

*“Intolerance of Intolerance” Diversity Awareness Corner*



*Beyond This Place... There Be Dragons!*

***Scott Warrick, JD, MLHR, SPHR***

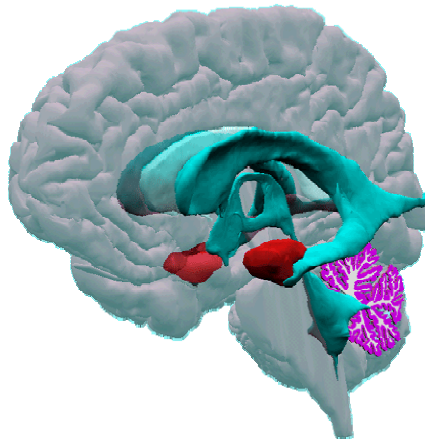
***HUMAN RESOURCE CONSULTING, EMPLOYMENT LAW & TRAINING SERVICES***  
***(614) 367-0842 – Office (614) 738-8317 – Cell***

**[www.scottwarrick.com](http://www.scottwarrick.com)**

**JULY 2007**

**TUNE YOUR NOBS!**

**EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE  
&  
EVERYDAY HYPERSENSITIVITY  
AND MENTAL ILLNESS**



# EVERYDAY HYPERSENSITIVITY AND MENTAL ILLNESS

by

**Scott Warrick, JD, MLHR, SPHR**

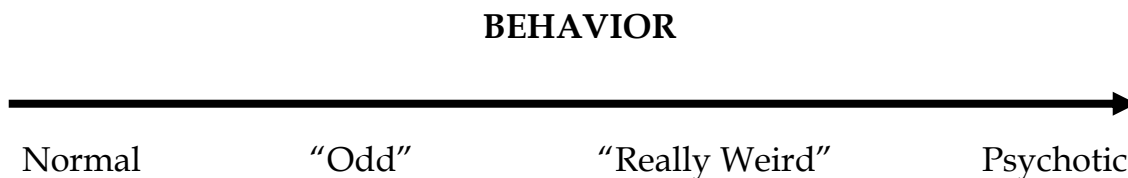
Last month, we examined the recent findings on extreme hypersensitivity and mental illness. Basically, when our emotional brain burns too hot, we become hypersensitive. Our ego takes over and no one can disagree with us. When this hypersensitivity goes too far...when our emotional brain burns too hot, we act in an irrational manner. This is why some people blow up abortion clinics ... they fly airplanes into buildings ... and so on.

But what about everyday people who are just a pain? They are not going to end up on the top of a bell tower with a rifle. They are not going to come to work with an AK-47 and level the place. But is there still a problem?

**ABSOLUTELY!**

Dr. Alvin F. Poussaint, a professor of psychiatry at Harvard Medical School, says mental illness is not an absolute line in the sand. According to Poussaint, human behavior and mental illnesses occur on a continuum. “Insanity” is not simply a “black and white” issue. In reality, people with mental issues or even psychotic people with delusional disorders can function so well that they aren’t seen as being seriously disturbed, even by some experts who may see them for evaluation. Many times, such people might at best be seen as just a little “quirky.”

What is a “mental illness”? It simply means that something in your brain is not working quite right. Well, there are varying degrees of it, as diagrammed below:



Hypersensitive people can cause tremendous damage. They can derail a Diversity/Tolerance Program, a department and even entire organizations.

How do we know a “hypersensitive” person when we see one? By the very nature of the term “hyper.” They are the very, very, very small minority who make very self-centered and ego-centric complaints. “Hyper” means “outside the norm” or “far outside of the norm.” Usually, such folks only comprise 5% of the population. So, how can these 5 Percenters derail everything? Because of the three “Rules of Leadership.” Although no one would ever admit to it, the following tend to be the **actual** “Rules of Leadership” far too many organizations follow:

# “Rules” of Leadership

**RULE #1: NEVER UPSET ANYONE!**

**RULE #2: AVOID ALL FORMS OF CONFLICT**

**RULE #3: NEVER ADDRESS AN ISSUE. IGNORE IT...IT WILL GO AWAY.**

This struggle for power and control is no more prevalent than in Diversity/Tolerance Programs...as can be seen in the following examples. Well, let me share with you some of the hypersensitive people I have encountered in the last few years and see if you think perhaps their emotional system is burning just a little too hot.

