TOLERANCE

Harmony in Difference



Dr. RASHID ALLEEM

Author of *21 Alleem Sustainable Development Goals*

Tolerance

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Tolerance - Harmony in Difference

Alleem Research & Development Center
Tel.: +971 6 573 3321
E-mail: abc@alleem.com
P.O. Box 1610, Sharjah UAE

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ISBN: 978-969-9637-40-7

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“Leave your mark. Be ashamed to die without leaving a legacy and winning some victory for humankind.”

- Dr. Rashid Alleem

To

His Highness Sheikh Khalifa Bin Zayed Al Nahyan, President of the UAE, for creating the first Ministry of Tolerance in the world

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Acknowledgments

To say this book is “by Rashid Alleem” is an overstatement. Without the significant contributions made by the Alleem Research and Development team, this book would certainly not exist. You, the team, have given your spirit to do your work with a true vision. I am grateful for your commitment to transforming lives in different parts of the world. You have been the wind beneath my wings.

I owe much gratitude to H.E. Dr. Mohamed Omar A. Balfaqeeh, UAE Ambassador to the Republic of Singapore, for his continuous encouragement and support throughout this book project. I am also thankful for our great country that promotes tolerance and acceptance of others through the Ministry of Tolerance.

Most of all, I thank you, my readers, for your attention, engagement, and feedback. I hope you will write to me at rashid@alleem.com. Finally, I offer my undying gratitude to my family, whose patience, encouragement, and love kept me going through this long and challenging project. Every day, they remind me of what matters the most.

Foreword



I am pleased to write this foreword on a book that has great meaning to all humankind.

In this world where we are experiencing a period of global transition, modern technology is connecting us ever more closely. Social media play a critical role in deepening cross-cultural exchanges every day. Amid the diversity of societies, intolerance is on the rise in many areas. The closeness of the people does not mean there is more understanding.

Younger generations are exposed to various views, ideologies, and fake news, which present challenges and threaten the peace and stability of societies.

Tolerance demands an active choice of reaching out on the basis of mutual understanding and respect, especially where disagreement exists.

Tolerance can, and must, be learned. We need to teach girls and boys not just how to live together but how to act together as global citizens. We need to nurture tolerance by promoting cultural understanding and respect at all levels.

The world must be prepared to defend a tolerant society against the onslaught of the intolerant, and this is the time the world should work together.

Dr. Rashid Alleem made a good choice in choosing "Tolerance" as the title for this book, which provides lessons from real-world stories. This book comes at the right time to highlight the importance of tolerance in our life.

Noting the contents of the book and background of its author, whom I believe reflects the voice of the UAE on this important subject, I am sure it will complement the efforts and contribution of the global community in promoting tolerance.

Dr. Mohamed Omar A. Balfaqeeh
Head of Mission, UAE
Ambassador to the Republic of Singapore

Introduction



"In the practice of tolerance,
one's enemy is the best teacher."
—Dalai Lama—

The world is transforming at breakneck speed, and the myriad changes it brings affect each and every one of us. We live in a highly connected world in an era rich with information and disruptive innovation. However, we may have lost the human touch. We pretend too much. We wear game faces. We become more aggressive with one another, and the outcome is social chaos: children killing their peers at school, ethnic cleansing of minorities, internal displacement of people that creates an increasing number of refugees, and the list goes on.

Before you roll your eyes or, worse yet, put down this book, let me say this: I decided to write this book because it is needed in this hour. Living in the global village means culture and religions meet and should interpenetrate with love. Instead, all too often, the outcome is a tragic collision of hatred and violence. Yet the basic spiritual teachings of the world's great religions and faiths are remarkably similar. Mahatma Gandhi said it well: "There will be no lasting peace on earth unless we learn not merely to tolerate but even to respect the other faiths as our own." Yes, it's not easy, but it's possible, and it requires honesty, vulnerability, and transparency.

I believe that no matter how different our backgrounds, you and I share many more similarities than differences. We have so much in common. Unfortunately, although we learn about the diversity of the world at a young age in school, no one ever brought it all together into *unity*.

What inspired me to write on the subject of tolerance is the recent declaration the President of the

UAE, His Highness Sheikh Khalifa Bin Zayed, of 2019 as the Year of Tolerance, as he believes that tolerance is achieved if we appreciate, accept, and respect other religions, faiths, and cultures.

Getting the Most from this Book

Don't just quickly read this book; make it your friend. Interact with it. Underline the important points. Write your own thoughts in the margins. Make it your book. Share it with others.

A journey is always better when it is shared. Let's get started together.

Happy Reading!

Dr. Rashid Alleem
Sharjah, UAE
International Tolerance Day

Part I

UAE Tolerance Program

“We don’t see things as they are,
we see them as we are”

- Anaïs Nin

1. Ministry of Tolerance

On January 15, 2017, I had the privilege of meeting Her Excellency Sheikha Lubna Al Qasimi, the president of Zayed University and UAE Minister of State for Tolerance at her university. We discussed her unique role in the ministry and the ministry's importance for society at large.

Sheikha Lubna asserted, "the UAE is one of the greatest examples of tolerance." The UAE's tolerance is reflected in the very fabric of its society, incorporating both nationals and foreign residents

in such a way that "everything reflects tolerance." Sheikha Lubna is well-positioned to have a broad perspective on the nation's composition and needs. She previously held four ministerial portfolios and was the UAE's first female Minister of the Economy. Talking about her new job as Minister of State for Tolerance, she explained that the UAE has service ministries, such as social welfare; ministries with international roles, such as foreign affairs; policy-making ministries; and two new and "odd" ministries: the ministries of happiness and tolerance. She noted that "these reflect the values that are integral to all of us. Tolerance is acceptance—accepting and rejoicing in our differences. We have to interact with the community. It is a challenging job, but an exciting ministry. Hopefully, we will see great results."

Indeed, after seeing the ministry's progressive plans, I, too, truly expect to see great results. I wish you all the best, Sheikha Lubna, and thank you for your dedication.

UAE National Tolerance Program

During the holy month of Ramadan, His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid al Maktoum, vice president of the UAE and ruler of Dubai, announced in a meeting at the Presidential Palace in Abu Dhabi on Wednesday, June 8, 2016, that the country would continue to promote the principles of tolerance set by His Highness Sheikh Zayed, the UAE's founding father. His Highness Sheikh Mohammed said, "Tolerance is a key value of our ancestors and our founding fathers. The UAE has succeeded in spreading it throughout the Arab region and the world."

He continued: "The holy month of Ramadan is a great opportunity to spread the spirit of tolerance and show the real image of moderation and respect for others," adding, "Tolerance is the basis for building societies and promoting values of peaceful coexistence. Today, we need to be more tolerant and united to face the changes happening around us."

According to a report by the Emirates News Agency, the National Tolerance Program would involve collaborations among federal and local entities within five main themes:

- Strengthening the government's role as an incubator of tolerance;
- Consolidating the role of each family in nation building;
- Promoting tolerance among the youth and steering them away from extremism;
- Enriching scientific and cultural content; and
- Integrating international efforts to promote tolerance.



2. Capital for Tolerance

UAE Global Initiative for Tolerance

Following the announcement of the National Program for Tolerance, the UAE increased its commitment to the value of tolerance by launching a landmark global initiative for tolerance on October 8, 2016. His Highness Sheikh Mohammed noted that its intent is to build up the UAE as a capital for tolerance and promote openness in the region. Weeks after this announcement, the hand sign of a dove (the Tolerance Sign) and a dedicated hashtag, #Tolerance_Unites_Us, were

announced during an event that saw four doves being released into the sky at the base of Burj Khalifa, the tallest building in the world.

UAE Issues Law against Hate Crimes and Discrimination

The UAE has, for some time, sought to codify its stance on tolerance. In 2015, the UAE issued a new law against any form of discrimination on the basis of religion, caste, creed, doctrine, race, color, or ethnic origin following a decree by President His Highness Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan.

The new law, No. 02 of 2015, commonly known as the Anti-Discrimination Law, criminalizes any acts that might stoke religious hatred and/or insult religion through any form of expression, be it speech or the written word, books, pamphlets, or via online media. The law also includes provisions punishing those who label other religious groups or individuals as infidels or unbelievers.

The law is intended to provide a sound foundation for an environment of tolerance, broad-mindedness, and acceptance in the UAE, seeking to safeguard people against acts that promote religious hate and intolerance regardless of their origin, beliefs, or race. Penalties for violating the law's various provisions include jail terms ranging from six months to more than 10 years and fines ranging from AED 50,000 to AED 2 million (13,600 USD to 545,000 USD).

The law condemns any actions that would comprise hate speech or the promotion of discrimination or violence against others using any form of media, including online, print, radio, and visual media. It demands that strict action be taken against any form of expression of hatred or incitement to hate crimes spread in the form of speech or published media.

The law also criminalizes any act that amounts to abuse of religion or vandalism of religious rituals, holy sites, or symbols and takes a serious view of violence committed on the basis of religious doctrines.

Regarding entities or groups established specifically to provoke religious hatred, the law recommends stringent punishments for groups or supporters of any organizations or individuals that are associated with hate crimes. It bars any kind of event, such as conferences and meetings within the UAE, organized with the sole purpose of sowing seeds of discrimination, discord, or hatred against individuals or groups on the basis of faith, origin, or race. Receiving financial support for such activities is also punishable under the new law.

Moreover, it encourages anyone involved in any activity that violates the Anti-Discrimination Law to submit themselves voluntarily to the authorities and includes provisions allowing the courts to waive penalties in such cases.

Tolerance Award

The Mohammed Bin Rashid Tolerance Award is also introduced to honor global personalities who promote tolerance. The award, headed by Shaikha

Lubna Al Qasimi, Minister of State for Tolerance, embraces five branches, three of which will be dedicated to human intellect, literary creativity, and aesthetic arts, and the other two will be related to organizing innovative contests in youth projects and modern media.

According to a news article published by *Gulf News* on October 27, 2016, renowned Arab television presenter Lojain Omran was appointed as the ambassador for the Mohammad Bin Rashid Award for Tolerance with a task to spread the culture of tolerance and promote the values of peace across the region.

Lojain Omran, also a social media influencer with millions of followers from across the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) and the region, pledged to enhance and promote the values of tolerance and coexistence using her social media accounts, which she described as a powerful tool to reach out to people from various backgrounds.

Lojain Omran said the UAE is already a role model for tolerance, and with an initiative like

this, the UAE will further nurture such values among the community, across the region, and the world.

“I call on everyone to be an ambassador of tolerance. Tolerance is something that begins from within us and is spread outwardly. I hope everyone can begin spreading this message. It is my responsibility as a human being to spread this message first, and now it is my duty as an ambassador to do so. I have always emphasized inner peace and values of respect and understanding with others and have learned to accept others regardless of their background.”

Omran said that she will work hand in hand with those working with the award to deliver “the humanitarian mission whose aim is to realize and achieve acquaintances, dialogue, understanding and respect in the Arab societies, hoping to strengthen the role of young leaders in the beloved UAE as well as the Arab world.”

The hashtag launched has been translated into different languages as a way to spread the message

of tolerance coming from the UAE. Ahmad Al Mansouri, secretary-general of the Mohammad Bin Rashid Award for Tolerance, said the award carries a crucial message about the UAE, a country that has fostered the peaceful coexistence of people of more than 200 nationalities with different cultures.

"The tolerance initiative is one of the many noble initiatives launched by Shaikh Mohammad, with a goal to eliminate violence, extremism, hatred, and discrimination across the region and around the world while also promoting values of tolerance and openness to others," said Al Mansouri.

He said The Mohammad Bin Rashid Al Maktoum Award for World Peace has been officially changed to the Mohammad Bin Rashid Tolerance Award, adding that the award is open for participation to all groups worldwide and will be honoring global icons of tolerance.

The award will also support creative productions and youth leadership, providing them with opportunities to spread their creativity on social media.

International Institute of Tolerance

The International Institute for Tolerance is the first of its kind in the region to provide necessary consultations and experiences to consolidate the values of tolerance among peoples across the world.

The Institute is launched with broad objectives: it produces and publishes tolerance-related research, works with other cultural institutions in the Arab region, and teaches the new emerging generations about the values of tolerance. It conducts social studies to delve into the root causes of intolerance, isolation, and sectarianism; it also organizes a series of programs that aim to nurture distinguished young people and provide them with appropriate and healthy environments to deepen their awareness on issues related to tolerance and help them bring their ideas to fruition.

These steps are intended to sow the seeds of tolerance in the region and condemn extremism among

peoples. I am confident that very soon our nation will be glorified by these profound approaches.

Tolerance Day

November 16 is the International Day for Tolerance. In 2016, on this occasion, H.H. Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, tweeted, “What makes us proud is not the height of our buildings, but rather the openness and tolerance of our nation.”

The post of the Minister of State for Tolerance in UAE was first introduced in February 2016, when H.H. Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, announced structural changes to the 12th Cabinet, reinforcing the UAE’s commitment to eradicate ideological, cultural, and religious bigotry in society. Sheikha Lubna bint Khalid Al Qasimi became the first Minister of State for Tolerance. Celebrating the day at Zayed University in Abu Dhabi, Sheikha Lubna described the occasion as a “renaissance, a moment of celebrations, which

reflects cohesion and a feeling of being together." She also said that unity, tolerance, and coexistence are the hallmarks of the nation; while November 16 is the International Day for Tolerance, "in the UAE, every single day is a tolerance day."

Sheikha Lubna, the Minister of State for Tolerance, has topped a 2017 poll of the most powerful Arab women in government, according to Forbes Middle East.

In the Cabinet reshuffle of 2017, H.E. Sheikh Nahyan bin Mubarak Al Nahyan was appointed as Cabinet member and the Minister of Tolerance in the UAE. On June 14 2017, as a practical application of the principle of tolerance, H.H. Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, the Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Deputy Supreme Commander of the UAE's Armed Forces, ordered renaming the Sheikh Mohammad bin Zayed Mosque in Al Mushrif, Abu Dhabi, to "Mariam, Umm Eisa," which is Arabic for "Mary, the mother of Jesus."

In November 2017, H.H. Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid named the pedestrian bridge over the Dubai Canal as the Tolerance Bridge. The announcement was made on the 22nd International Day of Tolerance.

Anglican Church

In a testament to the UAE's multicultural tolerance, the region's largest Anglican Church is currently being built in Abu Dhabi, with the land for the church donated by President H. H. Sheikh Khalifa Bin Zayed Al Nahyan.

Currently under construction in Musaffah, the All Saints Anglican Church will be able to accommodate over 4,000 worshippers when completed.

Merry Christmas

In December 2018, as a Christmas message, H.H. Sheikh Mohammad bin Zayed Al Nahyan, offered congratulations from the UAE to Christians across the world, tweeting as follows: "From the

UAE, the land founded in the spirit of tolerance, love and coexistence, we congratulate Christians across the world and wish them peace and happiness in celebrating Christmas."

