



# Let Go of Your Need to Be Right

By Julie Fuimano, Personal Development Expert & Success Coach

Have you ever had an argument? It's a silly question, for sure. Everyone has. You know, in that moment, when you're so sure that you're right, when you just wish the other person would hear you - *your version of reality*, that is, your *right* way of looking at the world. If they would only understand the world the way you do, everything would be fine!

But then, they are thinking the same thing in that moment, believing you should listen to them. Their way, after all, is the right way, the only way. Can't you understand?

And then, the next day, you both wonder what you were arguing about. It's often something arbitrary, and even when it is something important, or seemingly important, it's not nearly as significant as the damage done to each other in the process. The struggle is not about the thing or situation, but rather an internal struggle that was played out between two or more people.

## Observing Our Thoughts

For example, I have an idea for solving a problem. *Having* an idea is good. This is not the problem. The problem occurs when I become attached to that idea being the *best* idea. I believe it's the "right" way. The *only* way. And in that moment, if I listen to these thoughts and I need to be right, then you must be wrong. And if I am not very empathetic, or if I forget [to be empathetic](#) in that moment (I could be tired, moody, without coffee...), I can become pretty forceful about making my idea heard. I might even tell you how inaccurate or improbable your idea is just to make my point.

When this happens, I stop valuing you as a human being and instead, value my idea above all else, to the detriment of our relationship and my self-control. In other words, this is when things get ugly.

**An idea is never of greater [value](#) than a human life.** And yet, in that moment, it can feel as if there is nothing grander than our ideas, being heard, and being right.

Since I am devaluing you in favor of my great idea, the result is that you feel bad, belittled, and uncomfortable. You may become angry. Depending upon your modus operandi, you might withdraw and shrink, saying nothing but feeling hurt and wounded wishing for it to be over. You could become resentful (angry at yourself) for not being able to stand up for yourself. On the other hand, if you have an idea that you believe to be "right," then you might start telling me how bad my idea is and we go back and forth, hurting each other.

The more you feel yourself pushing or forcing your idea on someone else, the more this thought pattern is taking over. It's in charge. It feels like you have lost yourself and someone else is taking over as you watch this drama unfold. And if it happens often, you might even feel like it's an automatic response, one that you are so accustomed to that you believe it's just "who you are."

## The Self-Esteem Challenge

There are other factors at work here. As I go about telling you how wrong you are, your self-esteem could be impacted. For many people, their [value is attached to their ideas](#). In other words, if the value you believe you have as a human being comes from your ideas, then what you hear is not that I don't like your idea or that your idea has no merit; but rather you hear, "She doesn't like me." You hear that YOU have no value. And in the scheme of things, we ALL have to have value so you will defend yourself and your idea to the n<sup>th</sup> degree in order to feel valued.

I hurt myself, too, because it does not feel good for me to put you down, push you away, and make you become defensive, even though I may be quite unaware of what I am doing and the impact it's having on you.



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[I have needs](#) too, you see – the need to be liked, to seem important, to be in control, or to have power and authority.

And this is how it is. We hurt each other with our need to be right, to be heard, and to have value. In the process, we devalue each other by, in essence, valuing our ideas above the other person. Ouch.

### Value Yourself and Others

What we really want is to feel valued. We want to feel that we matter in the scheme of things. That it is okay to be me, to think my thoughts and feel my feelings, and that you are okay to think your thoughts and feel your feelings too. To feel that no matter what we say, we are okay. We want to make our point and [not feel like we are wrong](#) or that our ideas don't count. We do count. And our ideas do matter.

How can we stop fighting each other, arguing with each other, and devaluing or hurting each other?

Each of us must do our part **by first strengthening our self-esteem**, finding value within ourselves instead of looking for it from all the wrong places; and **second, we need to let go of our need to be right**. Everyone is right from their own perspective – in their own mind. Let's learn to value the ideas and perspectives of others. This doesn't mean you have to agree; rather you only need to give the person your attention and be interested. Validate the person for sharing their idea. Perhaps you could start listening for what is good about the idea rather than what is wrong or inaccurate. If we all did this, then we would strengthen our relationships, build each other up rather than tear each other down, and we would be able to synergize our best thinking which could lead to greater innovation, cooperation, passion, and productivity.

It's not an easy task to let go of the attachment to your idea, to being right, especially when you *are* right. There will be times when you know the person is making a mistake but they are unable or unwilling to hear additional information to make a better choice. You want so much for them to make a different choice but they are fixated on their decision and it is not your decision to make. By not pushing your ideas or knowledge onto them, it might feel as though you are giving up a part of you, making the other person think that you agree or are caving in. Give them permission to be where they are in their personal development. Give the person permission to think their own thoughts and make their own choices, even if it is a mistake; they'll learn from it. That is the right we all have as free human beings.

Ask yourself what really matters in this moment. Is it worth hurting someone to get your point across? What's the point? Are you doing it to sound smart or impress them? Is it for you or will it really add value to that person? It might seem difficult to step back from your thoughts, but you are NOT your thoughts. They are not who you are. Your mind is a tool for your use; you are not its servant. Make it your ally and choose to be in charge. In the end, caring more about the human being standing in front of you, rather than your idea of what is right or wrong, will add the greatest value and feel better for all involved.

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