

WHAT IT MEANS TO RESPECT AN OPINION AND DON'T LET ANYBODY SHUT YOU UP WITH "I HAVE A RIGHT TO MY OPINION"

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 you 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. If x tells me to politely shut up as in, "I have the right to my opinion" you have the right to say it is your opinion that they are trying to close you up and have no right to. Beat them at their own game! Some opinions are entitled to a hearing if you have the need and the time.