2019 Year of Tolerance

I feel extremely proud to write here that the UAE government has announced that 2019 will be officially proclaimed the Year of Tolerance to strengthen the nation's role of encouraging stability and prosperity in the region and the world.

The Year of Tolerance will focus on five main pillars:

- To deepen the values of tolerance and co-existence among cultures by teaching the youth the values of tolerance

- To solidify the UAE as the global capital for tolerance through a series of initiatives, projects, and dialogues between various cultures and civilizations

- To implement multiple cultural programs and contribute to building tolerant communities

- To focus on legislative and policy-oriented objectives that contribute to mandating cultural and religious tolerance via dialogue

- To promote tolerance through targeted media initiatives and projects

2019 Year of Tolerance Logo

According to news published by *The National*, on February 7, 2019, the official logo for the UAE Year of Tolerance—a Ghaf tree under which people of all views and backgrounds would meet in the past—has been unveiled by the Ruler of Dubai.

Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid, also Vice President, posted a video of the unveiling of the new logo on his Twitter account.

“Tolerance is a universal value, and Ghaf is our authentic national tree, a source of life and symbol of stability in the middle of the desert, under its shadows our ancestors gathered to consult on matters related to their daily lives,” he said.

“In the ‘Year of Tolerance’, we chose the Ghaf as a logo for all of us to live by the principles of tolerance, coexistence and diversity.” He said that the tree symbolizes tolerance and coexistence.

The Supreme National Committee of the Year of Tolerance said the tree “represents a great cultural value in the UAE and is associated with the identity and heritage of the country.”

“The late Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan has given great importance to the Ghaf and issued laws and regulations prohibiting the cutting of the tree throughout the country,” read a statement from the committee, which is chaired by Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation.

The committee added “Our ancestors and tribes gathered under the shadows of the Ghaf trees to discuss their daily matters. Also, a number of UAE rulers used to meet their citizens and listen to their demands directly under the shadows of these trees.”

“The Ghaf is planted in many countries around the world, particularly in the Middle East, Africa, Central Asia and the Americas, but under different names. For us, this year, we aim to establish it as a global logo for tolerance.”

In November 2018, a World Tolerance Summit in Dubai attracted regional leaders and national figures. The President of UAE, Sheikh Khalifa, declared 2019 as the Year of Tolerance, highlighting the UAE’s position as a global capital for acceptance through its legislative and policy goals.

“Instilling values of tolerance carries on Sheikh Zayed’s legacy and teachings, it is one of the most

important attributes that we can impact on our people and the global community to ensure the safety, stability and happiness of peoples across the world," Sheikh Khalifa said.

These thoughts were echoed on social media, with Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid, tweeting, "Dear brothers and sisters, the President... has issued a directive to announce 2019 as the Year of Tolerance in the UAE, with the aim of solidifying the international role that the country plays as the capital of co-existence and meeting of civilizations. Tolerance is the cornerstone of advanced societies, intellectually and humanely, and is one of the tools of empowering civilizations and ensuring stability and flourishing of nations. In 2019, we will endeavour to establish this value and lead the intellectual, media and research production movements to reaffirm this value in our region, which has suffered a lot because of extreme allegiance to ideologies or factions or parties."

Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi, said the "world today needs universal human values to be promoted for the sake of future generations."

In 2019, the UAE announced it will be a global coordinator for cooperation within a new Global Tolerance Alliance to promote acceptance worldwide. An agreement on tolerance was signed by dignitaries from Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, Switzerland, and the US, as well as the Emirates Human Rights Association, Higher Colleges of Technology, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation.

The Special Olympic World Games, to be held in Abu Dhabi from March 14 to 21 in 2019, are also expected to feature heavily in a year-long series of events promoting tolerance.

It will be the first time that the Games will be held in the MENA region. More than 7,500 athletes from around the world and an estimated 500,000 spectators are expected in the event.

Tolerance-themed events and publications will continue throughout 2019, and the Pope Francis's historic visit to UAE is one of them.



3. Pope Francis Welcome

The announcement of Pope Francis' visit to Abu Dhabi in February 2019 brought about a sense of joy and celebration in the country. His visit served as a sign that the UAE is welcoming and tolerant of all religions.

Pope Francis Hails UAE as a "Model of Co-Existence"

Pope Francis, ahead of his visit to Abu Dhabi, extended his warm greetings to the people of the

UAE in a video message released by the Vatican on January 31, 2019.

He began the video, posted in Italian (with English subtitles), with the Islamic greeting “salam alaikum” (peace be upon you all) before saying he was pleased to be visiting the UAE, a “country which strives to be a model for co-existence and human fraternity and a meeting point of different civilisations and cultures.”

He also thanked Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed, for inviting him to “take part in a dialogue of religions.” Pope Francis stressed that he was “delighted to be meeting with a people who live out their present and look forward to the future.” He said the UAE was a “country where so many people find a safe place to live and work with freedom that respects differences.”

His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed responded to the warm greetings by welcoming the Pope to the country, saying, “We warmly welcome you, Holy Father, Pope Francis, and look

forward to the historic Human Fraternity Meeting between you and His Eminence Dr. Ahmad Al Tayyeb, Grand Imam of Al Azhar Al Sharif, in Abu Dhabi. We are hopeful that generations to come will prosper in peace and security."

Sheikh Nahyan bin Mubarak, Minister of Tolerance, said it would be "an honor to welcome the Pope to the UAE," and that the Pope would be visiting a country that had learned the value of tolerance. He said the Vatican and the UAE each "embrace diversity and recognize the special talents of various population elements of the global society."

The nation was all set to roll the red carpet for the Pope. The papal visit was also significant, as the meeting coincided with the inter-faith conference in Abu Dhabi, attended by more than 600 religious figures from around the world representing various faiths.

Human Fraternity Conference

On the evening of February 3, 2019, a Sunday, under a rainy Emirati sky, Pope Francis landed in the UAE for the first-ever visit by a pontiff to the Arabian Peninsula. The Pope had a historic meeting with Ahmed Al-Tayyeb, the Grand Imam of Al Azhar Al Sharif on Monday during the second day of the Human Fraternity Conference that kicked off in Abu Dhabi. It was a one-of-a-kind inter-faith gathering in the UAE capital that brought together "cultures, faiths and civilizations," with an aim to foster tolerance and inter-faith dialogue.

The conference addressed three main themes: Principles of Human Fraternity, Common Responsibility to achieving Human Fraternity, and Human Fraternity: Challenges and Opportunities.

"This conference is truly a unique multi-cultural event that builds on tolerance that enables and encourages empathy, compassion, dialogue, understanding and respect. You will constitute in effect a global alliance dedicated to identifying action that will reaffirm values and combat [the]

destructive forces of extremism, terrorism, poverty, maladministration, ill-treatment of women, environmental abuse, illiteracy, prejudice and hate, scientific and logical ignorance, lack of sanitation and health care and greedy establishments that oppose the very idea of human fraternity," added Sheikh Nahyan.

Describing Pope Francis and Grand Imam as "global forces for compassion and peace," Sheikh Nahyan said that they exemplify the moral force needed to meet the global challenges of the 21st century.

"You leaders have assembled here as an extraordinary diverse international group of brothers and sisters. You represent the difference and diversity that exemplifies humanity," said Sheikh Nahyan, addressing a gathering of more than 600 religious figures from across the world.

Addressing the multi-faith Human Fraternity meeting on Monday at the Founder's Memorial in Abu Dhabi, Pope Francis said the world's great

religions must become more assertive in rejecting armed conflict, as he called for renewed efforts to end the “miserable crudeness” of war. He also spoke of the victims of conflict in Yemen, Syria, Iraq, and Libya.

He warned that “we will either build the future together or there will be no future,” urging members of different faiths and cultures to join an ark of fraternity as one human family to secure peace. The Pope also addressed issues such as safeguarding children from abuse, fake news, and the dangers of materialism.

According to many local news sources, he signed an important agreement with Dr. Ahmed Al Tayeb, the Grand Imam of Al Azhar, to encourage fraternal relationships between all people, bring an end to conflicts, and help the poorest in society.

Also speaking at the Founder’s Memorial, Dr. Al Tayeb called on Muslims to protect Christian communities in the Middle East and Muslims in the West to integrate into their communities.

“You are part of this nation. [...] You are not minorities,” he said. Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed described it as a “document that aims to reinforce the values of tolerance and coexistence.”

Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid said the UAE was “proud to host the historic meeting of His Holiness Pope Francis and His Eminence Dr. Ahmad Al Tayeb.”

On his last day of visit, the Pope delivered a landmark public mass to an estimated 180,000 Catholics at the Zayed Sports City Stadium in the UAE capital on Tuesday, February 5. Per the figures by many news sources, more than a million Christians live in UAE. The UAE government declared a holiday on Tuesday, for the private sector employees with tickets to the event. All of the nine Catholic parishes (an administrative unit typically having its own church and a priest or pastor) in the UAE were allotted tickets inside and outside Zayed Sports City stadium in Abu Dhabi. The tickets were distributed with a message written on it: “Make me a channel of your peace.”

The pontiff waved at the enthusiastic crowd carrying yellow Vatican flags and banners as he rode in an open-top Popemobile into Zayed Sports City Stadium, where an altar with a large cross was set up for the unprecedented open-air service.

One young girl from Colombia surprised the Pope and onlookers when she breached security to approach the white Popemobile and deliver a letter to the pontiff. The girl in white shirt and pink pants went under the railings and ran to the Pope to deliver a card she made at home, 13,500 km away.

The girl, named Gabriela, had traveled with her family to Abu Dhabi purposely to see the Pope. A security guard lifted the girl up so the Pope could bless her. A photo of the moment shows the girl in tears as Francis, smiling, touches her head.

The Pope also visited the Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque for a private meeting with members of the Muslim Council of Elders.

On the flight back to Rome, the Pope shared his experience of the historic meet and said, “I saw a modern country […] it is modern and welcoming of so many people.” Although it was a brief trip, it was long enough for the Pope to form a favorable impression of the UAE.

In commemoration of the historic event, a postage stamp featuring the Grand Imam of Al Azhar and Pope Francis was issued by Emirates Post on February 5, in time with the two-day Human Fraternity Conference in Abu Dhabi.

“We are proud to issue this commemorative stamp as a testimony of this visit and to show our pride in our nation’s experience and long legacy of peaceful coexistence,” said Abdullah Alashram, acting group chief executive of Emirates Post. He added, “We aim to highlight [the] efforts to build bridges of communication and harmony amongst different religions, creeds and races, to promote world peace and tolerance.”

Goodbye, Pope Francis

As an experienced Emirati pilot, Captain Abdulla Obaid is used to flying distinguished guests around the world to destinations far and wide.

On this particular lunchtime flight, the 45-year-old welcomed on board his Boeing 787 Dreamliner one of his most prominent passengers yet: Pope Francis.

In an interview with *The National*, the proud skipper and also the first Emirati to pilot the pontiff said he was humbled by the enormous privilege.

"I feel special because to my knowledge I will be the first Emirati pilot to fly his Holiness the Pope," said Captain Obaid. "It makes me proud, excited and also thankful to my company for giving me the opportunity."

His Holiness arrived in the Emirates on an Alitalia flight late on Sunday evening, but was returning to Italy on the UAE's national carrier, Etihad.

Inside the Boeing jet, Pope Francis was seated up front, with the rest of his entourage and the many journalists covering his trip seated toward the rear.

"As an Emirati, I'm really happy because it's the first time he [the Pope] has visited this country and this part of the world," said Captain Obaid.

"He started with my country, which makes me proud. Our leadership has always encouraged us to be tolerant of other religions and cultures and this visit is a clear message to us all that it is a very peaceful country where everyone can be together."

He said that this flight's aircraft was essentially a standard 787 with a few small changes, including the addition of the Vatican logo on the plane's door and headrests. Etihad, which screened the Pope's mass in the UAE on board its screens and in its airline lounges worldwide, started preparing for the flight back to Italy a week prior.

Part II

Stories of Tolerance

"Stories are a communal currency of humanity."

- Tahir Shah, in *Arabian Nights*

Story 1

VICTIM OF HATE

VICTIM OF HATE

"Admiration, n. Our polite recognition of another's resemblance to ourselves."

- Ambrose Bierce

I feel sick at heart knowing the hate swelling in people for others because of petty reasons, or else questioning their sense of belonging. The big question is this: where can we put our hatred while we say our prayers?

A middle-aged white man in Kansas City shot and killed an Indian-American engineer after shouting, "Get out of my country!" He was nervous. He looked like he was down. He felt stupid.

A Painful Story.

The right words can never seem to come. How can a person kill someone after questioning that person's belongingness to a nation? One thing I would like to suggest is that for the ease of people to manage and justify things properly, we are separated by different states and countries; it is not about belonging to a particular region, but the world. We all belong to the same world, which we should try to make a better place to live, not only for us but also for the generations to come.

☆ ☆

The news featured in the *Financial Times* on March 4, 2017, about an Indian-American victim of a hate crime, tells much about suffering. The fatal attack in Olathe, Kansas, in the United States, reverberated in the tidy Virginian suburb of office parks and strip malls, about 35 miles northwest of the White House. Adam Purinton, 51, allegedly shot two Indian-American Garmin engineers who

were enjoying an after-work drink, believing they were Iranians, according to police. Mr. Purtino is on trial and accused of killing Srinivas Kuchibhotla, 32, and wounding both of Kuchibhotla's friends, Alok Madasani, 32, and Ian Grillot, 24, who tried to tackle the gunman.

If you want to be miserable,
hate somebody.

The Pain Never Stopped

How miserable she felt. Sunayana Dumala, one week after her husband's killing, feeling isolated and lonely, asked on Facebook, "The question that is in every immigrant's mind: Do we belong here?" It is painful seeing the intense hate in people instead of love and peace for others. This needs to stop.

Story 2

RACISM IS FOR WHAT

RACISM IS FOR WHAT

"If we could read the secret history of our enemies, we should find in each man's life sorrow and suffering enough to disarm all hostility."

- Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

On April 3, 2017, while reading the *Financial Times* newspaper, my eyes caught this heading: "Racism towards Africans in India." As I have visited India many times and only ever felt a good and warm welcoming environment over there, reading this news about a statement given by a student from Nigeria who had just finished a three-year course from an educational institution there shocked me.



This is the story.

Mr. Orji's time in India had been characterized by persistent low-level racial discrimination and intimidation. With weariness in his voice, Maxwell Orji said he had been laughed at, spat on, and verbally abused on the streets of Greater Noida, which is close to New Delhi.

The situation became harsher after the death of Manish Khari, a local teenager whose family had accused their Nigerian neighbors of supplying him with drugs.

