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## Opinion/Brigidi: Left or right, let's live and let live

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What is it about conservatives despising us liberals, calling us names from socialists to progressives, and occasionally even Marxists? Oh yes, least I forget — we are also referred to as leftists.

These days I almost cringe when approaching a traffic light, to make a left-hand turn to see whose wrath I may encounter. I have to seriously think about whom I might offend here? No worries, I will likely make a right-hand turn farther down the road, politely waving on someone arriving at the same moment.

But in truth, I have no problem with those who do move in a rightist direction. Why do the conservatives have such problems with us, who move toward the left while acknowledging there are indeed right-hand turns that may sometimes be taken? We of the left decided a long time ago that there are indeed multiple directions to go in. It is something that many of us can live with. Why can't conservatives simply see that not everyone tends to move in the same way?

Why is it that conservatives become so infuriated at the thought that there are others who might feel differently about a situation, making decisions contrary

to their own? Is it really so foreign a concept to believe that there are people who have beliefs that might just work for themselves, having their own solutions to personal matters, be it choosing a partner, giving birth or deciding not to. Why is it such a problem for those on the right to accept us? Why do conservatives take such offense and try to force their way as the only way?

We on the left have never claimed that we have the “true path” in life. We make choices that work for us, as should everyone. It is noticeable though, and not so offensive to me, that my neighbor has painted his house a different color from my own. We live side by side, and this same neighbor goes to a temple, a mosque, or it might be a church occasionally. I don’t ask where, because it really is a private matter. Me, I choose to go for a bike ride instead, taking both left and right turns along the way.

The problem that I see is that conservatives somehow are convinced that we leftists are WRONG, and they must condemn our actions and outlaw such ways. On some level, I think they believe their mission is to save us from ourselves by imposing their righteous way. They have never been able to accept that others like me move to the left, go for bike rides, or paint houses in unique colors. What is so wrong about all these things that they take such offense? We of the left are not trying to tell them that their path is mistaken if partaking in a religious ritual instead of walking in nature. We are not judging them for their beliefs, but we do take issue when they attempt to burden us by imposing their ways. This, we will prevent from happening.

We all possess egos and, admittedly, love the power of our own decisions. We can all enjoy that. However, any action must and should stop with oneself, and not be imposed upon another person. That is the real power and privilege of choice, to freely act in one’s own interest, observing other ways as being different. Is it ever possible for conservatives to accept this simplest of facts — that each of us has our own way — and coexist?

Try smiling when you move left next time, and don't forget to use your "blinker." It does help to alert others, announcing your way is different. Go with care, safety, and yes — love, too! I promise not to say the left-hand turn is better or thrust it upon you.