

## The Quick Art of Knowing

Open discourse on sensitive subjects is always good so long as the parties are able to separate the personal from the ideological. But most people can't because they confuse politics, which might be defined as "the attainment of and way in which power is used between various parties," with personal beliefs.

In today's world, information is power. But that's different than knowledge. One is cursory and usually gleaned from minor sources chosen by the person looking for the reinforcement of personal values and ideologies. Knowledge is attained when you suspend your beliefs and dig into more investigative and substantive texts that explore issues in greater detail. It also brings with it a certain kind of false sense of entitlement. Just because you are more knowledgeable about something doesn't necessarily offer you privileges by default.

That said, if someone takes the time and effort to truly "know" a subject, why should they have to defer to someone who has not put the time and effort in? Some researchers and academics will speak of this burden of knowledge with equal part whimsy, restraint and yes...arrogance. I suppose it all circles back to the beginning—the ability to find and use empathy.

That and, as Bette Midler says, "It's all in the delivery, honey."