

## A Sermon on Individual Identity

Sermon by Rev. Minister Angela Smith of COPE for April 24th, 2022 (and beyond)

Like many of my sermons, this one is in dialogue format. “Individual” is defined by Oxford Languages via Google as “a single human being as distinct from a group, class, or family.” “Identity” is defined by Oxford Languages via Google as “the fact of being who or what a person or thing is.” So, when individual people identify themselves by group, class, family, or anything other than a human with a name to which they respond, they are labeling themselves. In a world of categorization for the sake of facilitating communication on various topics or issues, some have decided to label themselves before anyone else can do it or in response to labels others have attributed to them. At the heart of this issue for me is that I don't label myself, I'm just me. In other words, I identify as an individual human who responds to being called Angela Marie Smith (Angela or Rev. Smith is fine too) and love everyone to the best of my ability without sacrificing good faith and honesty to serve vanity. I love vanity though because it is in many ways the funniest vice to witness.

### DIALOGUE

Party #1: I'm hungry. I'm going to order Chinese. Do you want anything?

Party #2: I identify as someone who enjoys pizza. I identify as someone who likes pepperoni, mushrooms, black olives, zesty red sauce, and light cheese.

Party #1: I'm not in the mood for pizza. I'm ordering Chinese. You can order a pizza if you like, but that's not what I'm having.

Party #2: I identify as someone who enjoys salads. I identify as someone who likes both fresh garden salads with vinaigrette or ranch dressing and fruit salads.

Party #1: Have you ever tried Chinese food? I can show you the menu. If you are into appetizers, egg rolls or pot stickers might be good. If you aren't in on that, maybe soup? Do you like Wonton or corn chowder?

Party #2: I identify as someone who likes chocolate chip cookies. I do not identify as someone who enjoys nuts in them. No nuts.

Party #1: The Chinese place has some desserts including fortune cookies and chocolate chip cookies. You want me to add chocolate chip cookies?

Party #2: I should really eat something first before indulging in sweets. I identify as a responsible eater.

Party #1: I have low blood sugar and it is dropping. If I don't get this order in soon I might become noticeably irritable. I'm going to place my order, you do what you want.

I'm ordering the chocolate chip cookies for you but nothing else so don't even think about having a bite of mine. The cookies are my gift, that's it.

Party #2: I identify as someone who isn't being heard right now. I identify as someone who will go hungry.

Party #1: I just placed my order online and it should be here in 75 minutes. They are really busy tonight. I suggest you run out and get yourself something to eat while I wait for my food.

Party #2: Don't you have any food? I identify as hungry.

Party #1: I identify as suffering irritability due to low blood sugar unless UNLESS unless it is normal and/or reasonable to be annoyed by your part in this conversation.

Party #2: I identify as reasonable and have not annoyed myself.

Party #1: If I give you money, will you go get yourself whatever you want to eat? Will you eat it where you buy it? I identify as someone who would rather eat alone now. Low blood sugar.

Party #2: I identify as someone hurt by your rejection.

Party #1: I identify as someone with a known medical condition called low blood sugar that is known to cause irritability and have explained that so to me you are being insensitive regarding my medical needs and potentially your own safety. People do some crazy shit when they have this condition and need to eat.

Party #2: You are unsupportive. I identify as someone who no longer wishes to associate with you and am leaving now.

Party #1: Goodbye. Still waiting on that Chinese food. Don't expect the chocolate chip cookies. Here's \$5, buy some or know that's what they cost in the order so you can now buy it yourself and I'll eat the ones on the way.

Party #2: I identify as grateful and someone who may call again. Goodbye.

Party #1: I won't be here even if I am. I'm not even totally here now until the Chinese food arrives. I can't put my health at risk by having this happen again.

END DIALOGUE

Now, with low blood sugar, it is important to have snacks around or even apple juice. But, if it drops too low real food is the answer so it is best to keep it on hand so you don't have to wait on food delivery to avoid irritability or moodiness caused by the low blood sugar. But, was low blood sugar really the explanation for the frustration or something

else? Maybe Party #2 never took Party #1 into consideration and that's the real problem. It is clear Party #1 was being very considerate and trying to satisfy Party #2 while still taking care of Party #1's needs. Party #2 never showed any consideration for Party #1 even though Party #1 has a medical condition. Party #2 only cares about Party #2. Do you know anyone like Party #1 and/or Party #2? Which one do you relate to more? Would you be friends with either?

#TaoFu Joker says: "Party #1 decided on Chinese without consulting Party #2. Was that considerate? What was the situation here? Did Party #1 invite Party #2 to dinner and then spring on Party #2 that it was Chinese delivery? I honestly can't take a side without knowing more of the back-story."

#TaoFu Catwoman says: "Party #1 offered to order whatever Party #2 wanted if Party #2 was clear and also offered money for Party #2 to go buy whatever food they wanted, I think you took it out of context. Party #1 also ordered chocolate chip cookies for Party #2 because Party #2 likes them and that was communicated though apparently not something they identified as wanting at the time."

#TaoFu Joker says: "That is confusing. I'm with Party #1. You are right."

For those interested in starting #TaoFu Self-Defense Exercises, please see <https://www.cope.church/taofu.htm> and begin at any time.

There are opportunities to send messages, receive mystery bonus blessings, and more with or without donating available now on our "Pass the Basket" page at <https://www.cope.church/basket.htm> . Thank You.

"And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." John 8:32 KJV Willful blindness is an abomination.

COPE accepts Feedback, critical and complimentary. Learn more at <https://www.cope.church/feedback.htm> . For the sake of keeping myself and others humble, a sense of humor is welcome on all sides.

For More About COPE and the HEAL Mission, see:

<https://www.cope.church> and <https://www.heal-online.org>