Spread the Word: Civility Always

Choosing to communicate civilly we are acting for ourselves, but we are also setting an example. Those we interact will be observing civility. Still we really can do a lot more to move civility forward. Remember most of us have reported that we have experienced being treated uncivilly. With our huge social media, television, and a vast variety of entertainment and social interactions, we often see many examples of uncivility. The plain truth is that people will act as they see how others act. We may stand alone, but our example will not really be seen. Consequently, we need to take the next step, we cannot remain silent hoping that others will see how we speak.

We need to spread the word to communicate in a civil manner in every one of your interactions.

 There are multiple ways that we can spread the word that civility practices need to be always used. First and foremost when we see civil language we need to acknowledge this to those who are around us. Here are just a few examples of speaking up for civility. In a staff when there various opinions going around and one staff member states that these are the items all seem to agree on, you could say “Finding agreement is one of the tools of civility which will help us to reach out goal”. You could be watching TV and a scene depicts one person obviously listening intently to another and say to your family “It is so great to see one person listening to another”. At sporting events so many people will boo when they do not like call. If the person next to you does not boo, turn and say that you are pleased to see civil behavior in another by showing respect to the referee.

Since civility is not only about verbal communication, but behaviors and gestures that convey civility, there are many other ways that you can spread the word. Courtesy, a respectful or considerate act, excellent of manners, is one of those behaviors. Always asking with a Please and when someone does something for you; responding with a Thank You. If you are entering a building and a person is behind you, opening the door and letting them in first. If you and another start to speak at the same time, indicate that you will let them go first. So often when we are leaving an event and cars are trying to leave at the same time, let someone in the main line.

A second behavior is kindness, a gentle considerate nature. Perhaps kindness is like the one of Mary Poppins statements, “A spoon full of sugar helps the medicine go down”. So often we see someone in some kind of stress, our offer to help eases their pain at that moment. We see someone carrying a number of items and coming up to a door probably wondering how am I going to get this open, when you open that door for them. Their problem is instantly solved and they can move forward. A few words of support, bringing a casserole to family that has lost a loved one, helping your hostess clear the dishes after a meal, or offering to shovel the drive while your friend has broken an arm are just a few acts of kindness. Truly both of you feel more positive. I tend to watch The Today Show and each day they have the Morning Boost where they share an act of kindness. I have seen other news shows do the same thing. You can share these kind acts with your friends since hearing about kindness can encourage them to act when they see someone in need.

Humor or the ability to be amused is a third behavior. Laughter lightens our load. I am part of group of friends who play cards, mainly bridge, but we are always laughing with each other. One person regularly shares a joke that she gets from a friend. We tease each other kindly and laugh together. We laugh at ourselves when we make a mistake. Our laughter is heard by others and they want to join in. Our laughter helps each of us deal with some of the hardships of life. Others will want to join you.

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