


**Welcome to Unity's Interactive
Worship Service**

**Today's Topic: Our Spiritual
Teachers Part 2**

Power Point notes available at:
www.unityofbakersfield.org

Our Spiritual Teachers Part 2



In Dr. Mark I. Rosen's book, Thank You For Being Such a Pain: Spiritual Guidance for Dealing With Difficult People, he writes, "One thing is certain, difficult people can be a pain, but they are also our spiritual teachers."

Our Spiritual Teachers Part 2

1. Difficult People: There's No Escaping Them.
2. What Makes Someone Difficult?
3. Why Do Some People Drive Us Crazy?
4. Ways of Seeing (Others).
5. Why Do Relationships Have Difficulties?
6. Everyone Is Difficult to Someone.
7. A Spiritual Perspective.

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1) Difficult People: There's No Escaping Them.


Difficult people bedevil us. They sap our energy and distract us, causing us minor annoyance and major distress. We protest, complain, and struggle to cope—sometimes successfully, often uselessly. People have been making other people miserable for thousands of years. The Bible is filled with stories of people who do terrible things to each other.

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Every time we deal with a difficult person, we face one of the dilemmas of being human.

So, **the key** to remember here is when you are struggling with a difficult person, know that you are not alone. Share your concerns with a support group or trusted counselor. Know also that you will continue to face difficult people wherever you go, there's no escaping them.

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THERE ARE SOME PEOPLE WHO ALWAYS SEEM ANGRY AND CONTINUOUSLY LOOK FOR CONFLICT. WALK AWAY; THE BATTLE THEY ARE FIGHTING ISN'T WITH YOU, IT IS WITH THEMSELVES.

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2) What Makes Someone Difficult?

A newspaper story told of a contest for the worst boss. The winner was a man who sent his secretary to the bar up the street at the close of work each day to scout for women he could hit on.

Difficult people come in all forms: Bullies use their power to intimidate; back-stabbers are pleasant in person but turn on you the minute you turn your back; Know-it-alls are always right; Hotheads explode at the drop of a hat.

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A difficult person can be a stranger, a neighbor, a teacher, someone at work, a relative, a spouse. But, no matter how different each circumstance may seem, all of them have one thing in common: Each time we have an encounter with a difficult person, we have a very uncomfortable emotional reaction.

The key to understanding what makes someone difficult is that we really don't know, but this much is certain: no matter who it is, and no matter what is being done to us, a difficult person is someone who causes us to feel things we'd rather not be feeling.

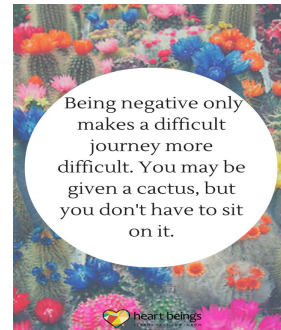
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3) Why Do Some People Drive Us Crazy?

Who we find difficult and who doesn't bother us is different for each person. Sam and Sally – Sam hates people who talk during a movie. Sally loves it and doesn't enjoy a movie unless someone is making colorful remarks about the movie and the characters. People are not difficult because of what they do – they are difficult because they illicit the experience of unpleasant emotions in us as a result of their behavior.

The key for us to pay attention to what is going on inside of us, not just what the difficult person is doing.

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4) Ways of Seeing Others.

We like to think that we see the world clearly. However, who of us have not been exposed to a behavior of someone close to us that say's: "I know what's right, and you're not doing it, therefore you're wrong and being difficult."

It's amazing how many people believe that their view of reality is the accurate one. In actuality, there are several truths. There is our truth, the truth of the person with whom we're having the difficulties, and the truth of any witness or bystander observing the situation.

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All our difficulties, our interpretations are based on how we feel at the moment. If we are tired, or angry, or suspicious, we will experience an interaction with a difficult person differently than when we are feeling good. We filter each encounter through our history, or life experiences, all our hurts and mistakes.

The key to this aspect is to know that when dealing with a difficult person, it is important that you be open to new ways of viewing the situation. After all, if your current perceptions and assumptions about the difficulties were entirely accurate, you would probably have solved your problems by now.

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You will continue to suffer
If you have an emotional reaction
to everything that is said to you.

True power is sitting back
And observing everything
with logic; true power is
restraint.

If words control you that
means everyone else can
control you; breathe and
allow things to pass.

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5) Why Do Relationships Have Difficulties?

While there are many reasons that difficulties arise in our relationships, three fundamental reasons stand out in every encounter: insensitivity, inadequate communication, and lack of caring. No one wants to be treated with indifference.

The key to this area of our relationships requires that we work on developing sensitivity, communication, and caring skills.

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6) Everyone Is Difficult to Someone.

If you are honest with yourself, you have to admit that at some time or another you've done something to drive someone crazy. Yet no matter how annoying we are to others, we do not willingly accept being labeled as difficult. When we do something to annoy someone else, we're not being difficult; we see it as justified and make statements like these: "I had a bad day; I didn't mean it; I didn't do anything; You deserved it; and the daddy of them all: "You made me do it."

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What is going on here is that ego is trying to preserve its self-image and it's a lot easier to focus on another person's behavior than it is to admit that we're being difficult. Ego does not like admitting that the effects of our own behavior on others would mean that we would have to identify with the very behaviors we are condemning.

The key here is that in order to start the healing process we must come to understand that the difficult people aren't really that different from us; in fact, they are us.

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7) A Spiritual Perspective.

Isaac Singer once wrote: *There is a plan to the universe. There is a high intelligence, even a purpose, but it's given to us on the installment plan.*

We are not here on this earth just to have fun.[Even Jesus pointed this out when he said, "In this world you will have trials and tribulations..." We are here to develop a spiritual life, our talents, our characters, to heal our souls, to contribute our unique and divine essence toward the greater good. No one else can do what we are here to do.

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The catch is that there are things to learn; it is likely that we can't learn at least some of them without a divine kick in the spiritual butt. The great spiritual traditions all teach that we live in a meaningful, purposeful, and loving universe.

The key to this aspect is consider the possibility that difficult people are in our lives to help our spiritual growth. Our task is not to focus on the person causing the problem, but to look within ourselves and understand why we are having these problems and what we are supposed to be learning on our spiritual journey.

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LIFE IS THE MOST DIFFICULT
EXAM. MANY PEOPLE FAIL
BECAUSE THEY TRY TO COPY
OTHERS. NOT REALISING THAT
EVERYONE HAS A DIFFERENT
QUESTION PAPER.