

About a opinion and what it asks of the holder and those who listen to him or her

Opinions are conclusions thought out at least a tiny bit but open to dispute. They need not be necessarily thought out carefully or well. The fact that an opinion is open to dispute means you ask for it to be examined by others to see if it is as reasonable or correct as you think. That is the case whether you like it to be examined or not. So if you say something is your opinion you are inviting debate.

It is said by some, "Beliefs are only opinions that you have evidence for." This is incorrect. A belief is more evidence based than an opinion though at times there may be a thin line between the two. To say that we believe nothing and have only opinions is too sceptical. A man marries his wife because he believes in her and not just because he has the opinion that it is wise to marry her.

People say that you have a right to your opinion. This means it is only fair that you should be allowed to have your opinion. But who allows you? Do we say that you must be allowed to have your opinion just because nobody can stop you? That is not allowing. We should indeed see opinions not as something to be allowed or whatever but just things that happen. Allowing or otherwise does not come into it.

People say they have a right to their beliefs and opinions. That is actually a half truth. The correct thing is to say you have a right to your beliefs and opinions as long as you see them as helps on the journey to truth. If you say you have a right to your beliefs and opinions without any concern for truth then you are not being fair. Fairness is based on what is true. The person who sees the truth and calls it a lie is being unfair.

A so-called opinion that is not thought out or has no concern for evidence is an assumption not an opinion.

There are different strengths of opinion. The more reasons and evidences one has that an opinion is reasonable and possibly true the stronger the opinion is. Some opinions are just barely opinions at all. Sometimes if somebody has an opinion, you may doubt that you can change their minds but what you can do is help them to turn it from a strong opinion to a struggling one. You will do this easily and without upsetting the person if you try and find the common ground with them.

A weak opinion cries out for disputation more than a strong one does. An opinion that will cause grave disaster if wrong needs more challenging than one that will not do too much damage.

If you say something is your opinion, you are saying it to influence others. The alternative is that you are intending to talk to yourself! When you express an opinion it is a way of asking people to think about sharing that opinion. You are asking people to believe you. Thus you owe them reasons and evidences. You are not asking them to assume its your opinion. Assuming is no good. You want The person who bases their perception of you on assumptions will never really know you. Their relating to you is false and artificial. You want beliefs to be held about you.

A form of fake tolerance manifests when you are asking for your opinion to be accepted as something that should be protected from encouragement to revise it. "I have a right to my opinion" is how it is phrased. It will be used against somebody who helps you see that your opinion may be wrong. Its euphemistic for, "I don't respect you for I want you deny you the right to encourage me to re-think. My opinion is more important than you." Saying you have the right is fine when nobody knows or can know the best thing to do. But to use it to silence somebody is an abuse. If something really is your opinion you will welcome any challenges to it. An opinion is about what you think is true but because you are not sure of it being true you will be willing to give it up when you get further light. If you won't hear it being challenged or debated you are really degrading yourself for the sake of what you call your opinion.

The person who knows how to deal with an opinion will use questions in order to help the other person rethink it. Using "I have a right to my opinion" to stop the questions is really just saying, "I am a bigot where you are your questions are concerned. My opinion comes first even before truth. I am addicted to my opinion."

Responsibility

We have the right to free speech. That is not the same thing as the right to your own opinion. You can have the freedom to say something is your opinion when it is not your opinion at all. The right to voice your opinion implies that you have to take responsibility for what you say and you must not distort or lie. Take responsibility for the consequences.

The right to my own opinion thing that people say is really an excuse for refusing to listen to the truth or be challenged about their opinions which amounts to the same thing. Its a cynical discussion stopper. Its a refusal to take responsibility. A

responsible person does not misuse their freedom of speech to say that something is to be left unchallenged just because it is their opinion. The people are accusing you of not respecting their right to accept garbage as true. It needs to be seen as rude and that message needs to be put out there. Tell them gently but firmly and politely what they are trying to do. And they know fine well there is no such thing as a right to accept garbage as true when you are being given the chance to see it for the crap it is.

They are saying, "I am allowed to believe garbage so let me, but I will impose my belief that you have no right to have the opinion that you should proceed in trying to correct me on you."

You will try to reason with somebody about some issue such as right and wrong behaviour or religion. It is very irritating when the other person says, "I have a right to my opinion." This is used to silence you. It really translates as, "My opinion deserves automatic respect. Your opinion that you should try to correct it does not." The audacity!

It also translates as, "Let people have whatever opinions or beliefs they want." Nobody who says that means it. What if the vast majority of people took the opinion that religion is a form of schizophrenia and religionists should be incarcerated?

You may partly respect a wrong or dangerous opinion. Nothing is all bad. As an opinion is just an opinion, people must be encouraged to voice their opinion even if it is unpopular. A really nasty opinion is nasty but if the holder of the opinion is basing this on evidence, the concern for evidence has to be respected. If you disagree, you must seek the common ground of respect for evidence and use this to help the person reconsider the opinion and open up to new evidence.

