

From: Laurence Archer
Sent: Tuesday, 11 September 2001 10:10 PM
To: archer@aquarius.com.au
Subject: Pledge for a world of tolerance and a future of possibilities

To all my friends

This message is prompted by today's events, but I should have sent it before, since it is about my beliefs and principles.

I strongly believe that today's events have a deep rooted cause in two phenomena of human nature. Intolerance and cynicism. These are not natural phenomena, and they can be defeated.

Intolerance is about wanting others to be like us so that we can feel right about the way we are.

Whenever we apply our values to others against their will we are intolerant. Religious fanaticism and bigotry are forms of intolerance. Being democratic and forcing democracy upon others is a form of intolerance. Being "righteous" is a form of intolerance. Wanting to drag others down to the same level as ourselves is a form of intolerance.

Tolerance is about love.

Love and "liking" are not related. Love is about accepting others as they are regardless of whether we like them or not. Love is not how we feel, it is what we do and say.

Intolerance can be "collective", tolerance is individual. It is up to every single one of us to be tolerant, thus defeating intolerance. This is one of the great teachings of Gandhi.

Cynicism is about believing that the future is like the past, believing that what was not possible in the past is not possible in the future. But the only link between the past and the future is our own imagination. Everything that has not happened in the past can still happen in the future.

The alternative to cynicism is a future of possibilities. Everything that was not possible in the past is still possible in the future. People that had no hope in the past can still have hope in the future.

I ask you to read this message carefully and understand it profoundly. If only one of you takes on its meaning, make it his own and passes it on to his friends, and they pass it on to their friends and so on...

perhaps we can create a new world order, a world of tolerance and a future of possibilities. A world where people that now hate each other see the possibility of accepting each other as they are. A world where people that had no future realise the possibilities of the future.

I do not know how you will take this and what you will do with it, it is what I believe and what I stand for. There can be some very complex solutions to the current situation, but this is a simple thing that we can all do.

Thank you for allowing me into your space

Laurence

If you come across someone who has mislaid his smile, give him one of yours