

## **WHY BEING NICE TO OTHERS IS GOOD FOR YOU**

Turns out that being nice to other people isn't just good for the recipients of your kindness. According to the latest research, people who are generous and altruistic reap a host of benefits from their behavior, from lower stress levels to happier relationships to reduced risk of heart disease.

*People developed deeper friendships, more meaningful relationships. They had a sense of gratification. They expressed greater resiliency when they experienced problems and tough times in life. So in my view if you could take those kinds of self-reported benefits and put them in a pill, market them at the drugstore, you'd be a billionaire overnight. But the thing is that you don't really have to do that because if people simply get in touch with that evolved aspect of their being, they tend to benefit from it.*

So, does this turn the old adage on its head? Do nice guys actually finish first? Maybe not always, but it looks like they're a lot happier -- and may well live longer -- than more selfish individuals.



## **STRESS MANAGEMENT - WAYS TO AVOID STRESS**

*Stress is a part of life, and you can't always avoid it. But you can try to avoid situations that can cause it, and you can control how you respond to it. The first step is knowing your own coping strategies. Try tracking your stress to record stressful events, your response to them, and how you coped.*

*After you know what is causing your stress, try making some changes in your life that will help you avoid stressful situations. Here are a few ideas:*

### **Manage your time**

*Time management is a way to find the time for more of the things you want and need to do. It helps you decide which things are urgent and which can wait. Managing your time can make your life easier, less stressful, and more meaningful.*

*Stress Management: Managing Your Time*

### **Look at your lifestyle**

*The choices you make about the way you live affect your stress level. Your lifestyle may not cause stress on its own, but it can prevent your body from recovering from it. Try to:*

- Find a balance between personal, work, and family needs.** *This isn't easy. Start by looking at how you spend your time. Maybe there are things that you don't need to do at all. Finding a balance can be especially hard during the holidays. Quick Tips: Reducing Holiday Stress*

- Have a sense of purpose in life.** *Many people find meaning through connections with family or friends, jobs, their spirituality, or volunteer work.*

- Get enough sleep.** *Your body recovers from the stresses of the day while you are sleeping. If your worries keep you from sleeping, keep a notepad or your cell phone by your bed to record what you are worried about—to help you let it go while you sleep. For example, if you are worried you might forget to run an errand the next day, make a note so that you can stop worrying about forgetting. Insomnia: Improving Your Sleep*

- Adopt healthy habits.** *Eat a healthy diet, limit how much alcohol you drink, and don't smoke. Staying healthy is your best defense against stress.*

- Exercise.** *Even moderate exercise, such as taking a daily walk, can reduce stress.*

## **Get support**

*Support in your life from family, friends, and your community has a big impact on how you experience stress. Having support in your life can help you stay healthy.*

*Support means having the love, trust, and advice of others. But support can also be something more concrete, like time or money. It can be hard to ask for help. But doing so doesn't mean you're weak. If you're feeling stressed, you can look for support from:*

- *Family and friends.*
- *Coworkers, or people you know through hobbies or other interests.*
- *A professional counselor. (See tips for finding a counselor or therapist.)*
- *People you know from church, or a member of the clergy.*
- *Employee assistance programs at work, or stress management classes.*
- *Support groups. These can be very helpful if your stress is caused by a special situation. Maybe you are a caregiver for someone who is elderly or has a chronic illness. Quick Tips: Reducing the Stress of Caregiving*

## **Change your thinking**

*Stressful events can make you feel bad about yourself. You might start focusing on only the bad and not the good in a situation. That's called negative thinking. It can make you feel afraid, insecure, depressed, or anxious. It's also common to feel a lack of control or self-worth.*

*Negative thinking can trigger your body's stress response, just as a real threat does. Dealing with these negative thoughts and the way you see things can help reduce stress. You can learn these techniques on your own, or you can get help from a counselor. Here are some ideas:*

- *Cognitive-behavior therapy (CBT) helps you cope with a problem by changing the way you think. How you think affects how you feel. To learn more, see the topic Stop Negative Thoughts: Choosing a Healthier Way of Thinking. Stop Negative Thoughts: Getting Started*
- *Problem solving Problem solving helps you identify all aspects of a stressful event, find things you may be able to change, and deal with things you can't change.*
- *Assertive communication helps you express how you feel in a thoughtful, tactful way. Not being able to talk about your needs and concerns creates stress and can make negative feelings worse.*

## 5 REASONS YOU SHOULD SPEAK UP (EVEN WHEN YOU THINK YOU SHOULDN'T)

Are you one to sit back quietly? You may be hurting yourself and others. Here are five good reasons to speak your mind loudly and often.

The art of communication is not mastered by just knowing what to say and how to say it.

A big factor is knowing when to say it. So often people sit back and say nothing when something really needs to be said. It could be an idea, a suggestion, an observation, a criticism...but for some reason they don't want to speak up.

They may be afraid of hurting another person, looking mean or foolish, or opening a can of worms that will make a mess in everyone's lives. Sometimes it seems like staying silent is the wiser choice. But here are five reasons why despite the risk, standing up and saying your piece is best.

### **1. Silence is deemed approval.**

You may think that staying silent keeps you from being involved in any conflict, but quite the opposite. Silence is as much an active form of communication as talking. Anytime you are involved in a situation, people are aware of all the input and lack of it. If you disapprove and don't say anything it will not make you seem easy going. If the problem persists and you did nothing people may consider it as enabling and think the issue is as much your fault as the person who actually caused the problem. You may destroy trust and create resentment. People rarely thank you for withholding information down the line.

