

CLAIMING THE RIGHT TO YOUR OPINION CAN BE A BLOCK TO LEARNING SO GIVE QUESTIONS NOT OPINIONS

If you think a person wants to waste your time by ending your chat with I have a right to my opinion then make sure you ask them questions so that they see the contradiction in their thinking. People are less defensive when they are asked to think.

Do not let yourself be bullied by people who go "I am entitled to my opinion." You have told them your belief and opinion fair and square and they come back defensive which is an attempt to get more honour and protection for their opinion at the expense of yours. They demand respect for their opinion - by which they mean it should not be disputed - while they dispute yours. They are saying, "I dispute your opinion that mine should be questioned. I am being unreasonable because an opinion means that which is open to dispute." They are trying to silence you as if their opinions are about them and not the world. Their opinions are not about them. People who think their opinions are about them are the ones who are trampling on the poor and oppressing others. Don't be an enabler of such horror. Mostly it is religious people who go "I am entitled to my opinion." That warns you about the dangers of religion.

Remember that the person who asserts their right to their opinion in an attempt to silence you is denying your right of freedom of speech. Yet they assert their freedom of speech in order to claim they have a right to their opinion. What about yours? They should be told what they are doing!

If some opinions are sacred and nobody must ever say they could be wrong then freedom of speech is nonsense. Those who use freedom of speech to curtail freedom of speech are hypocrites who do what they condemn in others. Who decides what opinions are sacred? Who decides how many of them are sacred?

Freedom of speech is far more important of a right than a right to opinion. There would be no opinions without communication. And an opinion must always be expressed in a spirit of, "I would like to be corrected if I'm wrong, but this is my opinion." That is what opinions are all about - trying to get the truth instead of trying to be a fundamentalist and encourage nonsense. The right to my opinion brigade does not know what an opinion is - a provisional position until further information comes.

You do not have the right to your opinion. You have the freedom to have your opinion but that is a different thing. It does not follow that because you are given the freedom to say things that you have the right to say them. You do not have the right to see a strange light in a cinema and then express the opinion to others that it could be a fire. The law will come down on you for that!

"I have a right to my opinion" is common.

It is not rude to ask the person who says it, "And on what grounds do you think you have the right to hold this opinion?" They invited the question whether they care to admit it or not.

And it is not rude to say, "You are saying you have a right to think something to be true. That means you saying you have to be open to checking it out." You could then change the subject.

Or you could say, "I agree. We both know opinions are just views we hold about the truth and that we have to make sure we are informed correctly."

The rule of thumb is, NEVER EVER LET "I HAVE A RIGHT TO MY OPINION" BE THE LAST WORD!

The freedom that comes from talking about an uncomfortable truth is better than the comfort of avoiding that talk altogether.