The highest possible stage in
moral culture is when we recognize
that we ought to control our thoughts.

- Charles Darwin

It Got Worse

It was a warm, muggy summer morning in Greater Noida. During a candle march, a protest against the youth's death, the crowd was so angry that when they encountered four African students with no known links to Khari's death, they requested them to stop. The students felt like lambs circled by hungry wolves. The protesters attacked the students so badly that the latter required hospital treatment.

At the hospital, one of the students spoke. His mouth felt dry. A feeling of anguish was growing in his heart. The words were hard to say. We're feeling pain now. We're feeling miserable. We want to go home. We are not welcomed anymore.

According to the Association of African Students in India, the country has about 25,000 African students, about a fifth of whom live in Greater Noida, a new city 30 kilometers away from New Delhi. Racism is one of the most severe diseases of human society in this age. What is it for? The

fact of the matter is that superiority is not by birth or color or blood but by righteousness. We are all human beings and should always maintain and strive for peace.



I would like to end this story with a quote from Martin Luther King, Jr.: “I refuse to accept the view that mankind is so tragically bound to the starless midnight of racism and war that the bright daybreak of peace and brotherhood can never become a reality... I believe that unarmed truth and unconditional love will have the final word.”



Story 3

I FORGIVE YOU

I FORGIVE YOU

"It is our choices… that show what we truly are, far more than our abilities."

- J.K. Rowling

There is no shortage of hate stories and victims of hate crime in the world but going through the hardship and still having the courage to forgive is something that happens very rarely. According to various news sources, on October 30, 2015, Jama, a Muslim of Somali descent, who came to Minnesota from Kenya in 2000 and is a US citizen, was attacked by Jodie Burchard-Risch, 44, of Ramsey, for speaking Swahili (the first language of the Swahili people) to her family.

According to a criminal complaint, Burchard-Risch was dining at Minnesota Applebee's in Coon Rapids when she overheard Jama. Burchard-Risch yelled at Jama to either speak English or go back to her country and then refused to leave when a restaurant employee tried to step in. Jama felt panicked. Terrified. Without any provocation, Burchard-Risch threw a drink at Jama, grabbed a glass beer mug, and smashed it in the woman's face before fleeing. The attack left Jama with a deep bloody gash on her lip that required 17 stitches, as well as cuts to her nose and right eye.

"Let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will know what God wants you to do."

- The Holy Bible

Jama came face-to-face with her attacker in court and offered the woman her forgiveness. On

December 20, 2016, at the Anoka County Court, Jodie Burchard-Risch was sentenced to 180 days in jail followed by five years of probation, along with alcohol monitoring and counseling.

Wounds provide an eye
to find new possibilities.

At times holding back tears, Jama said she felt her body tighten as old memories floated to the surface. She still carries the trauma of the attack with her. It's hard to talk about it, but she bears Burchard-Risch no ill will. "My religion, Islam, teaches me to forgive so I can get on with my life. In front of everybody here, I do forgive you, and I hope that you choose love over hate… I just want you to understand at the end of this that we are all the same. Look deep into your heart. No one can find meaning for you. Only you really know what's in your heart. Heart is courage and compassion. Without it, life is empty, lonely." Jama told Burchard-Risch.

Burchard-Risch nodded glumly and said, “I am terribly sorry, Jama, for what I have done to you. Please forgive me.”

Forgiveness is not easy, but it is a prerequisite for effective prayer. Jesus instructs us, in Mark 11:25: “And whenever you stand praying, if you have anything against anyone, forgive him and let it drop (leave it, let it go), in order that your Father Who is in heaven may also forgive you your [own] failings and shortcomings and let them drop.”

You find your way by opening your eyes. And your heart.

What a contrast between riotous living and righteous living.



I am proud of you, Jama, for showing such an act of kindness and forgiveness, which is not so easy,

especially as you suffered greatly and are still going through the same. You have experienced the incredible sense of hope, energy, and joy that comes from discovering what the Almighty God put you on this planet to do. It is far better to forgive and forget than to hate and remember. I believe forgiveness is the best form of love in any relationship. Bravo!



Story 4

YOU CHANGED MY LIFE

YOU CHANGED MY LIFE

"No act of kindness, no matter how small, is ever wasted."

- Aesop, "The Lion and the Mouse"

I truly believe that one's good deeds can inspire others to also be good. Here is a true story that I picked up from CNN based on the same philosophy. It was December 2, 2009, when Mohammad Sohail, a store owner at Shirley, New York, got a USD 50 bill with a thank-you letter for saving a shoplifter from a life of crime. The story began in May 2009, when Sohail was closing his shop, Shirley Express, at night, and the CCTV showed that a man with a baseball bat came to his store demanding money. Sohail somehow managed to

have his rifle ready and aimed it directly at the robber's face, forcing the man to drop his bat and lie on the ground. Unbeknownst to the man, Sohail never loaded his gun.

According to Sohail, the man immediately started to plead with him, tearfully saying, "I'm feeling sorry for myself. I have no food. I have no money. My whole family is hungry. Don't call the police. Don't shoot me." He was nervous and scared.

What Happened Next

"When I saw him crying, I really felt bad for him. I said, 'Oh man, this is something different,'" said Sohail.

Sohail made the man pledge to never rob anybody ever again, and then gave him USD 40 and a loaf of bread. Sohail, who is from Pakistan, said the man then wanted to be a Muslim like him, so he recited an Islamic oath and gave the would-be robber the name Nawaz Sharif Zardari. Sohail went to get some milk, but when he returned,

the man had fled with the money and food. He thought the story had ended.

Nothing has any power over me
other than that which I give it through
my conscious thoughts.

- Anthony Robbins

But the envelope that arrived on December 2, 2009, came as a surprise. Postmarked November 11 without a return address, it enclosed a USD 50 bill and a note apparently from the would-be robber. The typed letter began, “You changed my life,” and went on to say that the man was sorry for his actions six months ago.

“At the time, I had no money, no food on my table, no job, and nothing for my family. I know that it was wrong, but I had no choice. I needed to feed my family. When you had that gun to my

head, I was 100% sure that I was going to die," read the letter.

The letter said Sohail's acts inspired him to become a *true* Muslim and that his life had changed dramatically. "I'm very happy that somebody got to change his life," Sohail said.

Even a small act can have a great impact on someone's life. I am glad that someone's life has come to light from darkness.



Story 5

ASIFA BANO

ASIFA BANO

"There can be no keener revelation of a society's soul than the way in which it treats its children."

- Nelson Mandela, Former President of South Africa

Based on various international news sources, on January 10, 2018, Asifa Bano, an eight-year-old girl in a purple dress, was grazing her horses in a meadow in Kashmir when a man stopped her, looked quickly around the area, and asked her, "Why do you work so hard?"

With a smile, she asked calmly, "What do you want from me?"

Through clenched teeth, he asked, "Do you like where you are?" Then, without giving her a

chance to answer, he beckoned her into the forest. “Where are we going?” She sounded sincerely panicked. She wanted to say something, but no words came.

He turned around and forced a smile.

Was this a Trap?

According to police, he grabbed her by the neck and forced her to take sleeping pills. With the help of a friend, they say, he dragged her to a nearby temple. Then, he locked her inside. What did he really want? For the next three days, police say, the two men and at least one other raped her repeatedly. Suspects told investigators that the men’s motive had been to drive Asifa’s nomadic community out of the area. In the end, she was strangled, after one of the men allegedly insisted on raping her one last time.



On the morning of January 17, Muhammad Yusuf Pujwala, the adoptive father of Asifa, was sitting outside his home in Kathua when one of his neighbors came running toward him. His face said it all. He stopped in front of Mr. Pujwala and broke the news: They had found his eight-year-old daughter, Asifa Bano. Her crumpled body lay in bushes in the forest, a few hundred meters away, in the same purple dress, now smeared with blood.

"I knew something horrible had happened to my girl; she was killed." He stopped for a while and sat in silence. Mr. Pujwala, a 52-year-old man with deep sunken eyes, told the BBC in an interview recently. His wife, Naseema Bibi, sat beside him, faintly crying while repeatedly murmuring, "Asifa. How could I go on without you."

What Happened at Asifa's Funeral?

The Gujjars wanted to bury Asifa in a graveyard where they had purchased some land a few years ago and had already buried five people. However,

when they arrived there, Mr Pujwala said, they were surrounded by Hindu right-wing activists who threatened them with violence if they were to continue with the burial.

"We had to walk seven miles to bury her in another village," Mr Pujwala said. Two of his daughters were killed in an accident some years ago. On his wife's insistence, he adopted Asifa, the daughter of his brother-in-law.

His wife described Asifa as a "chirping bird" who ran like a "deer." When her parents traveled, Asifa looked after the herd. "That made her the darling of the community," Ms. Bibi said. "She was the center of our universe. We all know the feelings of grief and loss that follow the death of someone we love."

Story 6

HUMANITY IS BIGGER THAN EVERYTHING

HUMANITY IS BIGGER THAN EVERYTHING

"Be the reason someone smiles. Be the reason someone feels loved and believes in the goodness in people."

- Roy T. Bennett, *The Light in the Heart*

Let me share with you another powerful story. In May 2018, during the holy month of Ramadan, I, like many other Muslims, observed the fast. The month was passing full of blessings each day. A piece of news came to my notice through my local news source in the UAE (*Khaleej Times*) that a Muslim in Bihar, India, chose humanity over religious customs and broke his Ramadan fast to donate blood to an eight-year-old Hindu boy with thalassemia and saved his life. Thalassemia is a

blood disorder; patients need blood transfusions after every three to four weeks.

On Tuesday, May 22, 2018, Jawed Alam, a man in his 30s, donated blood to Rajesh Kumar in Gopalganj district, Bihar. The boy was rushed to the emergency of Sadar hospital (one of the premier medical hospitals in the state) by his father. The patient complained of uneasiness and weakness, and required immediate blood transfusion.

There was no blood matching Rajesh's blood group available in the blood bank. They said it would take at least two to three days to arrange it.

The boy's condition deteriorated quickly. His father had traveled some 200 km from the Kuchaikote area (one of the administrative divisions of Gopalganj district in the Bihar) and was fast losing hope as he waited in the corridors of the blood bank.

It was then that a hospital sweeper and cleaner informed Anwar Hussain, a member of the District Blood Donor Team (DBDT), about the

child. Hussain requested his friend Jawed Alam, an active member of DBDT to rush to Sadar hospital.

“When my friend Anwar requested me to donate blood to a seriously ill thalassemia patient, I politely informed him that I was observing Ramzan fast. But he convinced me to arrive and consult [with the] doctors. At first, even the doctors refused my offer as I was fasting. They agreed only after I took their advice, broke my fast and consumed fruit juice and some solids,” Jawed said.

Change your thoughts and you
change your world.

- Norman Vincent Peale

He said, “My religion teaches me to help a fellow human first, so I broke my fast and donated blood to save little Rajesh. Islam preaches that humanity is bigger than everything.”



Story 7

HUMANITY DURING FLOODS

HUMANITY DURING FLOODS

"We're all human, aren't we? Every human life is worth the same, and worth saving."

- J.K. Rowling, *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*

A temple in Thrissur, Kerala offers its hall for Muslims to pray; a mosque in Malappuram (a city in Kerala) shelters Hindu families. Isn't this something to be praised? I found this article on August 22, 2018, in *The Hindu*. Let's get to the nitty-gritty of this.

In a true example of communal harmony, a temple hall at Eravathur near Mala, in the southern part of Thrissur district, turned into an Eid prayer hall on Wednesday, August 22, as the nearby mosque in Kochukadavu remained submerged in flood-

waters. The temple hall was serving as the relief camp for the people of Kochukadavu and nearby Kuzhur, the two worst-hit areas from the floods in the district.

As the Muslims were searching for a place to conduct the Eid prayers on Wednesday, the SNDP Yogam (Sree Narayana Dharma Paripalana Yogam), which runs the Purappullikkavu Ratneswari temple, happily offered the hall for them. The temple trust also arranged all facilities for the Muslims, including water for the devotees to clean themselves before prayers. Around 200 Muslim devotees participated in the prayers.

Mosque Shelters Hindu Families

In Malappuram district, a mosque has provided shelter and food to several Hindu families displaced by the massive floods, whereas groups of Muslim men have assisted in cleaning two Hindu shrines affected by the deluge.

The Juma Masjid, located at Akampadam in Chaliyar village in northern Malappuram, was

sheltering 17 displaced Hindu families, including women, children, and older adults, who were given space to sleep inside the mosque.

When the families returned to their homes, the mosque provided them with rice, pulses, and other essential materials along with food prepared in canteens.

A Vishnu temple at Venniyode in Wayanad (a district in Kerala state) and a shrine dedicated to Lord Ayyappa at Mannarkkad in Malappuram, inundated by the floods, were cleaned by a group of Muslim men. Many shared photos of the Muslim men cleaning the temples on social media.

Story 8

CREATE A STORY OF POSSIBILITY

CREATE A STORY OF POSSIBILITY

"Don't wait for something big to occur. Start where you are, with what you have, and that will always lead you into something greater."

- Mary Manin Morrissey

The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR, UN Human Rights), founded on December 20, 1993, is the leading UN entity on human rights. While doing my research, I came across a page on their website that shares life stories that were delivered during the "Voices" event organized by the OHCHR and held daily during the Durban Review Conference at the United Nations Office in Geneva, Switzerland, from April 20, to April 24, 2009. The Durban Review Conference is the official name of the

2009 United Nations World Conference Against Racism (WCAR), also known as Durban II.

The “Voices” event provides a platform for individuals from diverse geographical and cultural backgrounds to share their experiences and gives a human face to issues addressed by the Review Conference. Delegates from 141 countries participated in the conference. Over the course of the week, at scheduled sessions each day, 15 individuals offered their personal experiences of racism.

☆☆

Creuza Oliveira tells the story of more than nine million Brazilian domestic workers, mostly women, mostly black, for whom slavery is not relegated to the dust piles of history. It is also the story of the revolutionary impact unions and social movements can have on entrenched and systemic injustices.

Born in a family of poor rural workers with no schooling, Oliveira began life as a domestic

worker in Bahia when she was only 10 years old. Unable to balance work and school, she had to pick work and dropped out of school numerous times.

At work, Oliveira would be beaten and taunted whenever she broke something; she was often called lazy, monkey, and even the N word. The physical and psychological abuses were compounded by sexual abuse from the young men in the household where she worked. To top it all off, Oliveira was not paid.

She buzzed, looking at the audience and said, “I only started to receive a salary as a domestic worker when I was 21; until that age, my payment was in used clothes and food. I did not have a right to vacations or any basic workers’ rights.”

At age 14, her employers took her to Sao Paulo to work, without any authorization from her relatives in Bahia. From the video of her speech, I could see her shudder, probably from recalling the memory.

