Twitter Thread by Jeff Rybak■■

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I believe very strongly we need to start tolerating one another more, making space for one another, working hard to bridge the divide. It's a theme I've been on about for a while. And I get push-back - often very indignant and heated. Sometimes outright accusatory. #cdnpoli 1/16

A point I keep trying to make, with varying degrees of success, is no matter how much other people may bug you, even disgust you, they're simply not going to disappear tomorrow. So we need to live together. It's not a question of if, it's only a question of how. #cdnpoli 2/16

The response I've never understood is the purist one. I refuse to live with X. I make no allowance for Y. How dare you (turning the question back on me) even imply we should tolerate Z. That's offensive. They are wrong and we are right. It's simple. No compromises. #cdnpoli 3/16

I consider purists to be comically self-indulgent. I've even started arguments over it. I recognize the attraction of purity. It feels great to stand firm on principle and uphold what's right. The question I return to is - now what? They're still here, as are we. #cdnpoli 4/16

What I forget, sometimes, is I view this as a political problem and not everyone does, even when talking about politics. They hear me say we need to live with the "other side" and imagine I mean make friends with them, date them, go bowling with them. That isn't it. #cdnpoli 5/16

If a certain kind of person disgusts you, you can cut them out of your life. Stop being friends with them, stop inviting them to family functions, refuse even to work with them if you have that luxury. You can socialize with only like-minded people. To a point. #cdnpoli 6/16

I wonder if the ability to curate our news, our online communities, even our own "facts" has led to the odd impression we can curate people we dislike entirely out of our environment. That doesn't actually work. Again, the basic problem. They're still here. #cdnpoli 7/16

So, to the issue. How do we live together? Saying you don't want to live with those people at all doesn't solve the problem. It just makes it someone else's problem to solve. That's exactly what politics is. I can't force you to care about it. But I do, very much. #cdnpoli 8/16

Purists love to imagine the problem gets solved when they win. Some of them are very happy right now. But the other side becomes desperate in equal measure. Society can't function when half of us are terrified of the other half at all times. Isn't that obvious? #cdnpoli 9/16

I'd love to offer a sweeping solution, but truthfully I don't have one. It's easier to burn bridges than build them. Rapprochement is a challenge and not one I find easy myself, no matter how many people call me out as an apologist. But it's our challenge to meet. #cdnpoli 10/16

I know we need to start, at least, with the most basic observation I keep making. They're here. So are we. They aren't leaving. Neither are we. We need to function as a society. That's part of what government does. We need to talk and work together. Somehow. #cdnpoli 11/16

I admit what I've failed to see at times in the past. You can opt-out of the problem if you like. It's hard for many people, frankly. But if you pass on the dirty, difficult task of making society function, you really might want to go easy on the criticism too. #cdnpoli 12/16

I know viewing things from this perspective - making politics a problem for all of us to solve - can be challenging. But I think we're up for it. People say that social media, the Internet, digital communities are dividing us. I actually see great hope in this. #cdnpoli 13/16

I think we've all been greatly empowered by access to information, to dialogue, to creating our own audiences both large and small. With that power comes responsibility - which we've struggled with at times - and a learning curve. But we'll get there. #cdnpoli 14/16

The reason I get so pissy (and I do, I know) with people who blow off the problem of just living with others around us, and imagining that purity and righteousness will make that problem go away, is that I see it as an abdication of power and responsibility. #cdnpoli 15/16

I don't have a solution. I've said that already. But I want to work on the problem with anyone else who wants to try. Tell me you can't be bothered if you like. I can live with that. Just don't tell me it's simple. It isn't. It's the defining challenge of our time. #cdnpoli 16/16