

## Different but Equal

My name is Alisa. I am not a person who lives with indifference to the surrounding social, political and economic areas. My motto is to get answers and go ahead. In this essay I want to present my point of view about an actual problem of the community- Intolerance to the full members of the society.

First of all, I would like to pay attention to the fact that the country, which I present, is a young developing country. Basic reasons of the Intolerance existence are hidden in the History of Latvia. Latvia is a Baltic country, which was a part of the Soviet Union for more than last 50 years. In addition, the territory of the Soviet Latvia was one of the most popular among the residents of the Union because of its climate conditions and geographical location. Therefore, Modern Latvia is populated with a big community of people, who were citizens of the former country.

### *Consequences:*

Being a part of the Soviet Union, Latvia's development as a liberal country was impossible. Therefore, the modern problems of our community appeared because of the collision between the former country stereotypes and the modern aims of the liberal state's development. It fully explains the unusual form of the intolerance in civilized modern society of Latvia.

The other important problem of intolerance in post-soviet Latvia is that the modern society of Latvia is separated into two big communities which can't avoid disagreements and are quite intolerant to each other.

### *Solving the problem:*

To solve the problem of intolerance in modern Latvia, we should understand that promoting tolerance in the community of Latvia will differ from promoting it, for example, in

West Europe. The main reason of it is a MINDSET. Our mindset is different because we have another very peculiar history.

People, who are parents and grand parents now, in the Soviet times were learned to blame diversity, individuality and privacy. They brought up a modern generation which is withstanding with their parents' moral philosophy and the mindset that is being formed by the influence of Media. Basically our society consists of three groups:

1.) Parents and Grandparents, whose age is above 50 years. These people aren't satisfied with a modern life. Some of them want to return the past. I think that most of them are afraid of new way of thinking, new culture, new morality. And I am sure that they condemn gays and lesbians, afraid of foreigners and also afraid to say their opinion openly. Personally, I think that changing their mind is impossible and necessary because they don't express an aggressive intolerance.

2.) Parents and young people who are in age between 18 and 45. These people have to solve the problems of modern Latvia. As a matter of fact, our common living conditions depend on them. They understand that the modern Latvia is a democratic State. But they also remember the education given by the previous generation based on a Soviet morality. It makes the biggest problem. Graver situation is connected with people who are under 30. They don't feel the morality of previous country as strong as "above 30" do. But they also don't understand the values of a modern society.

3.) Children and teenagers whose parents are under 40. This group of community is the future of our country! And I think that all the power we have we should use to change their modern mindset. I study in ordinary school and what I see every day there is rending my heart. Children are using bad language all the time, they are extremely ag-

gressive. Their fights are cruel and violent. And when teachers say their reprimands or ask to stop doing something, they impertinently say: "What can you do to me?" I don't want to answer: "I can do **nothing** to you"?

Intolerance- It is a "painful Infection" of the community which should be eradicated. As you see, my position is to find causes of the Intolerance and then to eradicate them. I was thinking a lot about this problem. And I concluded that it is necessary to spend a long period of time to change the situation. Nevertheless, the situation is changeable.

As I have said before, the society should pay major attention to the problem of spiritual education of the generation of children and teenagers. Adults are responsible for bringing the children up and giving them a spiritual education. Consequently, the problem can be solved if parents will take care about their spiritual values and will promote the same values in children's mindset.

*Steps:*

1. Establishing an Organization which will promote Tolerance and encourage community to accept and understand.
2. Searching for ambassadors who will support financially.
3. Understanding a level of intolerance in the community by means of analyzing popular Media sources.

4. Advertising the Organization and the Idea of Tolerance.
5. Organizing public activities which will be interesting for modern people to take part in them.
6. Organizing special education programs for children and adults which would promote positive thinking, a wish to discuss problems, ability to express a personal opinion politely.
7. Promoting to value diversity by creating a lot of activities where people can express their ways of thinking in polite ways.
8. Attracting politicians to discuss this problem. Politicians will think about and solve this problem if it is quite actual and popular in the community.
9. Becoming by an Important and influential Organization, which will really change the social problem of Intolerance in My community.

It is very important to understand that young people should have an opportunity to take part in solving national problems. I believe that people are so "wild" only because they don't know what to believe, that's why I am doing my best to show you that an **active** liberal organization will really help to turn the power of the society on discussing and solving problems instead of hating and avoiding them. Give people a choice to feel them useful and important!

*Alisa Kuzminska*