The Turning Point

Such was Oliveira's life until she heard on the radio about meetings of domestic workers fighting for their rights. She attended one meeting and thus began her evolution from a suffering young woman with low confidence into a leader in the fight for the rights of blacks, women, and domestic workers. She hated weaknesses. She felt her face flush again.

"Almost half a million domestic workers in Brazil are children and teenagers between 5 and 17 years of age [and] working without compensation, as slaves," she said.

"Domestic work in my country still carries the legacy of slavery: lack of application of relevant laws, physical and moral violence, lack of recognized rights vis-à-vis other professions, lack of union rights, and so on."

Oliveira is now President of the National Federation of Domestic Workers in Brazil and active in the Unified Black Movement and Women's

Movement. She shared the numerous changes in her country's policies since she attended the 2001 World Conference against racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia, and related intolerance, also known as Durban I, which was held in South Africa. Federal departments have been established to promote racial and gender equality, and the organization of domestic workers has gained visibility. There have been important victories in the recognition of property rights and on issues including domestic violence.



Domestic workers are now guaranteed, by law, rest and vacation days, as well as job security for pregnant women. Employers are prohibited from deducting housing and food expenses from their salaries, and there is ongoing construction of public housing for domestic workers. Legislation prohibiting domestic work for children and teenagers under 18 years of age has also been recently signed into law by the President of Brazil.

Oliveira says the situation for domestic workers has certainly improved with such laws and more access to redress, but the problem lies in implementing these laws, as domestic work is carried out in private households. Article 7 of the Constitution also still explicitly excludes domestic workers from various labor standards.

She is well aware of the fact that racism is about power relations and that domestic workers for the most part have low self-esteem. Independent expert for minority issues, Gay McDougall, who moderated the discussion, noted the difficulty in securing the labor rights of domestic workers and that this was not a problem unique to Brazil.

Oliveira also referred to broader issues causing the perpetuation of racism in her country, including the media, songs that diminish women and encourage violence, and TV shows that depict black women as ignorant.



Story 9

DELTA PRIDE

DELTA PRIDE

"All stress is the result of feeling as though you have no choice about something. As soon as you recognize the choices inherent in any situation, you regain a sense of being in control and the feeling of stress will begin to disappear."

- Bill Cumming

Sarah White is currently serving as the President of the Board of Directors at Mississippi Workers' Center for Human Rights. The Center was founded by long-time human rights activist Jaribu Hill in 1996. Located in the Mississippi Delta, the Center fights for the dignity and human rights of low-wage African American workers and all those who languish in extreme poverty. She shared the struggles of Mississippi catfish workers and the battles for human rights and

justice they faced every day. She said during the 2009 Durban Review Conference, “We as Black women had to stand on our feet for 12 hours a day in ankle-deep water that contained chlorine and other harmful chemicals. This contaminated water caused severe skin rashes and other serious physical ailments. White male supervisors would force us to speed-up our work on the assembly-line so the company could make maximum profit. The bosses did not care about the health and well-being of the workers. Supervisors would terrorize us, making threats, ‘Speed it up or lose your job.’ We were sexually and racially harassed on a daily basis. We were mentally, emotionally, and psychologically tired. Why is this happening?

We were denied bathroom privileges. Even when we were allowed to go the bathroom, we were forced to wait long periods of time. Many times, white male supervisors would come into the women’s bathrooms which had no doors on the stalls. They would stand over us and would shout, ‘Hurry up and get up and go back to work.’ These are some of the conditions workers encountered

every day in catfish and poultry plants across the Mississippi Delta. These indignities were suffered by us as workers because of our skin color and economic class."

At that time, workers at Delta Pride were given six bathrooms breaks a week.

Your word is a
lamp to my feet and
a light for my path.
- Psalm 119:105

"In 2009, workers in catfish and poultry plants in the Delta were forced to clock out and go to the bathroom. In other words, they lose money when they go to the bathroom. I am here today to let you know we rose up and fought Delta Pride for over three months to get justice and human rights. We, as African American women, had to show the bosses that we were proud, beautiful Black

women who would never again tolerate that type of abuse. We led the largest labor strike in the state of Mississippi.

We won that battle and began a workers' rights movement all over the state. Plants began to organize. Although we won many battles, we still must continue the struggle to overthrow Jim Crow laws (Jim Crow laws were state and local laws that enforced racial segregation in the Southern United States. All were enacted in the late 19th and early 20th centuries by white Democratic-dominated state legislatures) that still exist today. Workplaces are still racially segregated. Black workers still are assigned to the dirtiest and most dangerous jobs and forced to work under conditions that look a lot like slavery."



Story 10

ANNE FRANK

ANNE FRANK

"Sometimes when you get disappointment it makes you stronger."

- David Rudisha

During my recent visit to Amsterdam in January 2019, while I was doing my city tour with friends, I came to know about Anne Frank. Anne Frank was born in 1929 in Germany. Her family moved to Amsterdam in 1933, and she died in the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp in 1945. Her diary, published as *The Diary of a Young Girl*, which documents her life in hiding from 1942 to 1944, is one of the world's most widely known books and has been the basis for several plays and films.

During the tour, I visited the secret place where Anne and her family with a few other Jews hid during the German occupation of the Netherlands in World War II. At the time, unemployment was high, and poverty was severe in Germany. It was also the period in which Adolf Hitler and his party gained increasingly more supporters.

Hitler hated the Jews and blamed them for the problems in the country. He took advantage of the rampant anti-Semitic sentiments in Germany. The hatred of Jews and the poor economic situation made Anne's parents, Otto and Edith Frank, decide to move to Amsterdam. There, Otto founded a company that traded in pectin, a gelling agent for making jam.

Before long, Anne felt right at home in the Netherlands. She learned the language, made new friends, and went to a Dutch school near her home. Her father worked hard to get his business off the ground, but it was not easy. Otto also tried to set up a company in England, but the plan fell through. Things looked up when he started selling herbs and spices in addition to the pectin.

On September 1, 1939, when Anne was 10 years old, Nazi Germany invaded Poland, and so the Second World War began. Not long after, on May 10, 1940, the Nazis also invaded the Netherlands. Five days later, the Dutch army surrendered. Slowly but surely, the Nazis introduced more laws and regulations that made the lives of Jews increasingly more difficult. For instance, Jews could no longer visit parks, cinemas, or non-Jewish shops. The rules meant that more places became off-limits to Anne. Her father lost his company, as Jews were no longer allowed to run their own businesses. All Jewish children, including Anne, had to go to separate Jewish schools.

The Secret Annex

The Nazis took things further one step at the time. Jews had to start wearing a Star of David on their clothes, and there were rumors that all Jews would have to leave the Netherlands. When Margot (Anne's sister three years her senior) received a call to report for a so-called "labor camp" in Nazi Germany on July 5, 1942, her

parents were suspicious. They did not believe the call was about work and decided to go into hiding the next day to escape persecution.

In the spring of 1942, Anne's father had started furnishing a hiding place in the annex of his business premises at Prinsengracht 263. He received help from his former colleagues. Before long, they were joined by four more people. The hiding place was cramped. Anne had to keep very quiet and was often afraid.

Anne Keeps a Diary

On her 13th birthday, shortly before they went into hiding, Anne was presented with a diary. During their two years in hiding, Anne wrote about events in the Secret Annex, but also about her feelings and thoughts. In addition, she wrote short stories, started on a novel, and copied passages from the books she read in her "Book of Beautiful Sentences." Writing helped her pass the time.

When the Minister of Education of the Dutch government in England made an appeal on Radio Orange to hold on to war diaries and documents, Anne was inspired to rewrite her individual diaries into one running story, titled "*Het Achterhuis*" (The Secret Annex).

The Hiding Place is Discovered

Anne started rewriting her diary, but before she was done, she and the other people in hiding were discovered and arrested by police officers on August 4, 1944. Hermine "Miep" Gies was one of the Dutch citizens who hid Anne Frank and her family, and despite the raid, Miep retrieved Anne Frank's diaries and saved them in her desk drawer.

Anne is Deported to Auschwitz

Via the offices of the Sicherheitsdienst, the German security police, the prison in Amsterdam, and the Westerbork transit camp, the people from the Secret Annex were put on transport to the

Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration and extermination camp. The train journey took three days, during which Anne and over a thousand others were packed closely together in cattle wagons. There was little food and water and only a barrel for a toilet.

Upon arrival at Auschwitz, Nazi doctors checked to see who would and who would not be able to do heavy forced labor. Around 350 people from Anne's transport were immediately taken to the gas chambers and murdered. Anne was sent to the labor camp for women with her sister and mother. Otto ended up in a camp for men.

Anne Dies in Bergen-Belsen

In early November 1944, Anne was put on transport again. Together with her sister, she was deported to the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp. Her parents stayed behind in Auschwitz. The conditions in Bergen-Belsen were horrible, too. There was a lack of food, and it was cold; and Anne, like her sister, contracted typhus. In Febru-

ary 1945, they both died owing to its effects, Margot first, Anne shortly afterward.

Anne's father Otto was the only one of the people from the Secret Annex to survive the war. He was liberated from Auschwitz by the Russians, and during his long journey back to the Netherlands, he learned that his wife Edith had died. Once in the Netherlands, he heard that Anne and Margot were no longer alive as well.

Anne's Diary Becomes World Famous

Anne's writing made a deep impression on Otto. He read that Anne had wanted to become a writer or a journalist and that she had intended to publish her stories about life in the Secret Annex. Friends convinced Otto to publish the diary, and in June 1947, 3,000 copies of Het Achterhuis (The Secret Annex) were printed.

The Legacy

The book was later translated into around 70 languages and adapted for stage and screen.

People all over the world were introduced to Anne's story, and in 1960, the hiding place became a museum: the Anne Frank House. Until his death in 1980, Otto remained closely involved with the Anne Frank House and museum. He hoped that readers of the diary would become aware of the dangers of discrimination, racism, and hatred of Jews.



Yes I Can
"If you think you are beaten, you are
If you think you dare not, you don't,
If you like to win, but you think you can't
It is almost certain you won't.

If you think you'll lose, you're lost
For out of the world we find,
Success begins with a fellow's will
It's all in the state of mind.

If you think you are outclassed, you are
You've got to think high to rise,

Anne Frank

You've got to be sure of yourself before
You can ever win a prize.

Life's battles don't always go
To the stronger or faster man,
But soon or late the man who wins
Is the man WHO THINKS HE CAN!"

- Walter D. Wintle



Story 11

HELLO, BROTHER

HELLO, BROTHER

"If we cannot end now our differences, at least we can help make the world safe for diversity."

- John F. Kennedy

On Friday afternoon, March 15, 2019, as Muslims were gathered for prayer in the different mosques of Christchurch, New Zealand, a gunman opened fire on worshippers at the Al Noor Mosque on Deans Avenue, Riccarton, and continued at the Linwood Islamic Centre. The 28-year-old white nationalist extremist gunman posted a racist manifesto filled with anti-immigrant and anti-Muslim screeds, and live-streamed the first 17 minutes of the terror attack on Facebook Live, starting with his drive to the mosque. Just before

the shooting, the gunman appeared to be greeted by one of the worshippers, Daoud Nabi, who said "Hello, brother." He was among the first people to be killed. The hashtag #HelloBrother started by an Indonesian man is gaining traction on Twitter following the massacre. The video of the shooting shows the first victim, a pure soul filled with a peaceful faith, standing at the door of the mosque, greeting the gunman, only to be shot and killed.

Fifty people were gunned down in this terror attack with dozens more injured. According to *The New York Times*, Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern said that many of the people who died in the attacks were the *breadwinners* in their families, and that the government would help those who had been left without income.

Later, a few days after the attack, people vowed to stand guard outside New Zealand mosques as Muslims took part in their prayers.

The victims of the Christchurch attack include parents, children, and refugees. According to BuzzFeed News, Daoud Nabi was humble and,

according to a friend, “one of the kindest people you’ve ever met.” The 71-year-old often went to the airport to greet refugees, helping them start new lives in a country he, too, had made his home. He was an engineer, a father of five, and ran his community’s Afghan Association.

Nabi died on Friday afternoon trying to shield another worshiper as the gunman burst into the Al Noor mosque, his son, Omar Nabi, told local media.

Omar Nabi’s father was one of the 50 people killed during the rampage at two mosques in what New Zealand officials have called a right-wing, extremist terrorist attack and one of the deadliest mass shootings in the country’s history.

According to a Facebook post by Syrian Solidarity New Zealand, Khaled Mustafa, a Syrian refugee, moved to New Zealand with his wife and three children last year.

“They thought it was a safe haven,” the group said.

One of Mustafa's two sons, who was injured in the attack, required a six-hour operation at a Christchurch hospital. The other was still missing at the time of writing.

Following the attack, people all over the world left flowers and handwritten messages outside their local mosques to pay tribute to the victims of the New Zealand terror attacks.

Social media was replete with pictures of flowers and heartwarming notes, all in solidarity with the Muslim community.

We are One

The New Zealand Prime Minister started her speech in Parliament on Tuesday, March 19, with a Muslim greeting, "As-Salaam Alaikum" (Peace be upon you).

The session started with a recitation of the Holy Quran to express solidarity with those who lost their lives in the terrorist attacks in the Christchurch mosques. The translated recitation is as follows:

“O you who have believed, seek help through patience and prayer. Indeed, Allah is with the patient. And do not say about those who are killed in the way of Allah, “They are dead.” Rather, they are alive, but you perceive [it] not. And We will surely test you with something of fear and hunger and a loss of wealth and lives and fruits, but give good tidings to the patient, Who, when disaster strikes them, say, “Indeed we belong to Allah, and indeed to Him we will return.”

In her passionate speech, Jacinda Ardern said, “I implore you, speak the names of those who were lost rather than the name of the man who took them. He is a terrorist. He is a criminal. He is an extremist. But he will, when I speak, be nameless.”

When I do good, I feel good.
when I do bad, I feel bad.
That’s my religion.

- Abraham Lincoln

According to different news sources, the Islamic call to prayer, the *adhan*, rang out across New Zealand on Friday afternoon, March 22, as thousands gathered to honor the 50 people gunned down at the two mosques in Christchurch the previous week.

Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern led an estimated 5,000 people at a massive prayer service at Hagley Park in front of the Al Noor mosque, where most of the victims died. New Zealanders across the small, broken-hearted nation paused when the adhan played, and observed two minutes of silence.

“New Zealand mourns with you. We are one,” Ardern said in a short speech.

Officers dotted around Christchurch wore green ribbons pinned to their chests as a sign of peace and solidarity.

Candlelight vigils continued until late Thursday, March 21, across the country, while volunteers prepared the bodies of the deceased for a mass burial that was expected after the prayers.

