

## Forgiveness Is an Important Trait, and Trump Supporters Get to Practice It a Lot

I have detected a common theme in the writings of Trump supporters, one that is also present in his campaign advertising. It goes something like this: “Yes, the man is crude, rude, and even obscene, but he gets things done.” As good Christians, which most of his supporters are, they forgive him his flaws and, after all, Jesus died for his sins, too. You’ll recall that one reader whom I referred to as “Mary” compared him to Einstein, noting that all geniuses (even stable ones like Trump) have flaws.

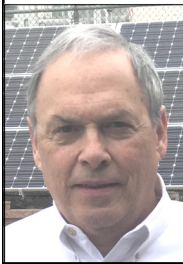
Donald Trump certainly does exercise his innate flaws, giving his supporters plenty of opportunity to practice forgiveness.

They forgive him — if not praise him — for saying that there were “many fine people” among the alt-right demonstrators in Charlottesville who marched with torches chanting, “Jews will not replace us!” even though one of them killed a young woman by driving his car into a crowd of people protesting those “fine people.”

They obviously have forgiven him for the Access Hollywood tape and for getting his fixer to pay off a porn star — and then forgave him for lying about it.

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### Talking Turkey



By JIM SMITH

They forgive him — or perhaps believe him — for saying that he knows more than the generals about military matters and more than all 17 intelligence agencies about Vladimir Putin. They also forgive him for sending emissaries to Moscow during the campaign to negotiate a Trump Tower Moscow, which probably explains why he never criticizes Putin. And, oh yes, they forgive him for attacking many of our allies while praising many dictators.

They forgive him for being a compulsive liar — or, worse, think he always tells the truth. All politicians lie, they say, so you have to forgive him for misstatements. They say that Obama lied too, but, coincidentally, every one of them cites the very same lie from Obama that “if you like your doctor, you can keep your doctor.” Find some new ones!

They forgive him — even like him — for using “locker-room language” to describe those who don’t like his policies. If he were a U.S. Senator and spoke like that in a chamber where Senators still address each other as “the gentleman from Texas” or “the gentle lady from Minnesota,” he’d be censured or even expelled, but his Senate enablers instead praise Trump, lest he endorse a primary challenger.

After writing several “Talking Turkey” columns about the unwavering support President Trump enjoys and concluding that members of his base are “unreachable” through logic, reason or the recitation

of facts, I have received many emails from Trump supporters who resent that conclusion and contend that we who oppose Trump are the unreachable ones who ignore facts and believe lies.

All of this has taken me back to school, it seems. I have been reading about “**confirmation bias**,” an academic term which Wikipedia defines as “the tendency to search for, interpret, favor, and recall information that confirms or supports one’s prior personal beliefs or values.” Everyone, it seems, suffers from confirmation bias, so the question is what are one’s “personal beliefs and values.” Fox News and talk radio feed the confirmation bias of Trump supporters.

Currently I’m reading *The Righteous Mind: Why Good People Are Divided by Politics and Religion*, a 2012 social psychology textbook by Jonathan Haidt. It is very enlightening but also very discouraging, in that I’m learning exactly how easy it has been to divide America and how hard it will be to bring us back together. The first part of the book is filled with academic details which I found difficult to follow at times, but his explanation of confirmation bias made sense. Wikipedia’s entry is much more readable!

I urge you to follow [www.JimSmithBlog.com](https://www.jimsmithblog.com), where I post these articles and others **with more content and links**, such as to that Wikipedia entry.

I welcome emails, both pro and con. I learn so much from each. Email me at [jimsmith@ecentral.com](mailto:jimsmith@ecentral.com), or write to me at 17695 S. Golden Rd., Golden 80401.