

## A Core Belief: I Don't Quite Fit In

David N. Green, 2016

I believe my thoughts and views do not fit in, or at least are often not in-synch, with most people around me, nor with the public at large. While I think I do get along well with others, have friends, and cooperate within society, my thinking and attitudes often, in fact usually, seem to me to be at odds with others. I get along with and even like a number of individuals and small groups, but at the drop of a hat I can find areas of discussion and concepts that turn them right off, even ending a night-out on a sour note. I feel, and have been told by some close to me, that I have to watch my train of thought, or at least speech, when among other people. As far as the general public is concerned, I don't seem to hold many of the typical societal views on what direction things should go, how we should consider things, what's important, and what society (masses of people say) should be doing with their time or caring about. These statements of course beg for examples, however I think that is beyond the intended scope of this essay, and I don't want to turn-off anyone at this point either. (Admittedly, such examples might make a few new friends too!) I know this sort of feeling, like one is not fitting-in, is quite common, especially say among adolescents. However, it seems to me to have remained throughout my adult life, as I'm quite sure it has with many adults, so I suppose it is essentially a core belief of mine.

By late childhood, and even in early teens, as I recall, I already didn't feel like I fit in, sitting alone or just not talking much among other kids; at least often times, as there were exceptions where I talked too much perhaps. However, it seems that it was in later teenage years and early adulthood, when I started learning about the world and other more technical details of the way it worked, that I really started noticing that I didn't seem to think about things quite the same as most people. If I voiced ideas in the those early years it would maybe turn one person towards me in interest, but would also make half a dozen others turn away in dislike or sometimes disbelief that one would think such a thing. I'm sure this scenario sounds like a fairly stereotypical angst-ridden young life. In any case, this is indeed about when I think I really started noticing my thought process seemed uncommon.

In the past, my own recognition of thinking a little differently about many things made me think I was special, but in a somewhat unpleasant and negative way. I often felt ignored or sidelined because I was voicing notions that were too extreme or opposite the consensus, and I wondered if I should just stop it. Admittedly, some of the ideas probably were a little silly from time to time, or maybe even based on weak arguments that others had in fact considered and dismissed. I tended to often spend time with people that I even now think were smarter than I am, in many ways, so I expect the latter, that they already thought of my ideas and I was not really offering much. In general, I think my behaviour was such that I came across as thinking others should adapt their ability to digest my inputs; I was in the right for offering such input, and they were wrong for not accepting it well.

Since my younger days there has been significant technological change related to sharing of views and opinions, specifically with the development of the internet, discussion boards, blogs, and social media in general. I would say that nowadays I still believe that I tend not to think of things the same as most others, and to hold many controversial views, however I see there are indeed others "out there", that I can probably find if I like, that have sympathy with every one of my current thoughts, and those

thoughts I have yet to conceive. This has made me feel better than I used to. While I may from time to time feel alone in opinion locally, I am comforted knowing someone else out there does indeed think about each particular idea the way I do, and I could find them if I wanted. In fact, I think I now voice opinions more freely than ever, though that might also be due to increased age and cynicism!

I believe it is still accurate and appropriate for me to assume that I still don't quite fit in by holding many of my ideas or with my understanding of the way things are or could be, at least not with the average person in the society in which I live. However, I am more comfortable with that belief in the newly interconnected, idea-sharing world we now live. In addition, I have people around me now that do indeed like debate and seem not to take it hard if something offends a core belief of their own, or at least they seem to be forgiving when it does. I can live with that, with a core belief, still intact.