On March 22, Burj Khalifa (the tallest building in the world) was also lit up with an image of Jacinda Ardern as a tribute from the government and people of the UAE to New Zealand's Prime Minister in the aftermath of the mass shooting. H. H. Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum praised Ms. Ardern for her support to the Muslim community.

"New Zealand today fell silent in honor of the mosque attacks' martyr. Thank you PM @ jacindaardern and New Zealand for your sincere empathy and support that has won the respect of 1.5 billion Muslims after the terrorist attack that shook the Muslim community around the world," he wrote on Twitter.

Meanwhile, landmark buildings like The United States' Empire State Building, France's Eiffel Tower, and Auckland's Sky Tower went dark overnight in sympathy for the shooting victims.

Over the ditch, the Sydney Opera House illuminated a big and bright silver fern on its roof on March 16 as a symbol of support for Christchurch.

In contrast, President Trump, who was cited in the gunman's manifesto as a source of inspiration, told reporters that he did not see white nationalism as a rising threat around the world and attributed such attacks to "a small group of people that have very, very serious problems."

Additionally, after the Christchurch Mosque attack, different Islamic Organizations have suggested declaring March 15 as the International Day of Islamophobia.



Part III

Learning to Live Together

People are of two kinds, either your brothers in faith or your equals in humanity.

- Imam Ali ibn Abi Talib

1. Living Together

In its Declaration of Principles on Tolerance, UNESCO offers a definition of tolerance that most closely matches their philosophical use of the word:

Tolerance is respect, acceptance and appreciation of the rich diversity of our world's cultures, our forms of expression and ways of being human. Tolerance is harmony in difference.

The Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. used the Greek term “agape” to describe a universal love that “discovers the neighbor in every man it meets.” The various disciplines concerned with human behavior have also offered a variety of adjectives: pro-social, democratic, and affiliative.



Racially and Ethnically Diverse

Per the Bloomberg article, titled, Want Faster Growth? Embrace Diversity, posted on July 5, 2018, during the last four decades, the U.S. has become much more racially and ethnically diverse. The share of non-Hispanic white people residing in the country is now only 62%; Hispanics (Americans whose first language is Spanish) and Asians together make up 22.5%. Since 2014, less than half of the kids born in the U.S. have been born to two non-Hispanic white parents. Some states, such as Texas, are already majority-minority.

Meanwhile, about 39% of American-born Hispanic newlyweds and 46 percent of American-born Asian newlyweds marry people of other races (mostly whites)—a figure that will probably climb even higher in the years to come. Some of the children and grandchildren of these unions will probably identify as white. Thus, the demographic decline of white America is probably overstated.

But overstated or not, demographic change presents a big challenge for the U.S., which already suffers from a history of troubled white–black race relations as a result of slavery and segregation. Poor race relations not only lead to violence and discrimination but also create dysfunctional politics and lead to economic underperformance. Evidence from developing nations shows that ethnic divisions, often created as a result of arbitrary colonial boundaries, tend to undermine the provision of public goods, making a country more likely to be poor.

That correlation is not a law of nature, however. Thus far, the U.S. has managed to overcome the

challenges posed by increasing diversity. Diverse cities tend to spend as much or more than non-diverse cities, probably as a result of successful inter-ethnic coalition building. The country's most diverse states, such as Texas and California, and diverse cities, like Houston, Los Angeles, and San Diego, tend to be economic success stories (as well as having relatively low violent crime rates). The reasons may be their liberalized economy, relative tolerance, and history as a nation of immigrants.

In a 2012 experiment, political scientist Ryan Enos sent Spanish speakers to stand in a train station in Boston and found that white Bostonians who heard them talking tended to express more negative views on immigration. Enos later wrote a book, entitled *The Space Between Us: Social Geography and Politics*, on how a large ethnic minority living close by can stoke racial tensions, especially in the presence of segregation.

To deal with the challenge of diversity, it is crucially important to break down geographic barriers between racial groups. Research offers

a ray of hope that this can be done. The theory that extended contact improves attitudes toward other racial groups is supported by a large number of studies. It looks like the famous line from the novel *To Kill a Mockingbird*, renowned for its warmth and humor despite dealing with the serious issues of racial inequality, describes a real and powerful force that can change human beings' attitudes toward other ethnic, religious, or racial groups: "Most people are [nice] when you finally see them." Thus, desegregation efforts should focus on producing long-term, repeated, positive interactions between racial groups.

But how can this be done? In any even remotely free economy, people—especially wealthier people—will be able to choose where they live. That makes it hard to avoid voluntary segregation—even if people only slightly prefer to live near to their co-ethnics, it can lead to substantial neighborhood homogeneity over time. Giving poor people housing vouchers and strictly enforcing anti-discrimination housing and lending laws can help, but cannot totally overcome the prob-

lem. Meanwhile, public school desegregation via busing turned out to be politically difficult in most of the country.

More creative approaches are called for. One of these is dense urban development. Even as racial housing preferences nudge groups apart, the need to live and work in a shared space pushes them back together. Research shows that since 1990, white Americans have, on average, been moving to more racially diverse neighborhoods and staying there. The country's urban revival is undoubtedly a part of this. Thus, keeping that urban revival going, by allowing more housing development and building more public transit in diverse cities, is key.

Desegregating schools is another challenge. Offering tax breaks or financial incentives to public or private schools with diverse student bodies could help more kids grow up around Americans of other races.

A third desegregating force is the U.S. military. Serving together is probably a powerful way of

creating lasting positive attitudes toward other races. Expanding the U.S. military, and implementing a program of national service, would help Americans realize that they are all on the same team.

Finally, college can be a potent tool for fostering long-term positive interracial contact. Expanding public universities, keeping student bodies diverse, using roommate assignments to encourage interracial contact, and banning or heavily discouraging racially exclusive parties would be key steps in making higher education a more powerful unifying force.

Diversity can create great challenges. However, it also offers great opportunities: the promise of a larger, stronger nation that is richer both in dollars and in cultural ideas. The U.S., despite its historical failings, is almost uniquely well-positioned to reap the benefits of diversity while overcoming its difficulties.



2. A Message from George Carlin

This is a masterpiece from George Carlin who lost his wife a long time back. Isn't it amazing that George Carlin, a comedian of the 70s and 80s, could write something so very eloquent and so very appropriate? Here is an excerpt from his work:

The paradox of our time in history is that we have taller buildings but shorter tempers, wider freeways, but narrower viewpoints. We spend more, but have less, we buy more, but enjoy less.

We have bigger houses and smaller families, more conveniences, but less time. We have more degrees but less sense, more knowledge, but less judgment, more experts, yet more problems, more medicine, but less wellness.

We drink too much, smoke too much, spend too recklessly, laugh too little, drive too fast, get too angry, stay up too late, get up too tired, read too little, watch TV too much, and pray too seldom. We have multiplied our possessions but reduced our values. We talk too much, love too seldom, and hate too often.

We've learned how to make a living, but not a life. We've added years to life not life to years. We've been all the way to the moon and back, but have trouble crossing the street to meet a new neighbor. We conquered outer space but not inner space. We've done larger things, but not better things.

We've cleaned up the air, but polluted the soul. We've conquered the atom, but not our prejudice. We write more, but learn less. We plan more, but accomplish less. We've learned to rush, but not

to wait. We build more computers to hold more information, to produce more copies than ever, but we communicate less and less.

These are the times of fast foods and slow digestion, big men and small character, steep profits, and shallow relationships. These are the days of two incomes but more divorce, fancier houses, but broken homes. These are days of quick trips, disposable diapers, throwaway morality, one-night stands, overweight bodies, and pills that do everything from cheer, to quiet, to kill. It is a time when there is much in the showroom window and nothing in the stockroom. A time when technology can bring this letter to you, and a time when you can choose either to share this insight, or to just hit delete.

Remember; spend some time with your loved ones, because they are not going to be around forever.

Remember, say a kind word to someone who looks up to you in awe, because that little person soon will grow up and leave your side.

Remember, to give a warm hug to the one next to you, because that is the only treasure you can give with your heart and it doesn't cost a cent.

Remember, to say, "I love you" to your partner and your loved ones, but most of all mean it. An embrace will mend hurt when it comes from deep inside of you.

Remember to hold hands and cherish the moment for someday that person will not be there again.

Give time to love, give time to speak! And give time to share the precious thoughts in your mind. And Always Remember:

Life is not measured by the number of breaths we take, but by the moments that take our breath away.



Emotional Intelligence

Let's discuss something that is related to emotions, and what could be the better way to elaborate

this topic than emotional intelligence. What is emotional intelligence? According to experts, it is generally defined as the capability of individuals to recognize their own emotions and those of others, discern between different feelings and label them appropriately, use emotional information to guide thinking and behavior, and manage and/or adjust emotions to adapt to environments or achieve one's goal(s).

Although the term first appeared in a 1964 paper by Michael Beldoch, it gained popularity in the 1995 book by that title, written by author and science journalist Daniel Goleman.

What if a billion people were practicing emotional intelligence?

What if?

What if all people knew and accepted themselves? And felt free to make choices to direct their own lives? And could freely give their energy to create the future they really want?

Can you imagine a world like that? Can you imagine a "you" like that?

Welcome to the World of Emotional Intelligence

Six Seconds, a non-profit organization founded in 1997, is dedicated to supporting people to create positive change. They think the world would be a better place if a billion people were practicing the skills of emotional intelligence. They research and share scientific, global, and transformational tools and methods to support the abovementioned goal. Currently, they have offices and representatives in 25 countries and members in 167 countries.

What's the best way to get started growing emotional intelligence?

Name your Feelings

There are over 3,000 words for feelings in English. How many are you feeling now? Prob-

ably several. Tune into what's happening inside. Draw a picture. Use words. Find metaphors.

Identify Options

Often, it seems as if one has "no choice." What if you have a TON of options but you haven't thought of them yet? Each day is a chance to try out a new way of responding.

See the WHY

Your choices matter. You choose your thoughts, your feelings, your actions, and such choosing changes the world around you. What's the effect you want to have? If you have a clear picture of where you want to go, you'll make much more effective decisions.

The Six Seconds model turns emotional intelligence theory into practice for your personal and professional life. The model of EQ-in-Action explained here, will give you a clearer picture of the subject. It begins with three important

pursuits: to become more aware (noticing what you do), more intentional (doing what you mean), and more purposeful (doing it for a reason).

Know Yourself gives you the "**what**": when you Know Yourself, you know your strengths and challenges, and you know what you are doing, what you want, and what to change.

Choose Yourself provides the "**how**": it shows you how to take action, how to influence yourself and others, and how to "operationalize" these concepts.

Give Yourself delivers the "**why**": when you Give Yourself, you are clear and full of energy so you stay focused why you respond a certain way, why you move in a new direction, and why others should come on board.



3. Declaration of Tolerance

Researching more about tolerance, I came across the portal of UNESCO, which is resolving to take all positive measures necessary to promote tolerance in our societies, because tolerance is not only a cherished principle but also a necessity for peace and for the economic and social advancement of all peoples. UNESCO has declared the following:

Article 1 - Meaning of Tolerance

1.1 Tolerance is respect, acceptance, and appreciation of the rich diversity of our world's cultures, our forms of expression, and ways of being human. It is fostered by knowledge, openness, communication, and freedom of thought, conscience, and belief. Tolerance is harmony in difference. It is not only a moral duty; it is also a political and legal requirement. Tolerance, the virtue that makes peace possible, contributes to the replacement of the culture of war by a culture of peace.

1.2 Tolerance is not concession, condescension, or indulgence. Tolerance is, above all, an active attitude prompted by the recognition of the universal human rights and fundamental freedoms of others. In no circumstance can it be used to justify infringements of these fundamental values. Tolerance is to be exercised by individuals, groups, and states.

1.3 Tolerance is the responsibility that upholds human rights, pluralism (including cultural

pluralism), democracy, and the rule of law. It involves the rejection of dogmatism and absolutism, and affirms the standards set out in international human rights instruments.

1.4 Consistent with respect for human rights, the practice of tolerance does not mean toleration of social injustice or the abandonment or weakening of one's convictions. It means that one is free to adhere to one's own convictions while accepting that others adhere to theirs. It means accepting the fact that human beings, naturally diverse in their appearance, situation, speech, behavior, and values, have the right to live in peace and to be as they are. It also means that one's views are not to be imposed on others.



BAPS

The UAE government has taken action with respect to tolerance, showing that tolerance had been practiced in the country even before the declaration of the Year of Tolerance. Here, I would

like to mention the land gifted by H.H. Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed al Nahyan, the Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Deputy Supreme Commander of the UAE Armed Forces, for the first traditional Hindu stone temple in UAE, named BAPS Shri Swaminarayan Mandir (Temple), located near the Dubai–Abu Dhabi highway.

On February 10, 2018, BAPS (Bochasanwasi Akshar Purushottam Swaminarayan Sanstha) representatives met H.H. Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed al Nahyan and the Prime Minister of India Shri Narendra Modi at the Presidential Palace, where a memorandum of understanding was signed by India and the UAE. The next day, the foundation stone laying ceremony for the *mandir* took place. The temple is expected to be built by 2020; it would include the following: visitors' center, prayer halls, exhibitions, learning areas, a sports area for children, thematic gardens, food court, and book and gift shops.

A spokesman from the BAPS said to the news media, "The stones will be carved by temple artisans in India and assembled in the UAE. The

BAPS Swaminarayan Sanstha is both honoured and humbled to have been invited and entrusted to design, construct and manage the Temple by the rulers of the UAE and the Government of India."

He added, "It will facilitate the traditional practice of the Hindu faith and serve the over 3.3 million Indians residing in and the millions of international tourists annually visiting the UAE through interfaith dialogue, pluralism and universal human values. It will also nurture the children of today and future generations towards a brighter future."

The UAE government, as part of its Year of Tolerance program, allocated 13 more acres of land to BAPS Mandir in January 2019.

☆☆

Article 2 - State Level

2.1 Tolerance at the state level requires just and impartial legislation, law enforcement, and judicial and administrative processes. It also requires

that economic and social opportunities be made available to each person without any discrimination. Exclusion and marginalization can lead to frustration, hostility, and fanaticism.

2.2 To achieve a more tolerant society, states should ratify existing international human rights conventions, and where necessary, draft new legislation to ensure equality of treatment and of opportunity for all groups and individuals in society.

2.3 It is essential for international harmony that individuals, communities, and nations accept and respect the multicultural character of the human family. Without tolerance, there can be no peace, and without peace, there can be no development or democracy.

2.4 Intolerance may take the form of marginalization of vulnerable groups and their exclusion from social and political participation, as well as violence and discrimination against them. As

confirmed in the Declaration on Race and Racial Prejudice, “All individuals and groups have the right to be different” (Article 1.2).



