

Are You a Label-Maker?

The other day as I was listening to some associates talking, I was struck by something very interesting. I noticed how much we tend to label people. It's like we have one of those little label-makers my sister gave me for my birthday years ago. You type in what you want the label to say and then a little strip of sticky paper comes out. Then you place that on your file folder, cabinet, jar, or whatever you want to label.

Here are some of the labels I have heard recently.

"The other day I was talking to my black friend, Karen..."

"And the Asian lady who waited on me said..."

"I wasn't sure what to say to my gay friend, Daniel..."

"The Hispanic lady who lives down the

Living The Good Life

by Krysta Gibson



street from me..."

"That white doctor didn't understand..."

"My elderly friend..."

"That straight attorney told me that..."

In any of these conversations the ethnicity, age, or sexual orientation of the person held no bearing on the issue being discussed. I wonder why we feel the need to add the labels?

In some cases, I think it is because we want to be seen as liberal in our viewpoints. After all, having a friend of a different ethnic group sets us up to be open and accepting of others. Same thing with being able to say

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of horror and still find a way to be uplifting then certainly we can do the same

Judith: With the current global crisis there seems to be a lot of fear running rampant but the beauty of it all is that it is bringing us closer together.

Gloria: I think so too. The global crisis that we are in is an opportunity to get back to the fundamentals of how to be a good human being. I call it the era of the soul. This is a wake up call for America to really step back and consider what is truly important. It's not about material things; it really is about going inside and figuring out who we are as human beings first and foremost and being of help to one another.

Judith: Do you think finding your true passion gives a person the strength to live their legacy?

Gloria: You have to have an intention. I talk about these principles in my book that I call the sacred promises. You have to know what you want even if you don't know how you are going to get there. Having an intention and a vision for where you want to go is crucial. Once you have that vision and start talking about it you start attracting other people who can help you know how to take the next step. But if you don't put it out there, you don't get the help that you need. You have to be clear about what you want and to ask for what you want. Sometimes it's creating an opportunity when it looks like there is no opportunity.

Judith: What advice can you offer someone who finds the idea of wearing their soul on the outside hard to do? Sometimes it's scary to be who you truly are.

Gloria: The advice that I would give is that when you don't wear your soul on the outside you are accepting a life that is too small for you. When you wear your soul on the outside you're accepting the largeness of who you really are. I believe that God has a legacy for each one of us that is unique and different and particular for the time that we live in. Our legacy and responsibility is to say yes to the fullness and the largeness and not to run away from the vibrant brilliant radiant souls that we all carry within us.

To find out more about Legacy Living and Dr. Burgess go to www.gloriaburgess.com.

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we have gay or transgendered friends. If we were prejudiced we wouldn't have friends like these, would we?

Consider this, however. What if the labeling of others keeps them and us apart from one another? What if this labeling is our subconscious way of keeping our distance from the "other." Why can't we simply say, "My friend said..." Who cares what color their skin is?

This separation of people from one another is at the root of many of our social challenges. If we could simply see each other as people, the divisions would fall away. I am not saying we need to lose any of our ethnic or cultural diversity. Not at all. In fact, I believe accepting each other as people first would make our differences all that more interesting. It would allow the walls of fear and division to come tumbling down.

We can take this labeling thing to another level. Listen to your thinking for a day or so and pay attention to what other sorts of labeling you do. Listen to hear if you are mentally saying things such as, "This is good..." "This is bad..." Do you find yourself looking at life in terms of labels? If so, you might want to reconsider having this as a constant thought pattern. Why?

Just about any spiritual teacher will tell you that life is neutral and only takes on the energy we give to it. For instance, we hear about some disaster and our first thought is how awful it is. While it is important to honor the feelings and experiences of others, in our minds it is important to see the event as an "is." How could we possibly know how this event is going to touch the people involved. For some of them, it might be a huge positive event that will bring them many blessings after the shock or the grief of the moment wears off.

How many times have you heard someone say that being fired or laid off a job was the best thing that ever happened to them? It's

true. Sometimes the person wasn't really happy in their employment but was just sticking with it because of the income. When they were forced to find a new job, they found something much more in line with their talents.

When something happens in our lives, we really don't know how it will affect us ultimately. That is why there is great wisdom in seeing events as neutral and waiting to see how they play out. I'm not saying to deny our feelings about an unhappy event. It is always a good idea to feel our feelings and then take the next step of letting them go so we don't get stuck in the unhappy energy.

Try this for at least one day. No matter what happens, tell yourself you don't know if this event is "good" or "bad." Let yourself see everything as neutral, as just how things are. When you talk about other people, don't label them. Just let yourself see them as people; not by the color of their skin, their income or lack thereof, social status, career, or anything else.

Just allow yourself to see everything and everyone as part of this grand divine expression of life. Allow yourself to be lived by this life instead of always trying to make it fit your preconceived notions of how life ought to be. You might be surprised at how free this makes you feel and how this new freedom expresses itself in your daily life.

Krysta is the publisher of New Spirit Journal and is the author of books and CDs. Learn more about her and her free podcasts at www.krystagibson.com. She also has a video at www.videovillageonline.com.



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