

COMMUNITY COMMENT  
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### The real Value of Normal

We live in a great country. We enjoy great beauty in the natural landscape around us. We have vast resources to sustain our needs. We have a great diversity of people and cultures and histories and religions that have managed to come together and form communities that work for a common good. Much of our success is due to this unique government of ours. This government was no accident. It was formed in response to tyranny and oppression. It was debated and discussed by educated people who drew everything they could from the history they knew going back even to the ancient Greeks.

A government by the people and for the people is not perfect. After all, there are people in charge and people are not perfect. Like in any family, however, rules are created and traditions are established to create communities that work for most of the individuals. Over time, stability is created and people establish a trust that their community will be somewhat predictable. Their lives have a rhythm to them. They can have meaningful work that allows for the opportunity for their children to have a better life than their parents. This working system becomes a community with a future and life becomes normal. A great example of the value of normal is how quickly we returned to our lives after WW II. And this normal lead to even greater success as a nation and as a people.

The 2016 Presidential election was not normal. The media covered everything Trump said because it was often outrageous. He lied and made things up as he went along. We now know that the Russians interfered at every level from fake facebook lies to hacking our election computers. This was done down to the county level in a few instances. We also know thousands of provisional ballots were not counted and an unknown number of people were simply taken off the rolls.

After the Inaugural Address, Trump said he had the biggest crowds ever; or at least bigger than Obama's. Photographs don't lie but Trump does. This is not normal.

All the intelligence agencies agree the Russia hacked our election. But Trump has yet to admit this happened. As a result, we are not combating this attack as we must to maintain our democratic integrity. Is Trump worried about the legitimacy of his election?. He should be. It is outrageous that the President is this incompetent and unwilling to learn on the job. In any other job, he would be fired. This is not normal.

Great Britain, perhaps our closes ally, had two people poisoned with a nerve gas on their soil and gathered enough evidence to charge the Russians and expel many diplomats. Our intelligence community sided with Great Britain as did our U.N. ambassador. But our president and our commander in chief would not declare the same. This is not normal.

This week Trump called Putin to congratulate him on his election victory. Russia is not a democracy! Their elections are a joke. Opposition leaders are killed in the street. The leader of the free world does not congratulate this victory. Trump's own staff told him not to. This is not normal.

We will continue to diminish this great country of ours until we get back to normal. Normal has a brain and a moral compass. Trump does not.

This has been Sam Pennisi for community comment.