

Developing Harmony Between Different Religions

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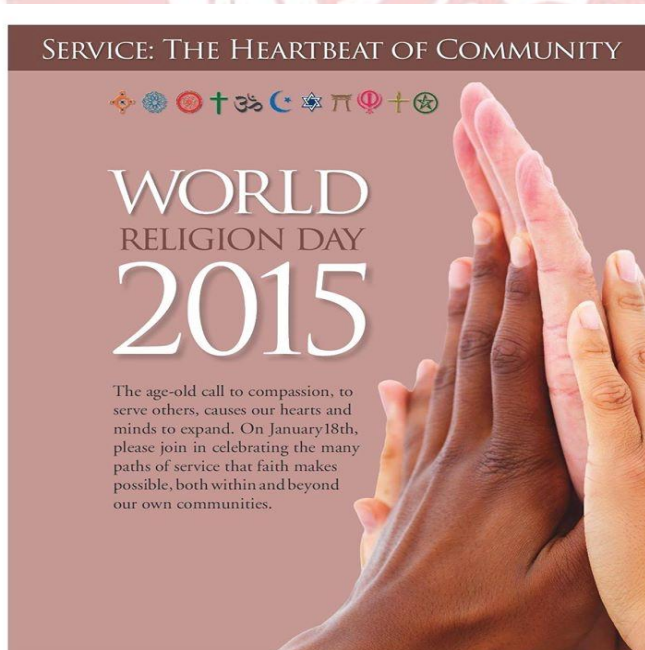
Introduction

Just as food is nutriment to sustenance of the body, religion is nutriment for cultivation of the mind. There are many different kinds of food; every culture, every country, every race of people, has its own unique or special kind of food. While they may vary in taste, texture, or appearance, the different kinds of food serve to provide nutrition for sustenance and strength to the body, and each individual person may choose his or her own favorite food. For cultivation of the mind, religion is no different in this sense; there are many different religions in the world, each having its own unique and special blend of philosophies, beliefs, and practices. Today, according to the popular assessment, there are 19 major world religions, subdivided into 270 large religious groups, and many smaller ones¹. For people of different religious following to live together in harmony despite differences in philosophies, beliefs, and practices, we need to exercise open-mindedness and tolerance towards other people's beliefs and practices, and to recognize and accept our differences. Just as we find the doctrines of our own religion appeal to our own personal beliefs, we must recognize that other people too may find the doctrines of their religions appeal to their personal beliefs even if we do not subscribe to those beliefs. Every person has a right to his own beliefs, and we must never impose our beliefs and values upon others or create conflicts between different religious beliefs. We are living in the 21st century, where modern technology has broken down barriers and borders across nations, ethnicity, and cultures. This is a period when such harmony invariably lead to development of economic progress that benefits all the diverse cultures in the world. We should see such common benefits for all to be superior to creating conflicts between different religious views. It is very important to guard our behavior towards others at work. In the social life, everyone wants to be respected, and to have an equal right and freedom to exercise his own beliefs. So the harmony between different religions is a good way of share between rich countries and poor ones. One way of

¹ <http://www.religioustolerance.org/worldrel.htm>

improving the educational system of each country is to broaden it with the international systems through various fields of material and spiritual science. In today's world, we live in the global context, and we must always maintain an open mind towards other's religions and to harmonize our viewpoints with others to become a globalized person.

Besides, regardless of religious beliefs, all of humanity is living and sharing the same planet, there is nowhere else to live for all of us. So we have to share many common resources and common opportunities. The world is becoming more and more integrated and borderless with increasing progress in technological advancements. We can communicate faster, easier, and in more diverse manners via the internet, and opportunities are boundless for people of different religions to meet, communicate, discuss, and share thoughts. If our minds are closed and become intolerant towards other religions, we allow our differences to fuel conflicts in this world. A fire only burns if there is fuel; so if we maintain conflicts with other religions in our mind, one day such conflicts in our minds may erupt or explode. So! To live in harmony between different religions, we should accept each other from our mind and should respect each other; if we can do this well, we will experience greater peace, calm, and wellness in the world. This is an important need for everyone in the world.



Methodology

The details for this research papers has been collected from the articles related to the field of religions and my own recognition when I discuss religion with my friends.

Discussion

We have to diligently cultivate religious tolerance and harmony. A first condition is an acceptance from our mind. When our mind has acceptance, free of conflict, we may live in harmony. Therefore, I will refer to in two main issues in our discussion.

These are: accepting other religions and developing their harmony

Firstly, I show six ways of thinking about other religion².

1. *Accept that everyone is different* because all people are different, everyone needs to make different choices to be happy. Your way may not be the only way - just like you can't expect your music tastes or favorite food to appeal to others, you cannot expect that everyone will be drawn to your religion, or any religion at all for that matter.

2. *Take a step back and stop criticizing* before you point out the "holes" in another person's religion, take a look at your own, as every religion has its faults. Every religion has questions that cannot be answered. This is why faith is necessary - to keep you from giving up when something doesn't make sense.