Article 3 - Social Dimensions

3.1 In the modern world, tolerance is more essential than ever before. It is an age marked by the globalization of the economy and by rapidly increasing mobility, communication, integration and interdependence, large-scale migrations and displacement of populations, urbanization, and changing social patterns. As every part of the world is characterized by diversity, escalating intolerance and strife potentially menaces every region. It is not confined to any country but is a global threat.

3.2 Tolerance is necessary between individuals at the family and community levels. Tolerance promotion and the shaping of attitudes of openness, mutual listening, and solidarity should take

place in schools and universities and through non-formal education, at home and in the work-place. The communication media are in a position to play a constructive role in facilitating free and open dialogue and discussion, disseminating the values of tolerance, and highlighting the dangers of indifference toward the rise of intolerant groups and ideologies.

3.3 As affirmed by the UNESCO Declaration on Race and Racial Prejudice, measures must be taken to ensure equality in dignity and rights for individuals and groups wherever necessary. In this respect, particular attention should be paid to vulnerable groups that are socially or economically disadvantaged so as to afford them the protection of the laws and social measures in force, in particular with regard to housing, employment, and health; to respect the authenticity of their culture and values; and to facilitate their social and occupational advancement and integration, especially through education.

3.4 Appropriate scientific studies and networking should be undertaken to coordinate the interna-

tional community's response to this global challenge, including analysis by the social sciences of root causes and effective countermeasures, as well as research and monitoring in support of policy-making and standard-setting action by member states.

Mohammed Salah

Mohammed Salah is at the top level of the English football league system. The Premier League has always given their fans a lot to live it up and boast about their favorite player's records and goals. This year, the Premier League 2018, has made the world talk about Mohammed Salah, an Egyptian professional footballer who plays as a forward for the English club Liverpool and the Egyptian national team. The faith of Mohammed Salah and his mannerisms on the pitch, such as cupping hands in silent pre-kick-off prayer or prostrating after hitting the back of the net, became the headlines of different international media houses. His heart-winning attitude and gestures were also featured in BBC. Salah, who has 31 Premier

League goals for Liverpool in the 2018 season, along with his religion, has become the inspiration for some Liverpool fans to rewrite the lyrics to the 1996 hit *Good Enough* by Dodgy. The words of the chorus are adjusted to celebrate the feats of the Egyptian striker: “If he’s good enough for you, he’s good enough for me. If he scores another few, then I’ll be Muslim, too. If he’s good enough for you, he’s good enough for me. He’s sitting in the mosque, that’s where I wanna be.”

A video posted on Twitter with a group of Reds fans performing this song went viral, and tens of thousands of hits later, even non-Liverpool fans have put allegiances aside in praise of the video and its lyrics.

The National also wrote an article saying that the Egyptian superstar’s popularity has been praised by Muslim leaders for helping kick racism out of sport. On Sunday, April 22, 2018, the “Egyptian king” added the esteemed Professional Footballers’ Association Player of the Year award, conferred by his fellow players, to a host of acco-

lades that includes the 2017 African Footballer of the Year. The award is well-deserved after an astonishing season. In a BBC poll of December 2018, 76% of voters chose Salah as their player of the year.

However, success on the field is only half the story for Salah, who has unwittingly sparked a conversation within a sport that is no stranger to prejudice. In the 1970s and 1980s, football stadiums reverberated with racist chants aimed at black and minority players. In recent years, Islamophobia has proliferated in the UK, stoked by right-wing politicians, media commentators, and online trolls. It comes against a backdrop of rising hatred in football, with 282 incidences of abuse recorded in 2017 by football's Kick It Out campaign, or a rise of 59% on the previous season.

At the age of 25 years, Salah is already an impressive role model for youngsters across the world, not least in his small hometown of Nagrig, Egypt, where he is adored. Like many Muslim

footballers, including Manchester United's Paul Pogba and Leicester City's Riyad Mahrez, Salah is known for donating much of his salary to charitable projects in his home country. He might not be able to singlehandedly beat an apparent rise of Islamophobia on the terraces, nor has the focus on his faith rather than his footballing ability come at his beckoning, but there is little doubt his extraordinary talent is building bridges, not walls.

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Article 4 – Education

4.1 Education is the most effective means of preventing intolerance. The first step in tolerance education is to teach people what their shared rights and freedoms are, so that they may be respected. Then, the will to protect those of others could be promoted.

4.2 Education for tolerance should be considered an urgent imperative; it is necessary to promote systematic and rational tolerance teaching meth-

ods that will address the cultural, social, economic, political, and religious sources of intolerance: major roots of violence and exclusion. Education policies and programs should contribute to the development of understanding, solidarity, and tolerance among individuals as well as among ethnic, social, cultural, religious, and linguistic groups and nations.

4.3 Education for tolerance should aim at countering influences that lead to fear and the exclusion of others, and should help young people develop capacities for independent judgment, critical thinking, and ethical reasoning.

4.4 UNESCO pledges to support and implement programs of social science research and education for tolerance, human rights, and non-violence. This means devoting special attention to improving teacher training, curricula, the content of textbooks and lessons, and other educational materials, by including new educational technologies, with a view to educating caring and responsible citizens who are open to other cultures, able

to appreciate the value of freedom, respectful of human dignity and differences, and able to prevent conflicts or resolve them by non-violent means.

Dubai Cares

Dubai Cares is a charity whose mission is to increase children's access to quality primary education in 45 developing countries. This mission is accomplished through integrated programs that eliminate the underlying obstacles preventing children from going to school and learning. They build and renovate schools and classrooms; improve water facilities, sanitation, and hygiene; and provide school meals, early childhood education, teacher training, and curriculum development programs.

I deeply appreciate and thank them for their efforts, as they are continuously doing an outstanding job in the field of education, especially in many countries in Africa.

Dubai Cares in Malawi

Thank you, Dubai Cares, for helping the teenage girls in Malawi go back to school. School reenrollment rates have doubled in six months since Dubai Cares launched a pilot project to help teenage girls in Malawi. The charity's fund amounting to USD 490,000 was expanded across the region in October 2016, as part of a two-year education project by the UAE charity. The program is helping not only teenagers but also older women who have not finished their studies because of ill health, poverty, and so on. Dubai Cares funds a local NGO, Engaging Communities and Schools in Support of Adolescent Girls in Malawi.

"The launch of two Early Childhood Development (ECD) programs by Dubai Cares in Tanzania and Zanzibar could change the face of the country's education system," says Cecilia Baldeh, chief of education at the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) in Tanzania. Apart from funding, Dubai Cares encourages families to allow the pursuit of education.

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Article 5 - Commitment to Action

UNESCO commits to promoting tolerance and non-violence through programs and institutions in the fields of education, science, culture, and communication.

Festival of Sacrifice

Eid Al Adha, also called the Festival of Sacrifice, is the second of two Islamic holidays celebrated worldwide each year (the other being *Eid al-Fitr* right after the holy month of Ramadan), and is considered the holier of the two. According to the *Arabian Business*, more than 1,200 prisoners, from different countries and different religions, in Dubai and Abu Dhabi are being released ahead of *Eid Al Adha* in 2018.

Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, ordered the release of 547 prisoners from Dubai's correctional and punitive establishments.

His order came a day after UAE President Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan ordered the release

of 704 prisoners who had been sentenced to jail terms for a variety of offences, state news agency WAM reported.

Essam Issa Al Humaidan, Attorney General of Dubai, said the decision to pardon inmates is aimed at offering them a fresh start in life and ease their families' suffering, as well as helping the prisoners reintegrate into the community.



Article 6 - International Day for Tolerance

To generate public awareness, emphasize the dangers of intolerance, and react with renewed commitment and action in support of tolerance promotion and education, UNESCO solemnly proclaims November 16 as the annual International Day for Tolerance.



4. How can Intolerance be Countered?

Tolerance vs. Acceptance

People often mix up the words tolerance, acceptance, and understanding. I found an article in *Psychology Today*, posted on February 25, 2014, that I would like to share with my dear readers. I feel this article will work in a better way to enlighten the topic. It compares the concepts of tolerance and acceptance, and then considers them in relation to understanding.

Tolerance is a fair, objective, and permissive attitude toward those whose opinions, practices, race, religion, nationality, etc., differ from one's own; that is, freedom from bigotry.

Acceptance in human psychology is a person's assent to the reality of a situation, recognizing a process or condition (often a negative or uncomfortable situation) without attempting to change, protest, or exit it.

Tolerance is a virtue. It is a version of the golden rule in that, insofar as we want others to treat us decently, we need to treat them decently as well. It is also a pragmatic formula for the functioning of society, as we can see in the omnipresent wars between different religions, political ideologies, nationalities, ethnic groups, or other us-versus-them divisions. It is a basis for the First Amendment protections that enabled the U.S. to avoid the religious strife that plagued Europe for centuries. (It is a reason to be skeptical of slogans such as "Zero Tolerance.")

Acceptance goes a step beyond tolerance. If a sign of tolerance is a feeling of "I can live with X (behavior, religion, race, culture, etc.)," then acceptance moves beyond that in the direction of "X is OK." You can tolerate something without accepting it, but you cannot accept something without tolerating it.

For example, when a son or daughter tells a parent about an unwelcome career choice, or marital partner, he or she wants that information not only to be tolerated but to be accepted.

Moving beyond tolerance and acceptance, we come to a third concept: understanding. Here is Wikipedia's shortened definition: "Understanding is a psychological process related to an abstract or physical object, such as a person, situation, or message whereby one is able to think about it and use concepts to deal adequately with that object."

Here is the problem. It is possible to tolerate or accept someone without understanding him or her; and the same goes for tolerating or accepting

a different culture. The converse is also true. It is also possible to understand a culture or a person without acceptance, or even tolerance—think, for example, of undercover spies.

It is good to know that some people are impressively free from prejudice against those with whom they have had little or no contact (or even abstract knowledge), as part of a live-and-let-live attitude toward life.

Tolerance and/or acceptance are desirable, but they are not a substitute for understanding. They are relevant for getting along with others in the world (although understanding helps), but understanding is essential for the social and behavioral sciences.



UNESCO's strategies and actions to promote tolerance are worth mentioning here.

Along with outright injustice and violence, discrimination and marginalization are common

forms of intolerance. Education for tolerance should aim at countering influences that lead to fear and the exclusion of others, and should help young people develop capacities for independent judgment, critical thinking, and ethical reasoning. The diversity of our world in terms of religion, language, culture, and ethnicity is not a pretext for conflict but is a treasure that enriches us all.

1. Fighting Intolerance Requires Law

Each government is responsible for enforcing human rights laws, as well as for banning and punishing hate crimes and discrimination against minorities, whether these are committed by state officials, private organizations, or individuals. The state must also ensure equal access to courts, human rights commissioners, or ombudsmen, so that people do not take justice into their own hands and resort to violence to settle their disputes.

Ban on Cow Slaughter

With much grief, here, I write about the complications people are facing in India, as perhaps no

issue today is more nationally divisive than that of cow slaughter. The majority of the community wants to have the cow declared the national animal and a countrywide ban on the killing of all cows imposed. In Hinduism, the cow is sacred, deeply respected. According to Hindu belief, the cow is a maternal figure; hence, Hindus are strictly against the slaughtering of cows, calling themselves *gaurakshak* (cow protectors).

According to the *Times of India*, only eight of India's 29 states permit the slaughter of cows. Although India's top court rejected a petition seeking a nationwide ban on cow slaughter, people still face violence regarding the same. Some states have, in recent years, pushed for tougher penalties, including 10-year jail terms for those convicted of cow slaughter or possession or consumption of beef. The banning of beef is troublesome for poor people as goat and other meats are far more expensive than beef.

The *Times of India* reports that on March 29, 2017, Raman Singh, the chief minister of Chhattisgarh

(a state in India), stated that anyone found killing cows in Chhattisgarh would be hanged.

Do you understand the extremism in the order? The state of Gujarat, meanwhile, has adopted the toughest law against cow slaughter in the country: the crime is punishable by 14 years of jail and carries a provisional fine of up to USD 7,757 and not less than USD 1,550.

Reading an article in the *Guardian* published on July 20, 2018, I noted the clear rising tide of hate surging through India, and of toxic speech and attacks on religious minorities, mostly Muslims. On Tuesday, July 17, 2018, the supreme court of India condemned the epidemic of mob lynching in India, and asked the Indian parliament to draft legislation that would stop people from taking the law into their own hands.

Within hours of the judgment, in the provincial state of Jharkhand, Swami Agnivesh, a spiritual leader and former minister known for promoting communal harmony in the country, was brutally

attacked. The assailants were allegedly members of the youth wing of the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), the party of the prime minister, Narendra Modi.

It is worth mentioning here that Swami Agnivesh is the winner of the 2004 Alternative Nobel Peace Prize (the Right Livelihood Award). At the young age of 28 years, he abandoned a promising career as a professor of law and management in Kolkata for a life of activism. Born into a South Indian family, he shed his name, caste, religion, family, and all his belongings and property to adopt the life of a "Swami" or renunciate, and began his life's crusade for social justice and compassion. The term "Swami" is misused and misunderstood. It denotes, as with Christian or Buddhist monks and renunciates, one who gives up all his individual, social, and birth-based identities and belongings to serve humanity and pursue spiritual truth. In 1994, Swami Agnivesh was appointed the Chairperson of the UN Trust Fund on Contemporary Forms of Slavery. He is better known across the globe in general and in India in

particular for his campaigns against bonded labor and is founder-chairperson of the Bandhua Mukti Morcha (Bonded Labor Liberation Front).

Most Indians see the 78-year-old Agnivesh as an elegant and soft-spoken seer in saffron robes, his head wrapped in a turban; yet on July 17, 2018, Tuesday afternoon, the Swami was kicked and punched by young men chanting, "Jai shree Ram" (victory to Lord Ram): his bare head on the ground, his turban flung at a distance as he pleaded with them to show mercy.

In an interview with a news agency, Chandreshwar Prasad Singh, a minister from the same BJP-ruled state, justified the attack and said, "He talks against Hindus, makes anti-national comments, supports Kashmiri separatists and Naxals." Singh speaks the language of the mob, a mob that has been given the responsibility of creating a new order in India, where the minority who speaks on their behalf is attacked with impunity.

Inhuman Act

Barely a month prior, in the city of Hapur, an hour's drive from the capital, Delhi, two Muslim men were attacked on the street while police stood by guarding the mob. One of the two was kicked and dragged along as he lay unconscious and later died of his injuries. The other, an elderly man, was pulled by his beard and dragged through a field, blood dripping from his face as he begged for mercy while they kept thrashing him with wooden planks. The emboldened crowd recorded a video of this inhuman act and shared it across WhatsApp and social media, a common practice associated with these acts of mob violence.



New Zealand to Slaughter Cows

Moving forward with the same topic, I would like to address here a very ambitious plan announced by the politicians and industry leaders in New Zealand to slaughter about 150,000 cows. What is contradictory here is that there are many people

who oppose the slaughtering whereas there are still many who understand the importance of slaughtering cows.

