

Telling Pricks and Criminals to Stop is Only Half the Battle

I'd like to think that I have a cure for prickish behaviors like racism and bigotry. Does my cure do anything to the pricks in question? Not at all. Rather, my cure is for the victims: responsibility.

We will always have pricks in society, and they will always come in different flavors, but how we respond to them is completely up to us.

What if we told ourselves and those we influence, like our children, not to pay any attention to those who call them names? If we lived our lives believing that how we feel at any given moment is entirely up to us, are we not empowered above pricks? Of course we are. If their verbal barbs (racist, sexist, homophobic, it doesn't matter) hit a brick wall, sooner or later they'll stop shooting them.

This is sound advice, in my opinion.

That doesn't mean teaching people not be pricks is also not sound advice. It is. But it's only half the battle.

As with pricks, so with criminals.

It's just as important to teach self-defense as it is to teach people not to attack people or take their stuff. It's empowering to be taught that you have a right to protect yourself from others bent on hurting you. I have one son and two daughters and hope that I can impart to them that while they can't control the behavior of others, they can control what they can do about it.

They can learn to defend themselves with the spoken word, martial arts, mace, and even firearms. They shouldn't expect that telling others not to be pricks and/or criminals is going to keep them safe. It won't.

Their safety and comfort is 100% their responsibility, as is mine, as is yours.