## **POLITICAL HYPERSENSITIVITY**

A while back, I conducted a “Diversity/Tolerance” training session, “**Management v. Labor: Diversity in the Workplace**” for a public service organization in the Dayton, Ohio area. As part of this program, I used the following statement from Bill Bennett to illustrate the point that even the most educated among us make bigoted statements.



On his “Morning In America Radio Show” **Bill Bennett** said to a caller:

**“If you wanted to reduce the crime rate...**

**[Y]ou could abort every black baby in this country ... and your crime rate would go down.”**

I also included bigoted comments from James Watt, former Secretary of the Interior, Lawrence Summers, former President of Harvard University, and former L.A. Police Chief Daryl Gates.

One attendee became *very* upset regarding my use of Bill Bennett’s quote. She interrupted the session and openly accused me of playing politics with my presentation and taking Mr. Bennett’s comments out of context.

“That is **NOT** what he said,” she boldly stated.

“You edited that quote so he would look like a bigot,” another said. “Why did you put ellipses in the quote and take out parts? You must be distorting the truth!”

I could see the foam starting to form around their mouths as their teeth grew longer and their claws began to protrude. I swore I could hear the “spark” of someone in the back lighting a torch and the “clang” of pitchforks being distributed. I had committed a cardinal sin:

**I had upset a bunch of middle-aged white people!  
I criticized “THEIR MAN ... AND HE CAN DO NO WRONG!”**

I was accused of being a liberal Democrat who was attacking a great Republican. (I thought this was really ironic because just a few months earlier in Toledo, Ohio I was accused of being an ultra-conservative Republican who was attacking Democrats.)

In reality, it never even dawned on me when I was putting the program together which political party the people in my examples were affiliated. Actually, I did not even know the political affiliation of the people in most of my examples, and I really didn’t think it mattered.

When I tried to explain all of this, the woman who claimed I was picking on Republicans got up and stormed out. However, on break, several black employees came up to me and confided in me that voicing a contrary opinion to certain people in this organization, including the woman who stormed out of the session, was suicide. Apparently, she is “always right,” I was told.

So, just to make sure we are all on the same page as to what was said, here is the entire quote:

**BENNETT: But I do know that it's true that if you wanted to reduce crime, you could -- if that were your sole purpose, you could abort every black baby in this country, and your crime rate would go down. That would be an impossible, ridiculous, and morally reprehensible thing to do, but your crime rate would go down.**

(The last time I checked, the number one factor influencing crime in this country was actually socio-economic...**NOT** race.) (source: FBI “Uniform Crime Rates: 2005”)

If you want to hear this statement with your own ears, just go to the following web link.

<http://clips.mediamatters.org/static/audio/bennett-200509280006.mp3>

## RELIGIOUS HYPERSENSITIVITY

In the previous year, I wrote a series of newsletter articles that discussed whether or not we are a “tolerant” people. These articles examined the need to have more tolerance between men and women...between older people and younger people, and so on.

This article series then examined how intolerant some people could be regarding their religion. In one article I asked the question, “Are Muslims Intolerant People?” In another article I asked, “Are Jewish People Intolerant?” Of course, the answer is, “Yes, some are and some are not. When you are talking about people, ‘Always When You Say Always You Are Always Wrong.’”

This series of articles was received very well because it took an in-depth look at how we have to consider each other on an individual basis. You cannot just put a label on someone and say “All of those people are good” or “All of those people are bad.” Likewise, every group of people has a certain number of deviants who “embarrass” the group by becoming intolerant of anyone who thinks differently from them.

However ... when I wrote the next article and took a look at Christianity and asked the question, “Are Christians Intolerant People?” ... trying to show that Christians are just like all the other people I had been writing about for the last few months and that we Christians certainly have tolerance issues of our own, once again, I could hear the torches being lit and the pitch forks clanging together from over 100 miles away.

One of my clients, a large national retail company with warehouses in the “Bible-Belt,” had about seven to ten “Christians” in their Kentucky warehouse location who were outraged. By the end of the week, I had received two or three hate emails and death threats from some of these employees. (I think they take off their “WWJD” bracelets when they send these emails.)

**Oh, yes! We are all VERY tolerant of other people who are just like us!  
(That is tolerance...right?)**

**I don't have to be tolerant of people I don't like...do I?**

As long as I was discussing how important it was for *others* to be tolerant ... I was a hero. But as soon as I suggested that we take a critical look at *ourselves*, and that some Christians were very intolerant ... such as the KKK, I was labeled a “heretic” and non-believer. Interestingly, it was the self-righteous *Diversity Committee* who was most upset over my heresy. (This is not exactly the “leadership” you want from your Diversity Committee.)