Seeking automatic respect for yourself is a sign of arrogance. And seeking it for your views is no better and is really seeking it for yourself. "Oh I'm AI because of what I think!" It would be good to explain that to a person in order to forestall them dismissing what you say with, "I have a right to my opinion." Dismissing what you say is pure rudeness. If you present what you believe or know to a person, who will not deal with it, that is disrespect. You were good enough to give them something to deal with and they were not good enough to face it. Another good idea is when somebody gives their opinion ask them to explain why they hold it is true. Then if they give a silly or useless reason then ask them to explain why it is a reason. They will then see through it themselves. You always need to be clear on how you know something before you start talking about what you know.

Dismissing

Dismissing is a form of rudeness where you ignore the truth that a person has spoken. It accuses them of having no right to be taken seriously even if what they say is the absolute truth.

The right to my own opinion thing is offering an excuse for unbelief in the truth. What excuse can be as lame as, "Well, they have the right to their own opinion"? Indeed its not an excuse at all. It is an excuse for those who are too lazy or too selfish to try and gently but firmly stand up for the truth.

Inconsistent

The gobstopper that you have a right to your opinion is habitually used in matters of morality and religion. But it is not used in geography or matters of mathematics for example. It is unfair to apply it to one field and not others. Why should morality and religion be a free for all for you where you can assert what you want as long as you say you have a right to your opinion and thus reduce others to silence when they might know or see that your opinions are wrong?

Real respect for opinion

Respecting the opinion of the other means you don't ridicule. Instead you gently and kindly help the person see the error. The notion that respecting the opinion means you cannot even do this is just an attack on your integrity. Its an insult. It implies that you have the right to hurt others if you simply think you should.

If people want you to respect their beliefs and opinions, they must do nothing to censor you - if they really respect belief and opinion, they will respect your opinion and belief that you should gently and kindly guide them into the light. In fact censorship does not lead to any belief being respected, it only leads to fake respect that is just a cover for resentment.

Respecting the opinion actually requires you to help the person see where they have gone wrong. If the person refuses to listen, do not persist. But if they listen, then help them to help themselves. If you say nothing, you cannot say you are truly respecting their opinion. What you are doing is disrespecting it but hiding it.

Back to the audacity involved in expressing your opinion and manipulating others to leave it unchallenged. It is even worse if the opinion is based on nothing but feelings or on weak evidence or against the facts. The person who silences me is

deliberately opposing facts. They do not stop to consider if they might be wrong. They take offense or pretend to. They are pretending that they should be praised for holding on to their opinion regardless of the ignorance or irrationality and harm involved. They are asking for such praise and that is against my rights.

They are saying they are not accountable for their ignorance or intellectual dishonesty.

If you are entitled to your opinion, the opinion must be based on evidence, open to revision, open to changing your mind should evidence come up that refutes the opinion. Being entitled to your opinion if you are opposed to the facts or the evidence or don't care would be saying that right and wrong in behaviour and everything else does not matter. It becomes an absurd and dangerous philosophy of, "As long as its your opinion do what you want even if its murder."

Rights are based on need. You need water. You do not need ice cream. Ice cream is not a right but a privilege. Rights are defined by the duties to which they give rise.

Rights entail duties. In other words, people must be compelled to respect your rights if possible. If it is not possible, it would be a case that if you had the choice to compel, you would.

If you have a right to your opinion regardless of reason and facts and evidence, then why listen to any debater at all or why even bother? "I have a right to my opinion" is really just a proverb for the lunatic and the disciple of chaos.

And some even claim that to try and correct somebody's opinion is not respecting it. That is false. They say that if somebody corrects you or your work they are doing wrong for they are trying to correct opinion not fact. This is ludicrous. Who are you to judge that what another person may know is just their opinion? If they know it then its a fact and not an opinion. Do not say they irritate you - you are irritating yourself and using them as an excuse. And surely if opinions are good, then the person who gets you to discard a weak and bad opinion for a slightly stronger and better one should be praised?

It is said that we should always say that we personally don't agree, not tell others that they are wrong. But this enables disregard for truth and puts what people think before the truth. It is neither helpful nor sensible.

They claim that they are being non-judgemental but they are. They are judging the person who knows the facts as if he is a person who does not know the facts. An example of that is the agnostic who says the person who says they are sure there is a God is arrogant and the atheist is also arrogant for claiming to be sure there is no God. This seems tolerant and humble but in fact it is arrogant itself. Perhaps the believer in God is sure there is a God and is right. Or perhaps the atheist is the one who is sure because he is right. Being sure is not arrogant if you are sure BECAUSE you are right. That can happen.

We cannot genuinely believe something just because we want to. Wanting to believe what you believe does not mean that you believe fully or partly because you want to. An opinion that is held only because you like it is not an opinion at all.

Rights are something you simply have. The state can only recognise that you are entitled to them. You have rights whether it allows you to have them or not. The right to life implies that the law should establish your right to life.

It is said that my right to my opinion does not mean that others are obligated to agree with me. This is wrong. It should be, "My right to my opinion does not mean that others are necessarily obligated to agree with me." Others are obligated to do their best to agree with me if what I believe is more than just an opinion and is a fact. They are obligated to agree not because I say so but because truth and honesty require it.