3. *Think about other people's feelings think about it:* You're choosing not to accept someone based on religion, on their differing beliefs and morals. This is extremely hypocritical. You are making someone feel bad about themselves because they don't follow your beliefs. No one should have another's beliefs forced upon them.

4. *Do not attempt to change them.* If you meet a person of another religion that is also kind, why try and change them? If you meet an Atheist that is honest, kind and pleasant and try to say he/she is a bad person because he/she does not believe in what you do, who is being irrational: you, or them?

5. *Recognize similarities in diversity of religion.* Another reason why hating a person based on religious beliefs is ridiculous is that almost all religions have certain similarities. Study the books of major religions carefully, and you will be surprised by the number of views and fables that are similar to your own religion (with different characters, of course.)

6. *Learn about religious ceremonies.* If you think a religious ceremony or practice looks *odd*, learn about it before you wrinkle your nose at it. What does it represent? What is the symbolic meaning of all steps and objects involved?

Secondly, I show my own recognition of developing harmony between different religions. I mention a background of education because everyone always gets

²<http://www.wikihow.com/Be-More-Accepting-of-Other-Religions>

education through school system and others. If people have basic knowledge of other religions and value of its ethics, people's religious tolerance will be improved. This serves to reduce conflicts and improve harmony between different religions. So I show how some rules should be applied in the educational system.

1- Education system should teach some basic knowledge of all main religions for students in senior High School aimed at introducing the good aspects of religion that lead to loving kindness for each other; do not teach unwholesome religious events of past violence to avoid creating hatred and intolerance in the mind.

2- The Faculty of Religion of all universities should organize programs about unity and harmony between different religions. The students of Faculty of Religion should present an ethics' view of each religion.

3- The Faculty of Arts should teach students to appreciate artistic representations of ethic values of religion aimed at building harmonious religions; we should increase religious representations in music or dance or graphics towards living in harmony between different religions; apply ethics of religions through film, scenario, screenplay.

4- Every country should organize conference on religion to share same ethical value to find out a good way for harmonious relationship between different religions.

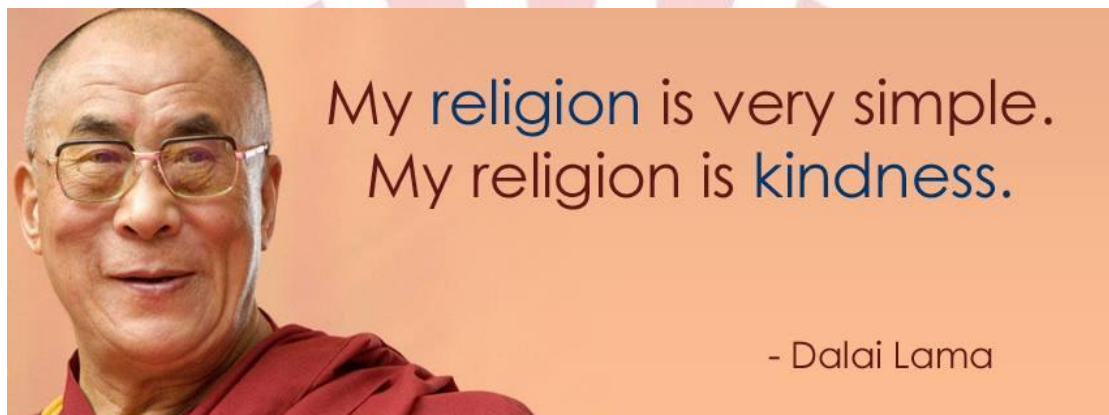
5- A ritual is also good means to educate ethics for human being. If without ritual or prayer, no religion will survive. The ritual dimension is also most important for any religion should be practice in its own religious community such as Faculty of Buddhism, all classes for Buddhist studies should applied worship the Buddha before starting study.

These are five points I would like to offer to everyone on the conference to discuss which point could be applied in the future. I wish everyone to be respectful and tolerant to each other and develop loving kindness towards each other; without respecting, people can not live peacefully, happily and free of hatred. For the happiness of the society, happiness of the individual is necessary for each human being.

Conclusion

The words *loving kindness, respect, harmony, tolerance* mentioned in this paper aim to show that the nature of religion is a good way to contribute towards education of the ethical lifestyle. Everyone has to respect freedom of religion for each other regardless whether we believe or not believe in the doctrines of another religion; there

is no justification to be in conflict with each other when we are living on the same planet, and to cultivate tolerance and non-violent attitudes towards other religion. It is most beneficial for human being to lead a peaceful and harmonious life. The value of ethics of religion will be shared with each other through the educational system and demonstrated in helpful ways through various forms of creative arts. Each of us live in the global context, we are constantly exposed to different religions all the time, we easily interact with other religions, therefore we have to open mind toward other's religions and to harmonize our viewpoints with others to become a globalized person.



Reference

<http://www.religioustolerance.org/worldrel.htm>

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