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This will be my only commentary on the events of the last few days. I do not seek validation. I will not respond to comments. Know that these words are from my heart and that they are meant with love.

In every population, horrible people exist who will twist everything that is good in order to justify their sick, barbaric behavior. Sadly, in such cases, their actions cast a pall on the good-hearted, decent individuals belonging to the group whose beliefs were corrupted. Generally, the vast majority of mainstream groups are made up of good-hearted, decent people. Obviously, there are groups so completely outside the norm I am not sure their members should be considered human, but those groups are the minority even in our f'd up world.

I believe we should all work hard to avoid the hateful stereotypes that have been rife in the past few days (or decades) about Muslims, Christians, LGBTQ individuals, straight people, 2nd Amendment advocates, gun-control advocates, republicans, democrats, journalists, insert-your-groups-here. **Please note - I am stringent advocate of the Bill of Rights; I will stand up for people's right to express their opinions even if they are completely contradictory to my own. I have defended to others the right of Westboro Baptist Church people to spout their despicable, truly inhuman bile. I have defended to others the right for a mosque to be built next to Ground Zero. My belief in the 1st Amendment has no political bias.** While I will stand up for anyone expressing opinions on social media, my purpose in writing this lengthy post is to ask everyone to stop and to think and to consider how to approach what is going on with love.

I see so much HATE on social media right now - aimed in all directions - that frankly I just feel sick. It is so easy to click share or to retweet. It's just a click, right? Unfortunately, hate breeds hate - even if it stems from the click of a mouse or a tap of the screen. It is hard work not to let hate rule. It is hard work to look at viewpoints diametrically opposed to ours and not say, "Look at that asshole. How can that person believe thus and such? I must negate that individual's existence in the most public way possible." Yes, not embracing hate is hard work, but it is important work. It is day by day work, minute by minute work, post by post work, click by click work.

I may disagree with you. I may really, really, really disagree with you. However, unless you physically harm me or others, you advocate harming me or others, or you belong to a group that advocates harming me or others, and in fact, even if you do, you are still a person to me. I may feel profoundly sorry for you and forever devastated by your thoughts and actions, but I won't hate you.

Right now, I am just sad. I am tortured for those who were directly affected by what happened in Orlando, for the victims who died and for their families, for those individuals who survived, for the emergency personnel and the doctors and nurses who worked so hard to save lives. I also ache for the majority of Muslim population who are just as horrified as I am. I also feel truly sad for the individual who was so wrought with hatred that he sought to end the lives of so many. His sentence is set for all eternity.

Hate breeds hate. Consider sowing love.

Teresa