

On Tolerance

You get no virtue points for tolerating your allies, but your enemies. Here's a simple test to know how tolerant you are: look at a person and consider their characteristics, everything from gender to skin color to sexual orientation to age, but also their religious, political, philosophical, and pop-cultural views and opinions; then figure out how much, if any, of these characteristics really, truly, make you uneasy; after, decide how willing you are to abide their expression of any or all of these such characteristics, those which make your skin crawl. If you will abide, then congratulations, you are being tolerant. If you will not abide, if you are unwilling to either permit them in your presence or permit them their life or liberty, then you are being intolerant. Whichever characteristic it happens to be, only when it truly bothers you, yet you abide their expression of it, can you be said to be a tolerant person relative to those people. Now, don't misunderstand, I'm not passing judgment on tolerance relative to any particular characteristic. There are many of which their expression I personally will not abide. Indeed, there are many ways in which I am a very intolerant person. I think that's true for everybody. But give me a break, having friends of different skin color, sexual orientation, or political views does not make you tolerant unless those specific characteristic expressions drive you batty. And that's today's two cents.