New Zealand is home to some 10 million cows, about double its human population. Per news on May 28, 2018 on *The Independent*, NZ was attempting to eradicate a strain of disease-causing bacteria from the national herd. Officials said it will cost hundreds of millions of dollars, and, if successful, would be the first time an infected country eliminates *Mycoplasma bovis*, which mainly affects cattle and has little effect on other production animals.

Found in Europe and the U.S., Mycoplasma bovis causes a constellation of diseases, including mastitis in dairy cows, arthritis in cows and calves, and pneumonia in calves. They are not considered a threat to food safety but do cause production losses to farms. Farming is vital to the economy in New Zealand, whose isolation has helped protect it from some diseases that affect herds elsewhere. Last July, *Mycoplasma bovis* was found in the country for the first time.

Officials planned to kill all cows on any farms where the bacteria are found, even if some of the animals are healthy. They had the legal authority to enter farms forcibly and kill animals even in cases where a farmer might resist, but they said they hope they do not have to use those powers. They said many of the cows would be slaughtered at processing plants and used for beef, but some cows would have to be killed and buried on the farms or dumped in approved landfills.

About 24,000 cows have already been killed in recent months and at least 128,000 more will have to be culled, most over the next year or two.

Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern said she believes it is still possible to eradicate *Mycoplasma bovis*. “We don’t know, in the long term, what impact it could collectively have on an industry that is incredibly important to New Zealand’s economy,” she said. “So if we have an opportunity to be the country that eradicates this disease, then we’ll take it.”

All I can say here is the phenomena in this world are set to balance things; excess of anything is bad.

☆ ☆

2. Fighting Intolerance Requires Education

Laws are necessary but not sufficient for countering intolerance in individual attitudes. Intolerance is often rooted in ignorance and fear: fear of the unknown, of the other, other cultures, nations, religions. Intolerance is also closely linked to an exaggerated sense of self-worth and pride, whether personal, national, or religious. These notions are taught and learned at an early age. Therefore, greater emphasis needs to be placed on educating more and better. Greater efforts need to be made to teach children about tolerance and human rights, about other ways of life. Children should be encouraged at home and in school to be open-minded and curious.

"Education is the most powerful weapon in the fight against poverty."

- Nelson Mandela

Education is a life-long experience and does not begin or end in school. Endeavors to build tolerance through education will not succeed unless they reach all age groups, and take place everywhere: at home, in schools, in the workplace, in law-enforcement and legal training, and not least in entertainment and on the information highways.



Fighting Hate

Civil rights lawyers Morris Dees and Joseph Levin, Jr. founded the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC) in 1971 to ensure that the promise of the civil rights movement became a reality

for all. The SPLC is dedicated to fighting hate and bigotry and to seeking justice for the most vulnerable members of society. Using litigation, education, and other forms of advocacy, the SPLC works toward the day when the ideals of equal justice and opportunity are a reality.

SPLC's lawsuits have toppled institutional racism and stamped out remnants of Jim Crow segregation; destroyed some of the nation's most violent white supremacist groups; and protected the civil rights of children, women, persons with disabilities, immigrants and migrant workers, the LGBT community, prisoners, and many others who faced discrimination, abuse, or exploitation.

Their Intelligence Project is internationally known for tracking and exposing the activities of hate groups and other domestic extremists.

Their Teaching Tolerance program produces and distributes free of charge anti-bias documentary films, books, lesson plans, and other materials that reduce prejudice and promote educational equity in American schools.

A project of the SPLC, Teaching Tolerance was founded in 1991 to prevent the growth of hate. SPLC began by publishing *Teaching Tolerance* magazine and producing films chronicling the modern civil rights movement. Today, their community includes more than 500,000 educators who read their magazine, screen their films, visit their website, participate in Mix It Up at Lunch Day, use their curriculum, or participate in their social media community.

Teaching Tolerance's materials have won two Oscars, an Emmy, and scores of honors. The project has been named a "Friend of the UN," recognized by the Desmond Tutu Peace Foundation, and selected by President Clinton's Initiative on Race as one of the nation's "Promising Practices" to eradicate racism.

They view tolerance as a way of thinking and feeling—but most importantly, of acting—that gives us peace in our individuality, respect for those unlike us, the wisdom to discern humane values, and the courage to act upon them.

Their mission is to help teachers and schools educate children and the youth to be active participants in a diverse democracy.

Teaching Tolerance provides free resources to educators—teachers, administrators, counselors, and other practitioners—who work with children from kindergarten through high school. Educators use the program's materials to supplement the curriculum, inform their practice, and create civil and inclusive school communities where children are respected, valued, and welcome participants. The program emphasizes social justice and anti-bias. The anti-bias approach encourages children and young people to challenge prejudice and learn how to be agents of change in their own lives. Their Social Justice Standards show how anti-bias education works through the four domains of identity, diversity, justice, and action.

Tolerance Levels Rise with Levels of Right to Education

An article on tolerance levels and education was published by the World Economic Forum (WEF)

in December 2016, which I feel is necessary to share with my dear readers. It's often said that a person's tolerance rises with their education level. On this basis, the higher a person's educational attainment is, the more likely they are to accept racial or ethnic minorities.

Studies often show that young people are also more welcoming in their attitudes to outsiders. This is thought to be largely because they have higher levels of education than older age groups.

As such, you would expect that society as a whole becomes ever more tolerant and enlightened as new, better educated generations steadily replace older, less educated ones.

After going through the WEF papers, I feel like this is a debatable topic. In WEF research, which is currently under review, while younger people may have become increasingly tolerant of racial and cultural diversity, they are growing less positive about immigrants.

Declining Tolerance

Education is said to make people more tolerant by enhancing their knowledge and reasoning skills. These help people see through prejudiced claims and dismiss irrational fears about those who are culturally different.

Schools and universities also enhance tolerance by emphasizing it as a virtue. The longer individuals stay in the education system, the more they are exposed to tolerance as a "core value," and the more likely they are to internalize it.

Some scholars have argued that education brings many extra benefits for society and that we can never have enough of it.

Nonetheless, intolerant notions across all age groups persist. In the 1990s and 2000s, there was a steady growth in the number of people in Britain who believe that it is right for employers to discriminate against immigrants when recruiting new staff.

This trend has continued into more recent times, with figures showing a huge decline in the number of people who believe legal immigrants in Britain should have the same rights as British citizens.

The figures also show that in 2013, only a small minority of people still believe that legal immigrants should be treated equally.

Educational Advantage?

It seems that the more educated British society has become, the lower the levels of acceptance toward immigrants. Strange as this may seem, the reason for this may also be in part due to an increased level of education across society.

Education does not only enhance knowledge and foster tolerance as a virtue but also gives people a competitive edge and access to higher social positions. Thus, people with the highest education levels feel more secure and less exposed to competition from people "coming to take their jobs."

But what the highly educated gain, the people with middling and low levels of education lose. The value of their qualifications is diminished when all others in society become more educated and "out-compete" them in the struggle for desirable jobs.

This loss of status produces feelings of economic insecurity, which may translate into more defensive and intolerant attitudes toward "out-groups."

Not a Cure-All

Thus, while higher levels of education may be good for some individuals in terms of making them more tolerant, there may not be any benefits for society at large because of the "trade-off" created by the process of educational expansion.

This effect, sometimes referred to as the positional effect of education, may explain why a positive relationship between education and tolerance does not always occur in society as a whole.

Another possibility is that other social forces have a stronger effect on attitudes toward immi-

grants than education. Along with the new wave of negativity toward migrants, the remarkable return of nationalism, for instance, is something that cannot be ignored. Mainstream parties have now adopted some of the nationalist rhetoric and proposed policies of populist anti-immigrant parties.

This trend has led to more restrictive immigration regimes in a number of Western countries and a discourse more generally of protecting and privileging the ethnic majority.

In such an environment, the taboo of expressing negative sentiments toward those who are culturally different, especially immigrants, has undoubtedly weakened. This serves as a stark reminder that educational expansion is not the panacea to all of society's problems.

3. Fighting Intolerance Requires Access to Information

Intolerance is most dangerous when it is exploited to fulfill the political and territorial ambitions

of an individual or groups of individuals. Hatemongers often begin by identifying the public's tolerance threshold. They then develop fallacious arguments, lie with statistics, and manipulate public opinion with misinformation and prejudice. The most efficient way to limit the influence of hatemongers is to develop policies that generate and promote press freedom and press pluralism, to allow the public to differentiate between facts and opinions.

"Laws alone cannot secure freedom of expression; in order that every man [can] present his views without penalty, there must be spirit of tolerance in the entire population."

- Albert Einstein

4. Fighting Intolerance Requires Individual Awareness

Intolerance in a society is the sum total of the intolerance of its individual members. Bigotry,

stereotyping, stigmatizing, insults, and racial jokes are examples of individual expressions of intolerance to which some people are subjected daily. Intolerance breeds intolerance. It leaves its victims in pursuit of revenge. To fight intolerance, individuals should become aware of the link between their behavior and the vicious cycle of mistrust and violence in society. Each one of us should begin by asking the following: Am I a tolerant person? Do I stereotype people? Do I reject those who are different from me? Do I blame my problems on "them"?



Human Trafficking

Human trafficking is the fastest-growing crime in the world. According to the International Labour Organization (ILO) report from 2014, it is a USD 150 billion industry, with millions of people estimated to be bought and sold every year.

The reality is that it is impossible to know exactly how many people fall victim to this crime across

the world. Human trafficking and modern slavery networks are highly organized, powered by technologies, and completely clandestine.

Therefore, if we are ever to defeat these crimes, we need to shed some light on how and where they are taking place. Moreover, we need to generate systemic disruption on a global scale to not only disrupt trafficking networks but also predict and prevent them.

We need to harness the power of such networks, being more innovative and creative in our solutions, and thereby build resistance to human trafficking and modern slavery throughout the world.



STOP APP

To end modern slavery and human trafficking, we can all work together. Just download the STOP APP. The STOP APP is the first of its kind in combining community empowerment, big data management, and anti-trafficking expertise to

disrupt, combat, and prevent this global issue. This groundbreaking app can be downloaded on smartphones around the world, and it will allow individuals to report what they have seen and what they know about human trafficking, whether it is in their communities or elsewhere. If you see or hear anything that you believe to be linked to these crimes, capture the incident, and report it using the app. The STOP APP empowers every person with a smartphone in their hand and equips them to take action. Together, we can shed light on modern slavery and human trafficking and stop them.



Since 2011, CNN has been taking vital steps to amplify the voices of the victims of modern-day slavery by highlighting success stories, holding governments and businesses accountable, and helping unravel the tangle of criminal enterprises trading in human lives.

Here's What you can do Right now to Fight Modern Slavery

Right now, there are approximately 40 million slaves in the world, including 10 million children. Faced with these harrowing statistics, it's easy to think that there is nothing ordinary people can do about it. But that is not the case.

CNN asked the anti-trafficking community what we can all do to help end modern-day slavery; the responses were many and varied. Here are some things you can start doing right now to make a difference.

Learn and Educate

First, you can educate yourself about the problem and then spread the word. Anti-trafficking organizations have highlighted the wealth of online material on the subject.

Take a Stand

Once you are well informed, charities have suggested holding governments and businesses worldwide accountable.

Remember the Survivors

Don't forget to listen to the survivors themselves. You can help by providing jobs for victims of modern-day slavery, or helping others provide them with a safe haven.

Lake Volta

On March 2, 2019, while watching CNN, I saw a headline that said around 20,000 child slaves risk their lives on Ghana's Lake Volta. The lake, only created in 1965, is considered as the largest artificially made lake by surface area in the world. I tried to do more research about this on the internet and came across an exclusive report titled "Child slaves risk their lives on Ghana's Lake Volta," published by CNN.

Sold by their parents, around 20,000 children work on the lake, enslaved by the fishermen they call "master."

Dawn breaks over the water. Adam leads a column of five other boys through the high, gold-

en grass to the softly lapping edge of Lake Volta in Ghana's central region. The group of boys will spend the better part of the day fishing under a hot equatorial sun.

They've come from different towns, at different times, but they all have one thing in common. Each one of them was bought by the same fisherman to come and work as his slave.

Enslaved on the Lake

"Every morning we wake up and we go to the lake, we paddle, remove the nets," says Adam. "Then we come back, remove the fish, prepare the nets for the next casting and around 4 pm, we go back to cast the net."

Adam doesn't know his own age, but appears to be about 12 years old. He estimates he's worked for Samuel, the man he calls "master," for around three years. "I don't want to be here," says Adam. "I want to go to school, but I'm forced to be here."

Adam is just one of 20,000 children on Lake Volta who the International Labour Organization reports are working for slave masters.

Most of the children come to the lake from hundreds of miles away. They are sold by their desperately poor parents to human traffickers, sometimes for as little as USD 250, which in this area is what it would cost to purchase a cow.

CNN joined Adam and five other enslaved children working for Samuel, to witness what a typical day on the lake looks like for them. It started in the pre-dawn hours. The young crew loaded the gear onto a wooden boat and pushed off into the water.

By 9 am, they had spent several hours on the boat. At one point, there was a shout from Samuel. Adam's head lowered. He took off his shirt and swung his legs over the gunwale of the boat, disappearing under the surface of the dark brown, murky water.

"When he says you should dive, you have no option. The fearful part is that you might not come back," Adam says. "That's what I fear most. You can be stuck down there and never come up. That's why I'm so scared and don't want to work on the lake anymore."

For children like Adam, diving under the water to untangle fishing nets caught on submerged tree branches is incredibly dangerous. And it's one of the reasons adults use children on the lake. Their smaller frames and nimble fingers allow them to free the nets more easily.

Of course, there are other reasons as well: since they are smaller than adults, they take up less room on the boats and can be dominated physically by their masters. This, in turn, means there isn't much of a fight when they don't get paid for their work, which is always.

"Some people might think because the lake is so big, it would be difficult to find them (child slaves). But it's not, and that's the heartbreaking thing," says George Achibra, Jr., projects coordi-

nator for the Partners in Community Development Programme (PACODEP), an NGO that works to rescue the child slaves.

Achibra says, in their experience, it's nearly impossible to reunite the children with their families, because the parents are the ones who sold them in the first place. Extreme poverty often forced parents into a ghastly choice: whether to sell one child to traffickers, to provide money for their other children to eat.

"We've realized that when we rescue these children and give them back to their family, they don't really take care of them, but end up re-trafficking them," he says. It was through Achibra, PACODEP, and the Polish-based Kulczyk Foundation, which supports them, that CNN met Adam.

Of the 1,621 households surveyed in and around Lake Volta, over a third contained a victim of child trafficking, or slavery-like conditions (Source: Free the Slaves).

