

TOLERANCE

in the 21st Century Society



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Human diversity makes tolerance
more than a virtue; it makes it
a requirement for survival.

~ Rene Dubos, Celebrations of Life, 1981 ~

The MEANING of TOLERANCE throughout HISTORY

- Colonial powers & extinction of natives
- Witch-burning in the Middle Ages
- World War II & the Holocaust
- Communism & the Cold War
- Escalation of Hatred in Regional Conflicts

The MEANING of TOLERANCE TODAY

“...respecting human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the freedom of thought, conscience, religion or belief, for all without distinction as to *inter alia* race, colour, sex, language, religion or belief, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status.”

OSCE Ministerial Council Decision
Ljubljana 2005

INTOLERANCE, PREJUDICE & HATRED

- Intolerance, prejudice & hatred are one of the root causes of everyday violence
- Preconditions for mass-hatred & large-scale violence
- Constant threat to modern society
- Empathy enables mutual respect & tolerance
- Empathy can be taught

CONFLICT & POST-CONFLICT SOCIETIES

- The vast majority of represented states and societies at some recent point in history experienced violence on a larger scale
- If the roots of past and ongoing conflicts are not addressed and resolved accordingly, there is a high possibility that past grievances are passed on from one generation to the next
- Global War on Terrorism & Muslim Communities

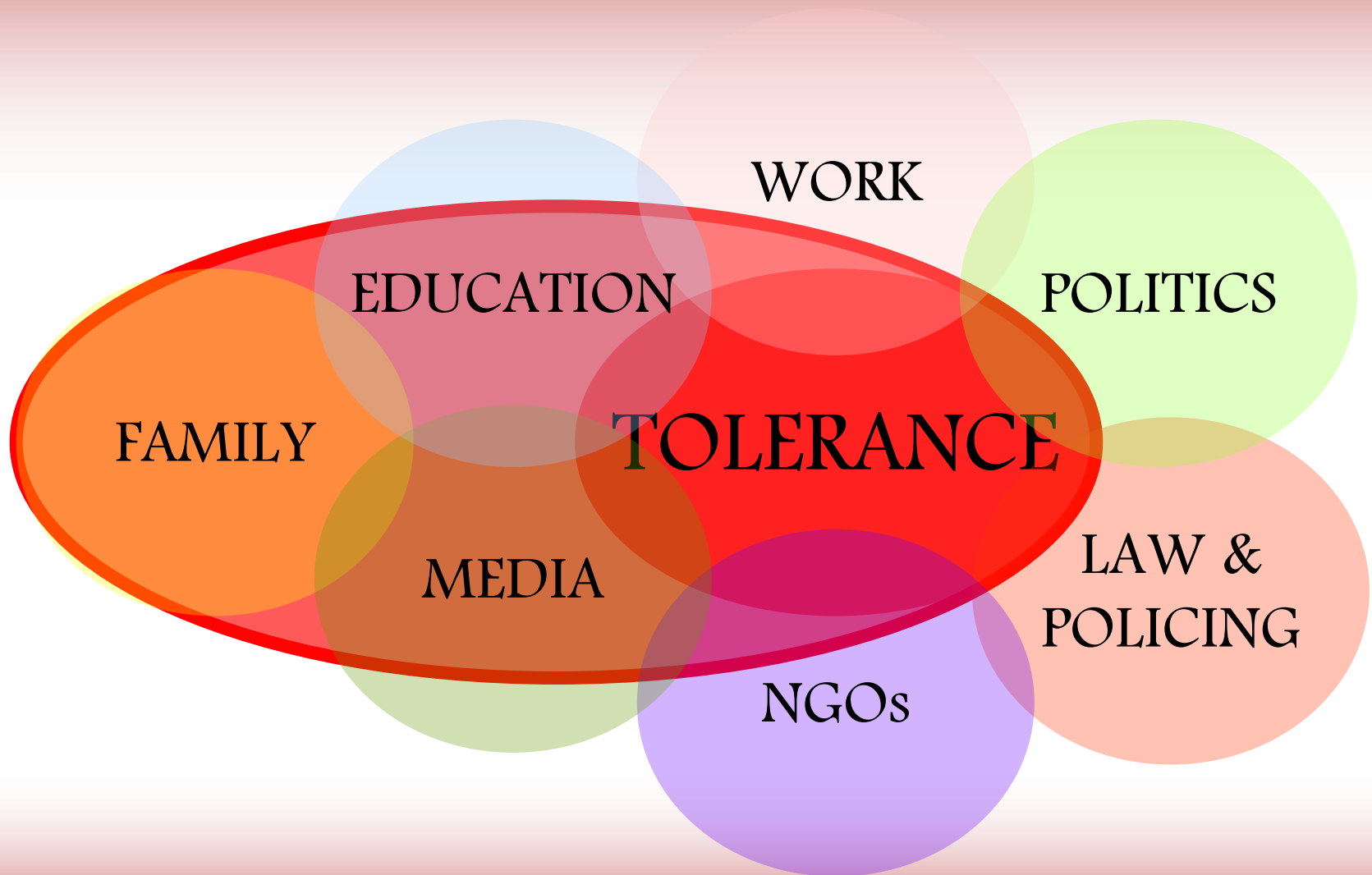
BREAKING CYCLES of INTOLERANCE & HATRED

- Cycles of intolerance & hatred are generated:
 - in the environment of primary socialisation (family, etc.)
 - confirmed by the environment of secondary socialisation (local community & broader society)
- In order to break cycles of intolerance & hatred a broad overall strategy is needed

EDUCATION & KNOWLEDGE versus INTOLERANCE

- Education & knowledge as part of a broader strategy for combating intolerance
- Education and its' importance in teaching tolerance through empathy & understanding
- Fostering mutual respect through more knowledge about each others uniqueness

IMPLEMENTING TOLERANCE



COMBATING INTOLERANCE & HATRED

- AWARENESS RAISING on the importance of education & knowledge in fostering mutual respect & tolerance
- Responsible MEDIA COVERAGE
- Tolerant POLITICAL DIALOGUE
- INTER~CULTURAL & INTER~FAITH DIALOGUE at national and international level

COMBATING INTOLERANCE & HATRED

- Adequate legislation & policing through the **RULE OF LAW**
- Coping with the **VIOLENT PAST** by focusing on common interests in the **PEACEFUL FUTURE**
- Breaking the **VISCOUS CYCLE** of intolerance:
 - education plays the key role in **BREEDING RESPECT & TOLERANCE**
 - family, local community & the society as a whole must be **INCLUDED DIRECTLY**

FINAL REMARKS

- ~~Is it difficult to develop more tolerance?~~
- Is there political will & backup to do it?
- Is it really that simple?
 - no, but our determination to do it, is the basic precondition
- Leave the rest to the experts?
 - no, stay involved, because this issue really effects all of us

FOOD FOR THOUGHTS

There's nothing in this
world so sweet as love,
And next to love
the sweetest thing is hate.

~ Henry Wadsworth Longfellow ~

CONCLUSION

- Human nature makes us perceive all things as either GOOD or BAD
- Either LOVE or HATE ~ the “US” and a “THEM”
- We LOVE CHALLENGES ~ HATE THREATS
- EDUCATE ourselves & society to stop perceiving THEM=ENEMIES=THREATS → we HATE
- There is a good chance we start perceiving THEM=EQUALS=US=CHALLENGE → we LOVE

By turning the imaginary ENEMY
into an actual EQUAL,
a THEM becomes an US,
the THREAT becomes a CHALLENGE,
...and at the end of the day...

**WE START LOVING
WHAT WE ONCE HATED**