



Equality

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Life is full of very complicated, convoluted and controversial concepts, none more so than that of equality. This is why I try and live by simple rules and processes. A number of these are found in familiar religious tomes:

- *“Love your neighbor as yourself”* (The Bible)
- *“Kind words and the covering of faults are better than charity followed by injury.”* (The Koran)
- *“One should not kill nor cause another to kill”* (Buddhist teachings)

One of the most basic concepts to understand and yet virtually impossible for humanity to uphold throughout its violent history, is that of equality. The American Declaration of Independence states it perfectly:

“We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.”

It's a beautiful encapsulation of how people should treat each other at the most fundamental level. And yet, when put into historical context, it was solely referring to white, male American colonists, excluding probably two-thirds of the population. In fairness to the revolutionaries who wrote the document, it has to be acknowledged that this statement was hugely brave and ground-breaking for wards of the British Empire in the latter part of the eighteenth century. However, looking at the statement today, it is remarkable to us to think that our Founding Fathers could have been so narrow-minded when formulating a relatively universal statement.

Equality has been mis-defined and mis-used throughout the history of mankind and yet it should be so easy to embrace. We should all walk the streets assuming that we are equal to everyone else. And I believe we should start doing that. Yes, there are a lot of rules and regulations that have to be written to ensure equality – and, frankly, some that should be un-written – but why not start by flipping a switch and declaring “All people are equal”. Done, end of sentence.

Saying that we are all equal does not naively assume that things today are equal – they're not. However, by building equality into any formula for social, economic, military, etc. leadership, and by simply assuming equality, then episodes of inequality become embarrassingly obvious to everyone involved with them, in my opinion.

Is this a utopian or naïve way of thinking? No, it is not. Because we are all equal, I believe, from a creation perspective. The inequalities exist as a result of fear and lack of confidence. This results in inequalities in our institutions such as education and law enforcement. So, if we assume equality amongst humans, the inequalities and hypocrisies stand out like low hanging fruit, waiting to be plucked and thrown in the compost pile of history. These old relics would be and must be replaced by new, robust and efficient systems that reflect the diversity of our culture and ideas but also our forward-thinking, noble objectives for humanity.

I do not claim my ideas are innovative or even complex. On the contrary, they are simple and easy to understand. If I am standing here looking at you and you are looking at me, we are equals. Simple.

Now, if we peel away a layer of the onion, you might say, for example, that you are better qualified for certain job than I am so you should get the job. Possibly. But what if the answer to the question "Did you become more qualified as a result of some sort of favoritism in our society?", is yes, then we need to fix whatever that system or process is.

A Simple Proposal

Equality is an intuitive concept and yet there is a great deal of detail to be fleshed out underneath. All I ask at this stage is to accept the concept, in its simplest most eloquent form. Again, even that idea might seem simplistic and naïve. But we don't do it today. Instead we drill down to, what I consider, shortsighted and political box checking rather than real change: add an addendum to this law, send millions of dollars to this organization, throw the police and National Guard out there to solve the problem. The concept of all people are equal is simple enough to understand but to bring it to reality requires considered thought and self-evaluation. But if we cannot accept the simple concept then we will make little progress no matter how much effort and treasure we throw at it. So let's spend some real time to focus on the simple rules - not assumptions, not concepts, just rules:

- All People are created equally
- All Americans have equal access to education
- All Americans have equal access to the American dream
- The purpose of government is to ensure and defend the first three rules above.

These are four basic rules that I challenge flow into everything we do as Americans. Each one can be expanded to levels deeper than the ocean – and should be. However, until we agree on these four, we can go nowhere. And it cannot happen overnight by a survey or poll.

Once there is agreement – which there should be since these are fairly intuitive concepts (with the exception perhaps the last one, related to government) – then there needs to be the understanding of what these simple concepts encompass at a high-level. This is where it starts getting interesting. However, I assert that this next stage will still be at a high enough, conceptual level that will not engender excessive animosity or division. I believe, as with the rotten fruit, anyone or any organization that refuses to find consensus at this second stage, will have no moral, legal or other ground upon which to stand. Their hypocrisy and elitist nature will be obvious.

That being said, driving towards consensus on these four simple concepts requires total vesting by those institutions of government, society and commerce in the process or it will fail. If any body or individual discusses these simple yet ubiquitous concepts with an agenda to obstruct or mislead, the ability to move forward will fail. Once again though, if the people or entities involved with the process, for whatever reason attempt to distract the effort towards a specific, self-centered need, it will be obvious and apparent.

This debate must also take place in the public domain. The American press plays a tremendous role in communicating the message to the masses. They must also be held accountable for transparency and an overall duty to all of us to communicate the facts and sidebar the editorials. A free and forthright press is a cornerstone to American Exceptionalism and must be protected – but also held accountable.

Therefore, in summary, societal equity must begin with societal agreement upon simple, rules of nature and human nature that provide the foundation for real, enduring change. Once these rules and concepts are agreed upon, the systems that are out of context with the simple, basic rules will be dangling from our tree of liberty waiting to be cut off and cast away.

Let's get started.