

MULTICULTURALISM - UNDERSTAND IT!

It is very important to understand other cultures. The main problems in the world are the result of differences in culture, religion and so on.

We think, "Why should I do this? It is not my culture. Why should I wear a turban? It's an Indian culture." If someone wants to wear a turban, then they should be able to wear a turban. Who are we to discriminate against someone who wears a turban?

This is the problem. And this problem exists because ignorance rules in this world. People are not educated properly - they know nothing about other cultures and that's why they discriminate against them. In European schools they are beginning to teach the children about other religions and cultures.

Once someone asked Gandhi why there were so many Goddesses in India. Gandhi said that it was thanks to God that there were so many Goddesses. He went on to say that if a garden has many different kinds of flowers growing in it, then it's a beautiful garden, but if the garden has only one kind of flower, it's not as beautiful. Pumpkins are good, but if you only have pumpkins, pumpkins, and more pumpkins in your garden, then it is not so good!

Someone said that the whole world has become like a small village, and in a small village there must be unity. However, to bring about unity, there needs to be understanding - we need to understand the diversities. We should be informed and educated and we should be free to follow whatever culture we wish.

There is so much discrimination in the world - "my religion, my tradition, mine only - no others".

One person likes to eat with a spoon, the other likes to eat with their hands - why not? Why should the person who eats with a spoon discriminate against the person who eats with their hands? After all, God gave us hands - we were not born with a spoon! But this is how we think. We discriminate. The main thing is that they are eating - it doesn't matter how.

We should respect our culture, we should maintain our culture but we should not discriminate against other cultures.

Paramhans Swami Maheshwarananda
Kranj, Slovenia - 9th November 2002.