

Build a Community

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The community is a cell in the organism of society, therefore each community is vital to the economic health and cohesion of the greater whole-- the nation. In our "me" centered society, with its anything-goes, dog-eat-dog mentality, we undermine the glue that holds the community together by focusing on issues that only effect the few rather than the many.

Unfortunately, there are those who want to split the social cohesion of our communities. They see only Democrat or Republican, black or white, man or woman, gay or straight, Christian or non-Christian, rich or poor, criminal or innocent, and on and on until we no longer see our common interests; we only see antagonism and condemnation.

In reality, the community does not split into two or three of these neat categories. We are a cornucopia of individuals and families who need to see past our own narrow focus in order to nurture the whole growth of the community, not just one portion of it. We need to support local businesses, create mutual festivals and holidays, contribute to civic projects, and lift up the less fortunate among us not by closing factories and running competitors out of town, but by encouraging fair competition, economic growth, affordable education, and universally available healthcare right here where those things will make the most impact.

Many of us come from pluralistic communities, but contrary to what we are taught on Saturday morning TV, we must not nurture those differences or let them divide us. We must look for commonalities, or the damage that has been done may never be repaired. Because the more we look at each other with suspicion and hostility, the more we identify our neighbors as "the other," and the more we forget about our common interests, the more likely it becomes that the United States will share the same fate as Indonesia, India, South Africa, the former Soviet Union, Yugoslavia, or a hundred other countries around the world wrought by religious and ethnic conflict.

The United States has certainly not been immune to its share of internal conflict, and that is all the more reason to begin nurturing a growth of community right now. We need to put our disagreements aside and work together for a cleaner, happier, more productive physical and working environment where everyone sees the positive results of their labor within their existing community.

Because the bonds are so precarious, because what is at stake is so important, we cannot be persuaded by divisive and egotistical philosophies. We must work together and build our community for the greater welfare of the whole.