It is said that others are not obliged to agree with me because if they did that they would have to be exactly like me in outlook on everything and that is unrealistic. And why me? If they change their opinion every time they hear a new one life will soon be unsustainable. But the reality is that people will still have different opinions. It is stupid to worry about everybody turning out the same. And others are not obliged to agree with you but with the truth. To agree with one who has the truth, means you care about the truth not the authority of who is teaching the truth.

Am I obligated to listen to your opinion? It is unrealistic to expect me to unless I have the time to listen or unless it is a very important matter. I cannot listen to every opinion and listen properly. Religion is a violation of our rights because it invents important things that are not really important. Listening to somebody trying to help you believe that Jesus is the only one who can save you from everlasting torture will not put bread on the table. Listening to somebody who can tell you where the bread is is far more important.

People who claim they have a right to their opinion actually should be honest enough to rephrase their claim. They should say something like "My right to my opinion means you have a duty to let me keep it. I don't want to change my mind or know if I am wrong. Fuck the facts if I am against them."

They always wait until the point where they might have to admit or see that they are wrong before they say they have the right to their opinion.

We have no duty to let others keep their opinions. And even less so when they cannot honestly admit that they are happy to oppose truth and integrity.

We have a duty to try to change them for as an opinion means that which is not proven and which is open to dispute then the holder of the opinion gives us the right to dispute it.

We have an even stronger duty if the opinion is harmful. For example, if your friend thinks that drinking rat poison will improve her health you will help her see that she is wrong.

If a person is genuinely honest and concerned about the truth, the person will not object to - or claim to be offended at - the presentation of evidence contrary to her opinion. The attitude, "I have a right to be offended if somebody comes along with evidence and facts that show that I am wrong" is so ridiculous that it is laughable. I have a right to be offended if somebody claims I offended them with evidence and truth

The person who says they have a right to their opinion may prefer their opinion to be true. You must assume that they do - its the most charitable assumption. Remind them that if they prefer their opinion to be true they will check it out and not only be open to a challenge but welcome it.

The truth is not too important for them but important enough.

What do you do if somebody tries to stop you challenging their view with, "I am entitled to my opinion"? That is okay when we are talking about some things in which it is impossible to know the truth or what should be believed. Just leave them to it. But remind them that calling something an opinion is saying, "I think this is the case though this may be disputed and I must welcome new light."

But if they start saying "I am entitled to my opinion" to avoid accepting something that is plainly correct - such as that they have to pay £1 for their milk if that is the price on it - then do not leave them to it.

Your beliefs are not about you at all. Neither are your opinions. Your beliefs and opinions are about the world. To say, "I am entitled to my opinion", is always evil when it is used to mean, "I don't want to hear the truth or if I am wrong." That is saying that it is about you when it is actually not. It shows disrespect to the person they say "I am entitled to my opinion" to.

If you ever feel tempted to resist an argument or conclusion by saying "I am entitled to my opinion," stop! This is as clear a bias indicator as they come. It may irritate you to give in, but honesty demands it.

People feel they must have their own opinion in a democratic society. But any opinion will not do. If you care about democracy you will do your best to check out your important opinions. You will want to hear criticism. Democracy based on lies is not democracy at all but a facade.

To say, "I have a right to my opinion" is actually to say, "Make it your opinion that you should say no more." It is to attempt to impose your view on another. The other person may be only trying to help you help yourself. He is not trying to impose an opinion. If you give you should be able to take. If you take you should be able to give. Tell them what they are doing.

You can show a person the truth about something they believe. You can disprove it . They will insult you by saying, "That's your opinion. I have my own opinion." They claim the right to judge you that you are dressing up your opinion as fact. If they have that right they have the right to malign and slander you.

You will, if you respect yourself, tell them that.

You have the right to say, "You told me that its your opinion. Nobody can have opinions unless they have reasons for them. Please, tell me why its your opinion? Why do you think it is right?" If you tell somebody you believe or think something you are imposing on them unless you give them reasons to show that you believe or think it.

We need to have empathy with others to be able to have friends and be part of any community. Empathy means to suffer with and also to be happy with. It is inviting others to challenge us. Thus we have to accept that others have a right to challenge our beliefs.

It is worrying that humanity in general has a tendency to defend doctrines and principles with more passion and ferocity when they don't have decent evidence to support them.

If rights and truths are subjective and just opinions, the only opinion that can prevail is the one held by the powerful and influential people. It turns rights and education into a battleground. Might is right becomes the law.

The foundation of all law and knowledge and science is the law that truth must be sought earnestly. If people oppose that, their opposition cannot be respected. To respect their opposition as opposition is to say there is no law at all. And if we start thinking that we will soon have a mad mad madder world.

So you have no right to your opinion and less right to state it. What you have a right to is your informed opinion and that gives you the right to state it. The theologian can give an opinion but the ten year old's opinion cannot be in an equal playing field. This is about truth not your superior notions. The moment you spread your opinion as a fact you become just a liar.