

MY VIEW ON POLITICS

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If you occasionally read my blogs, you know I don't offer you political rants, and what follows is not a rant. It is an opinion. Our gridlocked political process is something I worry about.

Something I wonder about is how best can I be used up? What are my chances of changing the way corporations operate? How could I get through to the politicians in Washington, most of which (on both sides) I wish could be fired? What can I do about the ridiculous decision by the supreme court to allow unlimited Super-PAC money to influence our voting process? And how can I help Earth protect its environments when the greedy are destroying them as fast as it can make them more money? That is just a sample of what troubles me.

The answer to the above questions as to what I can do, aside from "I try to do the best I can," is "very little." So what is it that I 'can' do?

My own analysis of the problems we face is that what's missing is basic awareness and the sense of responsibility that goes with awareness. "Responsibility," the 'ability to respond' seems to be missing in action. We seem to be frozen like the proverbial deer in the headlights.

As a social group, we are not responding to what is happening around us, and society to a large degree is lacking in awareness. Otherwise, how could we let the state of this country decay as much as it has?

Congressional gridlock is just a symptom, not the cause. Otherwise we would just naturally take responsibility for what is happening around us and simply change things. That's not happening, so more awareness on all our parts is needed.

I understand that there are countless tutorials that teach awareness about various subjects, like global warming and many other things, one topic at a time. I am reminded of the story of the king who wanted to carpet his kingdom with leather, so he could walk around it in his bare feet. It is much easier, someone pointed out to him, to have a pair of leather shoes made and walk anywhere he pleased.

In a similar way, it makes more sense to me to show someone how to become totally more aware (in which case they will naturally respond properly to whatever is presented to them) than it is to teach those who are basically unaware to be aware, a topic at a time. If we learn how to be generally more aware, then we can trust ourselves (and each other) to respond to any topic that presents itself correctly.

It is this kind of thinking that has landed me teaching mind practice, because meditation is all

about growing some awareness. It is not some religious urge on my part, because the only church I recognize is the cathedral of Mother Nature. To me, Buddhism is not a religion in the common sense of that word, but rather just a method to become more aware. My interest in meditation stems from my wish to help more of us develop awareness so that together we can do something about the problems we face on this Earth as well as internally. Make sense? I can say this about awareness training:

For me it was very, very difficult to learn and took way too long. Yet, in the end I brought awareness to my photography, to my programming, my writing, literally to everything I do. Wherever I turn my mental awareness, I can make some sense of what I see. I can respond. I am responsible. Somewhere in there we all are.

I know of no more powerful tool than an awakened mind. It should be our first order of business, each of us.

That being said, I am not happy about everything the Barack Obama has done over the last four years. In particular, I wish he had asked each of us directly, publicly to get off our butts and do something. However, IMO he stopped communicating in that fashion the moment he was elected. I don't think it was intentional. I can't explain it, but it is sad.

On the other hand (again IMO), the Republicans have done little to cooperate and have refused to do even what they could have done. I am DEEPLY embarrassed at the behavior on both sides of the aisle.

All things considered, I will be voting for Barack Obama. I see no other viable choice. So you know where I stand.