

Never attribute to malice what can be explained by ignorance

A very wise man I know, Buzz Brewer, once gave me those words of wisdom. Like most things in life it has taken me a decade to "get it." All too often in life we take as a personal insult what was in no way intended to be one. Sometimes our mind set is just in a different place, we are "not on the same page" with our perceived adversary.

A case in point would be my current situation. I live with a man in a 6' x 10' cell. He has lived in this cell for five years of his life. In his ignorance he believes that he should tell me how I should cover the window when rest room is being used, or when I can have my half of the back window covered. My initial reaction was that this guy has got to be kidding, I was toilet trained at age two! That I know when I can cover the window and when I can't, that he is attempting to inflict his will upon me. Anger is natural in that situation. The problem is: Is that in fact the situation?

Could it be that he is merely trying to be helpful and friendly? It very well could be that he does not realize that I find his input to be offensive, that I prefer to mind my own business and desire others to do the same. So I **must** not react in anger, but rather act out of love by letting him know how I feel. I must do it in a loving way, a way that will avoid confrontation. Sounds logical doesn't it?

The problem is at this moment in time I feel offended and confrontational. So I absolutely have to wait until I can be kind and gentle, which will **not** be easy because he will most likely continue behavior that ticks me off. Sort of a catch 22. That is what is so good about this whole thing. It is a wonderful chance to grow in grace and mercy, to become that man of gentle integrity I so wish to be. So "count it all joy when you fall into various trials."

Be well and treat each other with kindness and love. WE reap what we sow. peace.