This particular facility employed over 400 people. A handful of employees were “offended” ... which constituted the “5 Percenters.” Yet, management “bowed” to the intolerance of the few at the expense of the majority. The leadership was so afraid of upsetting **anyone** that the intolerance of the 5 Percenters was allowed to stand and prevail.

**Oh, yes! I forgot...Rule #1: NEVER UPSET ANYONE!**

I found it interesting that this is the same employer who had just settled a civil rights lawsuit over racial issues earlier that year for over \$2 million dollars. I cannot understand **WHY** this organization would have these types of racial issues when the leadership and rank-and-file employees are so “tolerant”? (**MUCH** sarcasm goes here.)

Are Christians tolerant people? They are just like everyone else...some are, and some aren't. In truth, most of us are still working on it ... while others are not trying at all. **Intolerance ... is Intolerance ... is Intolerance ... is Intolerance.**

On another occasion I was presenting to a large retirement planning organization in Downtown Columbus when I angered one woman so much that she got up and left my presentation. She left because I suggested that the Ku Klux Klan actually uses the sacred cross as one of their symbols. (I thought most everyone already knew that.)

### **DOG AND CAT HYPERSENSITIVITY**

On another occasion, I made a comment about dogs, which upset two of the dog lovers in the room so much one got up and left. When I later made a comment about cats, just to even things out, I ticked off some of the cat people. (Sometimes I think working the fryer at McDonald's would be a promotion for me and an easier way to make a living.)

### **DEALING WITH HYPERSENSITIVITY**

When I reflect upon the various hypersensitive people I have encountered in my travels, in light of recent developments and discoveries regarding how our brain really works, how people react when they are operating with a normal healthy brain, it is apparent that these incidents all involve people who are operating from a position of hypersensitivity.

### **REMEMBER: Hypersensitivity is NOT Normal**

According to Dr. Daniel Amen of the Amen Clinics, who oversees the largest bank of Nuclear SPECT Brain Scans in the world, the natural state of a human with a healthy brain is to be a tolerant and caring person. They can take a joke. They do not go into a tirade when someone voices a contrary opinion to theirs. Others are actually allowed to have their own opinions. That is the basis of “tolerance.” They are, in short, Emotionally Intelligent people.

Each of these examples of hypersensitivity represents deviant behavior by a few individuals. Unfortunately, when things start to get tough, when the “hypersensitive bullies” and the “5 Percenters” of the organization become offended, they complain that their opinions are being challenged, whatever that issue might be, and their mental disorder becomes apparent for the whole world to see, what will the leadership do? Will they run and hide ... or will they stand up to the “deviants?”

If they bow to the 5 Percenters, then the crazy people will literally be running the place.



## **Scott Warrick, JD, MLHR, SPHR**

**Human Resource Consulting, Employment Law & Training Services**  
**(614) 367-0842 Office ♣ (614) 738-8317 Cell ♣ (614) 367-1044 FAX**

**www.scottwarrick.com**

**2007, 2006 and 2003 SHRM National Diversity Conference Workshop Presenter**

**Nationally Certified Emotional Intelligence Instructor and Examiner**

Scott travels the country presenting his revolutionary “**ANTS, TROLLS and EMOTIONALLY INTELLIGENT COMMUNICATORS**” and his “**Intolerance of Intolerance Skill-Based Diversity/Tolerance Program,**” which focuses on the **FOUR BASIC SKILLS** needed to combat **ANY** type of bigotry/bullying employees encounter in the workplace, rather than the traditional “Cultural-Based” types of programs that focus on only a few select different cultures.

Scott’s clients include Ohio Department of Administrative Services, The Gap, Area Agency on Aging, Skyline Chili, The Ohio Supreme Court, Heinz Frozen Foods, Fayette County Hospital, Honeywell, Carastar International, Utah State Workforce Development, etc.

Scott’s academic background and awards include:

- Masters degree in Labor and Human Resources: The Ohio State University
- Capital University College of Law (Class Valedictorian (1st out of 233))
- Lifetime Senior Professional in Human Resources (SPHR) accreditation
- The Human Resource Association of Central Ohio’s Linda Kerns Award for Outstanding Creativity in the Field of Human Resource Management and the Ohio State Human Resource Council’s David Prize for Creativity in Human Resource Management

***Solving Employee Problems BEFORE They Happen!***