Negotiating Freedom

Achibra and an armed local police officer he's brought with him explain to Samuel how they would feed his own family if he turned over the children to them. However, he has only two options. The first is to release the boys peacefully. The second is to resist. But to do so means he would be arrested and go to jail, while the boys are removed forcibly from his custody.

"If you are taking him off the lake... he can't go for trafficked children anymore" said George Achibra, Jr.

The ultimatum works, as it often does in cases like this.

Samuel agrees to release all six boys, but with a condition. He will turn over two boys immediately, including Adam. He also promises to release the other four boys in the following days, once they've finished off a bit more work.

As part of the discussion, Achibra had offered to help Samuel develop an irrigation system around his home so he can focus on farming, rather than fishing.

“I think this is the best way,” says Achibra. “Because if we give him anything like money or nets, it means we are encouraging him to go for more children. But if you are taking him off the lake into grounds work, it means he can’t go for trafficked children anymore.”

Outsiders might think Achibra could grow frustrated going to the lake before dawn, day after day, meeting with the traffickers individually and then negotiating for the release of just a handful of boys, especially given the thousands of children trapped in slavery here.

But Achibra sees it differently. “There are 78 boys that we help today. That is just a drop in the ocean, a blip on the lake, but for those 78 boys, it means everything,” he says.



5. Fighting Intolerance Requires Local Solutions

Many people know that tomorrow's problems will be increasingly global, but few realize that solutions to global problems are mainly local, even individual. When confronted with an escalation of intolerance around us, we must not wait for governments and institutions to act alone. We are all part of the solution. We should not feel powerless, for we actually possess an enormous capacity to wield power. Non-violent action is a way of using that power: the power of the people. The tools of non-violent action are available to all those who want to put an end to intolerance, violence, and hatred: putting a group together to confront a problem, organize a grassroots network, demonstrate solidarity with victims of intolerance, and discredit hateful propaganda.

Be happy for this moment.
This moment is your life.

- Omar Khayyam

King Philippe of Belgium Shared Iftar

On Monday, June 12, 2017, the headlines of Belgian media stated that King Philippe of Belgium shared *Iftar* (the fast-breaking meal eaten by Muslims after sunset during Ramadan) with a Muslim family in the city of Ghent. The media published the king's pictures while saluting the family members and eating Moroccan meals with them.

According to Belgian media, the king wanted to partake in a Ramadan meal. The king chose a regular family, the Benhaddous, who live in Evergem near Ghent, the Dutch-speaking region of Belgium.

Khalid Benhaddou, one of the eight sons in the family, said, "This is a very honorable event for which we are very grateful." King Philippe joined three generations of the family for the event, which Benhaddou views as a sign of coexistence and commitment.

The king took his time to meet all the family members and hear them explain the meaning of Ramadan. The conversation also touched on the various social challenges facing the Muslim community in Belgium.

This is the beauty of humanity; irrespective of religion, caste, and background, one can share the best time together, promoting peace and love.



5. Role of Religion and Faith-based Organizations

On January 23, 2017, during the third annual symposium on The Role of Religion and Faith-Based Organizations in International Affairs at the UN Headquarters in New York, the UN officially mandated the fight against genocide (or the intentional action to destroy people, usually defined as an ethnic, national, racial, or religious group). The UN highlighted the issue, saying that religious leaders and faith-based organizations have a responsibility to contribute to peaceful

societies, and that the international community must support these grassroots peacemakers in their daily activities.

Addressing the symposium, Adama Dieng, the UN Special Advisor for Genocide Prevention and the Responsibility to Protect, said that religious leaders "have a responsibility to contribute to the building of peaceful, inclusive and cohesive societies that are resilient to conflict, violent extremism and atrocity crimes." He added that religious leaders "provide support during emergencies, respond to the needs of marginalized communities, as well as address grievances as soon as they emerge and advocate for the rights of their communities."



Inter-Religious Organisation, Singapore

The Inter-Religious Organisation, Singapore (IRO) was officially launched on March 18, 1949. Since its humble beginning, IRO has worked

quietly to promote peace and religious harmony in Singapore.

The idea for establishing IRO sparked when Maulana Abdul Aleem Siddiqui, a well-known Muslim missionary, visited Singapore in 1949 and received an interfaith reception. Sir Malcolm Macdonald, then the British Commissioner General for Southeast Asia, helped propel this vision into reality.

With the passage of time, IRO organized and participated in many local and international forums to learn more about what is being done in the region to promote religious harmony. It networked with organizations such as the World Council on Religion and Peace and the Asian Council on Religion and Peace.

Today, ten major religions are represented in the IRO. IRO organizes events such as offered prayers for the victims of the 9/11 terrorist attack in the U.S., prayers for the Bali bombing victims, prayers for peace in Iraq and other countries

afflicted by war, and prayers for victims of natural disasters, such as the earthquakes in India and China and the cyclone in Myanmar. IRO has published several books, including Religions in Singapore and Religious Customs and Practices in Singapore.



Institute for Religious Tolerance, Peace and Justice (IRTPJ)

IRTPJ, founded in 2011, is a non-profit organization, incorporated in California under state and federal non-profit laws. They work with the mission to promote religious tolerance, interfaith dialogue, and education about religions of the world as a pathway to world peace. By promoting interfaith dialogue and universal respect for different faiths, the Institute seeks to minimize the conflicts that are shaped by religion and people who employ religion as their excuse.

They educate the public through a variety of methods on the diversity of religious beliefs

worldwide in an attempt to combat religious oppression, intolerance, and violence. Some of the programs conducted by IRTPJ are as follows: panel discussions and public lectures, interfaith solidarity marches, Interfaith Ambassadors Program, The Religion Matters Show, and Our Muslim Neighbors Forum.

Employing strategically interwoven programs, IRTPJ implements interfaith education and collaboration to promote cross-cultural understanding and realize universal religious tolerance.

IRTPJ highlights the commonalities shared by people as a stepping stone to the peacemaking process. By tackling religious intolerance as the root problem of many of our modern difficulties, we will be better able to handle them.



Intolerance on the Rise

A diverse country, India is home to many expats from the Gulf. I myself have had a wonderful

experience visiting there, but issues like people clamoring for intolerance have upset me greatly. On June 13, 2017, I was reading the *Times of India*, and a news title got my attention: "Intolerance on the rise, defend the spirit of Constitution." After reading further, I learned that 65 former bureaucrats in India, who had worked with central and state governments for decades, wrote an open letter stating that they decided to speak out in view of "a sense of deep disquiet at what has been happening in India," claiming no political affiliation. They issued a direct appeal to public authorities and constitutional bodies to take corrective action to defend the spirit of the constitution.

The former officers lamented a "growing climate of religious intolerance that is aimed primarily at Muslims," tracing it to the prime minister's controversial remarks on "burial grounds and cremation grounds" and power supply outages during religious festivals in different communities. The letter also pointed out that banning slaughterhouses targets the livelihoods of minorities besides breeding communal violence.

I know it is hard to be patient; I can only wish to lessen intolerance not only in India but worldwide.

Charter for Compassion

While doing my research on global activities toward tolerance, I came across Charter for Compassion. On February 28, 2008, acclaimed scholar and bestselling author Karen Armstrong received the TED Prize and made a wish: to help create, launch, and propagate a Charter for Compassion. After much work and the contribution of thousands of people, the Charter was unveiled to the world on November 12, 2009, with the vision of a world where everyone is committed to living by the principle of compassion.

The organization, Charter for Compassion, was created by Karen Armstrong with the Council of Conscience in 2009. It inherits a confluence of contributions made by TED.com, Compassionate Action Network, Fetzer Institute, and many others. Charter for Compassion provides an

umbrella for people to engage in collaborative partnerships worldwide.

Aware that our world is deeply troubled and polarized, the Charter for Compassion is committed to making the world a better place. They work to establish and sustain cultures of compassion locally and globally through diverse sectors: arts, business, education, the environment, health care, interfaith communities, peace, restorative justice, science and research, social justice, social services, science and research, and women and girls. At the heart of their work is working with cities to identify issues of concern that make communities uncomfortable places in which to live.

Charter for Compassion supplies resources, information, and communication platforms to help create and support compassionate communities, institutions, and networks of all types that are dedicated to becoming compassionate presences in the world. They believe that a compassionate world is a peaceful world, and that a compassion-

ate world is possible when every man, woman, and child treats others as they wish to be treated: with dignity, equity, and respect.



Genocide of Myanmar's Muslims

On September 4, 2017, tens of thousands of people gathered in the streets in the capital of Chechnya to protest the "genocide of Muslims" in Myanmar. More than 400 people were killed in the week prior during clashes between the Rohingya Muslim minority and Myanmar's military.

According to the news posted by the *Guardian* on September 5, 2017, the United Nations Secretary-General, António Guterres, appealed to Myanmar to end the violence that forced more than 120,000 Rohingya people to flee in the preceding two weeks, which he warned was "creating a situation that could destabilize the region."

The unrest raised fears of a humanitarian crisis in overstretched border camps; another 400,000 of

the Muslim ethnic minority were estimated to be trapped in conflict zones in western Myanmar as more “clearance operations” by security forces in Rakhine State began in the previous month.

Malala Yousafzai, the youngest person to win the Nobel Peace Prize, also urged Myanmar’s leader, a fellow Nobel laureate, Aung San Suu Kyi, to condemn the violence against the Rohingya minority.

During the annual UN Human Rights Council held in Geneva in 2017, Zeid Ra’ad Al Hussein, the top UN human rights official, denounced the “brutal security operation” against the Rohingya. Zeid said, “I call on the government to end its current cruel military operation, with accountability for all violations that have occurred, and to reverse the pattern of severe and widespread discrimination against the Rohingya population. The situation seems a textbook example of ethnic cleansing.”



House of Worship

Armed with an AR-15-style assault rifle and at least three handguns, a man shouting anti-Semitic slurs opened fire inside a Pittsburgh synagogue (a Jewish house of worship) on October 27, 2018, killing at least 11 congregants and wounding four police officers and two others. As Pittsburgh reeled from a tragic weekend, a Muslim-led effort began a crowdfunding campaign to raise money for the victims of the synagogue shooting.

Posted on LaunchGood, a global crowdfunding platform to support Muslims launching good across the world by helping them raise funds for their campaigns, the effort aimed to help support the short-term needs of victims and their families by raising money for medical bills, funeral costs, and other expenses after a gunman stormed services at Pittsburgh's Tree of Life Synagogue, before being captured by police.

The charity drive was a success, with organizers claiming to have raised an average of USD 2,000 per hour since the launch of the effort. Within six hours, the campaign had already reached its

initial goal of USD 25,000. In less than 24 hours, it had broken USD 50,000.

Two Muslim-led non-profit organizations, Celebrate Mercy and MPower Change, organized the drive, in partnership with the Islamic Center of Pittsburgh and the Tree of Life Synagogue, which worked together to distribute the funds to victims and their families. Tarek El-Messidi, the founding director of Celebrate Mercy, said the effort as part of his group's larger belief in responding to hatred with acts of goodness.

"We recognize that the money can't bring back loved ones that [families] have lost so tragically, nor can it physically heal any of the wounds," El-Messidi told *TIME*. "But we do hope the money can in some way lift their spirits, lift the burdens of funeral expenses and medical costs."

"I like the religion that teaches
liberty, equality and fraternity."

- B. R. Ambedkar

Al-Aqsa Mosque

On July 14, 2017, following a shoot-out around Al Haram Al Sharif, Israeli-occupied authorities (IOA) closed off the holy shrine of Al-Aqsa and prevented Muslims from performing Friday prayers there for the first time since the occupation of Jerusalem. Two days later, on July 16, 2017, the occupation reopened the holy site, but the Muslim worshippers were outraged when they found out that they had to enter their holy shrine through metal detectors.

According to various media sources, the e-gate installation was done to tighten search and inspection procedures for all Palestinians wishing to enter the mosque. IOA took the keys of the Asbat gate to facilitate entry of its cars into the courtyards of Al-Aqsa and refused to return them to the Jordanian Awqaf (endowments).

According to the Palestine Red Crescent Society, 18 Palestinians sustained injuries. Four Palestinians were also arrested. The report further said that Israeli forces conducted inspections inside

the mosque, inflicting damage on the place. They broke the locks of the drawers and safes under the pretext of inspecting the mosque.

The Arab League condemned the Israeli authorities' use of violence and other arbitrary measures against the Palestinian residents of occupied Jerusalem, especially in the vicinity of Al-Aqsa Mosque.

The Arab League Secretary-General, Ahmed Aboul Gheit, called on the Israeli authorities to cease all practices and procedures immediately and respect fully the sanctity of Al-Aqsa Mosque.

It causes me deep sorrow to see such a holy place turned into a battlefield.



About the Author

Dr. Rashid Alleem is ranked third among the 25 most influential CEOs in the Gulf Cooperation Council by the ITP Media Group and is considered one of the 100 most influential CEOs in the Middle East. Recently, the Academic College of Oxford, UK, honored Dr. Alleem with the title of Honorary Professor. He is a passionate writer, an environmentalist, a sought-after thought leader, the creator of CRITRAL Thinking (a portmanteau of "critical and lateral" thinking), and an internationally respected transformational leader. The founder of Alleem Knowledge Center, Dr. Alleem is a dynamic leader who has worked with prestigious governmental, semi-governmental, and non-profit organizations. He is also an entrepreneur. Dr. Alleem was recognized as

“The Knowledge Ambassador of the UAE” by His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, the Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and ruler of the Emirate of Dubai, and as “Environmentalist of the Year 2012” by the fourth Prime Minister of Malaysia, Dr. Mahathir Bin Mohamad.

Dr. Alleem earned a Ph.D. from the University of Salford, in Manchester, UK. He has received five honorary doctorates from different universities and was recently recognized as The Global Green Ambassador by DMG. Under his leadership, SEWA received the Voluntary Cancellation Certificate for excellence in energy-saving and the reduction of CO2 emissions by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in 2017. He was bestowed with the Friend of Singapore Sustainability Award 2017 by the government of Singapore and became a member of the advisory board of the Singapore World Water Council. He has also been recognized as “The Ambassador of Peace & Happiness in the Arab World” by Voice of Kerala radio station.

As a highly sought-after keynote speaker, presenter, and teacher, Dr. Alleem is well-known for delivering compelling and practical messages to audiences of more than 200,000 people per year. He is also the author of several books on management and leadership. Among his works are *My Green Journey in Hamriyah; Sustainability: The Fourth Wave of Economy; I Am Committed: 17 Global Goals; Alleem Sustainable Development Goals; The SEWA way; The SEWA Customer Centric Model*, and *The SEWA Brand Turn Around*.

Contact Dr. Rashid Alleem at
rashid@alleem.com
alleemsdg.com

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