

*family*

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### Abstract

This short paper raises questions which force people who do not have disabilities to ask, "What is wrong with us that makes us want to avoid those with intellectual disabilities?" **Keyword: Attitudes**

## PEOPLE WITH AN INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY CAN AROUSE REPULSIONS

MANY HATE TO ADMIT THEY CAN BE REPELLED BY PEOPLE WITH AN INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY TO SOME DEGREE. SOMETIMES THE "PULLING AWAY" IS OBSERVED AS AN OVERT ACT. AT OTHER TIMES IT IS DONE IN MORE SUBTLE WAYS. THIS CAN LEAD TO A MOST INTERESTING PROBLEM. WHY IS IT THAT SOMETIMES WE FEEL REPELLED?

- \* Is it because we have never learned to live graciously with **FAILURE** in our lives? Failure can make us feel guilty.
- \* Is it because we have strong needs for **STIMULATING RELATIONSHIPS** only? Is it hard to give to people who cannot give as much in return?
- \* Is it because our feelings of **OMNIPOTENCE** are tested? We like to think we are powerful "life changers". Because we cannot change them into what we want them to be, does this make us feel helpless?
- \* Is it because emotionally we still see these things as the **RESULTS OF EVIL**? We used to. We say we do not any more. But, sometimes do we not look at them and wonder if "somebody sinned"?
- \* Is it because one of our greatest fears is that we will be found to be **STUPID AND INSIGNIFICANT**? Is this one of our most closely guarded fears: that we will be found to be a "nothing"? Do we sometimes refuse to associate with those who remind us of one of our own greatest fears?
- \* Is it because in Australia we hold high the **MYTH OF HUMAN PROGRESS**? We try so hard to believe that man is always making positive development, always moving onward and upward towards achieving the brilliant mind, the beautiful body and the pure heart which none of us will ever have in this life. Maybe we hate to admit that human progress does move backward and downhill at times.
- \* Is it more comfortable and secure to keep our **RELATIONSHIPS NARROWED** to those who live, function, and think like ourselves? Can we dare do this when society has now begun to learn that greater creativity comes from struggling with the individual differences of people even if it is risky?

NOTICE THAT THE QUESTIONS RAISED DO NOT FORCE US TO ASK, "WHAT IS WRONG WITH PEOPLE WITH AN INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY?" INSTEAD, THE TABLES ARE TURNED. THEY FORCE US TO ASK, "WHAT IS WRONG WITH US THAT MAKES US WANT TO AVOID THOSE WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES?"