



Choosing Civility...

A Talk Given by Gerry Gordon-Brown based on Dr. Forni's Book

This book is about how we should treat each other. All people deserve respect except when extreme rudeness is being demonstrated. First let us define civility. Civility is defined as a code of conduct based on the "3Rs" - **Respect, Restraint** and **Responsibility** for our personal behavior throughout our participation in activities of daily living. Civility is about showing kindness, consideration, sensitivity, caring, giving and nurturing.

The majority of people would agree that thoughtful behavior, common decency and random acts of kindness are in short supply in our nation today. Showing kindness and good manners have been put on the back burner or simply forgotten in our hurry up world of emails, mobile phones, texting, and multi-tasking projects. In our society we have forgotten how to treat each other or how to be kind to each other. When we watch or listen to our local and/or national news, what you read or hear for the most part is negative news...someone or a group of people hurting someone or a group of people hurting more than one. We are living in very dangerous times. A higher level of civility is needed in our activities of daily living, starting at home and then transferring into our communities and then to our nation.

We as members of a civilized society need to demonstrate many more random acts of kindness. People deserve respect for the most part, but sometimes it is very difficult to show respect because of the way we are treated. In his book **Choosing Civility**, Dr. Forni identifies twenty-five rules that are most essential in connecting effectively and being happy with ourselves and others. He covers topics that include the following:

- **Think Twice Before Asking Favors**
- **Give Constructive Criticism**
- **Refrain from Idle Complaints**
- **Respect Others' Opinions**

- **Don't Shift Responsibility and Blame**
- **Care for your Guests**
- **Accept and Give Praise**

We are way overdue to a return to a high level of civility in our society. It is much easier to be respectful and kind than to be mean, rude, and having a negative attitude. We seldom read or hear about acts of kindness. Our acts of kindness are few and far apart in some cases, given the major highlights of our local and national news reports. There is a saying by one of our local organizations that says "Attitudes are the Real Disability". It is true, if we have a kind attitude and show respect for people, we feel better - we like ourselves, and we help make this a better world and more civilized society. Good manners never go out of style; it's the same from one generation to another. Being polite and saying 'please' and 'thank you' demonstrates good manners towards each other. A friend once stated that rudeness seems to be an acceptable norm in many situations. We are failing the respect and consideration test. There is a need to constantly practice good manners until good manners become a habit. There are some behaviors that are influenced by our sense of what is proper, responsible and a decent act to do.

Finally, I truly believe that this is a book for every member of our community and our nation. Dr. Forni provides examples of how to put each rule into practice and so it makes life for each of us and the lives of others more enjoyable, happy and rewarding.

Choosing Civility is a book that is very easy to read and it is a practical handbook on the lost art of civility and compassion!

Finally, remember these words of wisdom...

"Treat people as if they were what they ought to be and you help them to become what they are capable of being." Wolfgang

"Individually we're smart, but Together we're brilliant" unknown

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