



## Be Agreeable

"I know where I am going."

"I am sure you were supposed to have turned back there."

"Really? I have driven this route a thousand times. I know what I am doing."

"Then why does that sign say 'Dead End'?"

"If you hadn't been nagging me, I am sure I would not have missed that turn-off."

A typical couple on a nice drive? Possibly. Some people feel they must be right all the time (or can't admit they are wrong!) Civility expects that we must be willing to consider that we might be wrong, be willing to admit we "just don't know." Internet search engines have made millions off this concept. If we all knew everything, there would be no need for Google! However, during a conversation or debate, it may not be possible to use Google; it may be necessary either to admit you do not know or to accept that the other person may know more. This is also referred to as humility.

*"Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind let each of you regard one another as more important than himself" (Philippians 2:3).*

A civil person acknowledges that he or she does not possess all wisdom and knowledge. A civil person possesses humility. Humility can be more than accepting a lack of knowledge. Humility is also the willingness to avoid disagreement by finding agreement. In a religious discussion, it is unlikely that a Christian and a Jew will agree on everything; however, they can certainly agree on a number of things. Despite the fact that one is not likely to convert or accept the other's opinions on religion, Christians and Jews can still work together by finding commonality. These common pockets of agreement instill civility.

Don't let incivility rob your joy. Be happy! (Matthew 5:1-12).

Credit: Oshkosh Civility Project

Visit the Door County Civility Project for more information: <http://www.doorcountycivilityproject.org>



## Keys to Civility - Think Positively

*"The precepts of the LORD are right, giving joy to the heart. The commands of the LORD are radiant, giving light to the eyes."* -Psalm 19

### **Because it Matters:**

While the word "positive" is not used in either the Old or New Testaments, we are commanded throughout the Bible to live a joyful life and to find joy in the Lord. In the Old Testament, we are commanded to focus on the precepts of the Lord; in the New Testament, Paul tells us to find joy in all things. Yet every day we find ourselves subject to life's little aggravations: a driver cuts you off in traffic, your boss says that he or she is disappointed in your work, or you have a disagreement with a spouse or friend. How can you possibly stay positive with all of life's little negativities nipping at your heels? Maintaining a positive attitude can steer you through this maze of aggravations and help you rediscover all the joy that life has to offer.

### **Applying it to my life:**

1. How can we stay positive and joyous, when there is so much negativity and conflict in the world?
2. Why does it seem easier to be negative than positive?
3. Where does joy come from? How can we tap into the eternal spring of joy available to us?
4. Think of a time when you allowed lots of little negative things to affect your outlook on life. How could you have handled those situations differently?
5. Think of some things that bring you joy in your daily life.

Credit: *Because it Matters - Bringing Back Civility* - Gulf Coast Community Foundation of Venice

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