

Defying assumptions

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A senior, snoopy yet enthusiastic photojournalist was desperate for a good, juicy story, that his editor had asked him to come up with. While on his rounds, he came across an accident scene, where several people seemed to have gathered around the victim who was bleeding. Assuming he had a good story, the journalist attempted to push through the crowd and get a glimpse of the victim, whose photograph he thought he would take. The crowd was large and he could not get through. He quickly shouted, "I am the father of the victim, let me through." The crowd parted and the journalist ran towards the victim only to realise that the victim was a dying donkey.

Assumptions invariably lead us to incorrect conclusions, as had happened with the journalist. Assumptions are also based on judgement and rarely supported by facts. When we assume, it is very likely we become a 'victim', as we fall a prey to erroneous thinking.

In relationships too, between father and son, mother and daughter, wife and husband, mother-in-law and daughter-in-law, confusion ensues because we assume.

It is therefore wise to ask questions of one another, not in a manner that is interrogative or provocative, yet in a manner that is curious and evocative. In doing so, there will be gentleness, empathy, compassion and genuine inquiry, sparing us from having to nurse hurt that follows wrong assumptions.

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