### **2. The greater good should be the priority.**

I like to believe most people are good hearted by nature. And many stay silent because they don't want to do any harm by offending or criticizing someone. But when a person or the team is headed down a dangerous path it's selfish to put your own need to be comfortable above the needs of the others. Worse, by staying silent, you may be harming the very people you hope to help. The worst case scenario if you speak up is that someone may disagree, but at least the issue is at the forefront and an active decision can be made. The best case scenario is that everyone benefits and you are hailed as a powerful leader.

### **3. Demonstrate you are invested.**

Why are you in the conversation in the first place? Someone invited you into the dynamic. If you truly don't have a stake, then find a better use of your time. But if you are there for a reason you need to show your commitment to the process and the people involved by being active and vocal. Speaking up is an important form of honesty. Honesty actually builds trust, especially when combined with tact and empathy. Demonstrate that you will be truthful with people, that you care about them, and that you give good advice, and you will never lack for trusting friends and followers.

#### **4. No one else may know.**

You can't assume the obvious is obvious. Your experience and knowledge has value in a given situation. No one else has your unique perspective. That doesn't mean that everything in your brain is worth communicating, but with a little discretion and thought, you should be able to bring value in most situations. And your piece of the puzzle may be the most important finisher. You're also not doing yourself any favors by not sharing your expertise. People don't automatically recognize your skills, values, ambitions, and desires when you are quiet. Gather up your confidence and share.

#### **5. You may not be alone in your thinking.**

It's entirely possible that your insightful observations and conclusions have surfaced in the minds of others. Others may share your thoughts and opinions, but may be also unwilling to speak up. By speaking your mind you encourage them to voice their opinions as well. If everyone holds back, the bus may silently head over a cliff.



## **SDS**

### **The TOPIC for April, 2016**

WHY GOOD LEADERS ARE NOT AFRAID TO BE NICE?

### **Date**

*6<sup>th</sup> April, 2016*

VENUE (MALAYSIA)  
Banker's Club Kuala Lumpur  
(Amoda Building)  
Jalan Imbi  
(Opposite Berjaya Times Square)

### **Time**

6pm - 8pm



## **Timely Inspiration**

### ***“Self Management with Dr. Venga”***

In order to implement effective time management you basically need 10 important elements. First of all, you would need a tool to help you structure your thoughts; help you organise your activities and help you focus on what you want to achieve.

Secondly, you must be willing to make the necessary changes. For example, if you have a need to improve your health, you must be willing to wake up an hour earlier in the morning to exercise. Or if you have children, you must have the need to stop smoking and you must be willing to make the change, so that your children are not subjected to secondary smoke or follow in your footsteps.

Thirdly, you need commitment. You must be committed to see your endeavours through to the end, no matter how dreadful the situation is. You must crave to make it; to be more effective at work and life. Perhaps even at the risk, that others may shun you at the office.

Fourthly, you must have self discipline: to stop yourself when you are going off track, to correct yourself when you feel that you lack discipline. Implementing techniques of time management may seem very simple to you but the techniques must be implemented daily until it becomes a habit. Once you are able to develop these habits, only then will you see yourself benefiting from effective time management.

Fifth, it is important that you seek guidance and support from others. Associating yourself with people who share the same need and desire will help. Like minded company would be able to influence you to get back on the right track as you deter. You should socialize and mix with people who are organized and not those who are taking one day at a time, unconscious of time.

The sixth element is to know what you want in life. Set goals for yourself. Ask yourself what exactly what your life needs en route to a better quality of life. Only when you identify what you want, will you be able to identify it when you see it. You must ensure that your goals are not only realistic and achievable, but also that they provide enough of a challenge for you. It is all too easy to set a goal you can easily achieve. At the same time, recognise that there are many levels of goals. There are some goals that you set with a 5 year timeframe, but there are also goals that you need to set on a daily basis.

Next, you must be prepared to invest time in order to get time. Time is the greatest resource and it if is not used well, you will not be able to reap the benefits. Remember that time and tide waits for no man, therefore you need to sow the seeds of success now, in order to reap the fruits of success in the future. Take time to think and plan for the future that you want.

The eighth element is to believe in yourself. You need to have the confidence that you will be able to achieve what you are setting out to get. You must believe that you are capable and with time and energy as your only resources, you can achieve uncharted results. However, to be able to do this you must utilise your energy well according to the time that you have.

The ninth element is one of the most important. This is to have the skill of writing. Yes, writing. Unless you are able to write all that you see and think about, you will not be able to focus on what you need to achieve. Despite living in what many call the information age, you must go back to basics and tap into the power of the physically written word and personally sketched art.

Lastly, you need to have the initiative to take the first step towards achieving effective time management. You will need to control time wisely in order to satisfy your life values.

Other than the first element – to have a tool – all the other 9 elements are within you and it is up to you to make it happen. As long as you have the desire to achieve a better quality of life, the skills and knowledge of what you need to do, the reasons why you want to make it and the ability to do it, you should have no reason you cannot achieve what you want.





## **4 COMMON COMMUNICATION BARRIERS IN THE WORKPLACE**

Communication is a complex workplace issue. Various factors contribute to effective communication; from the sender, the receiver, the mode of transmission, and the verbiage used. Today, with a myriad of online communication tools replacing the spoken word, it is easier than ever for a simple message to become misconstrued. The most successful organizations utilize effective communication to increase productivity, efficiency, and improve teamwork.

Communication barriers are obstacles in the workplace that prevent the exchange of ideas or thoughts. Communication barriers exist in many forms such as: physical, language, status, and even gender barriers. The presence of these barriers can lead to tension, poor task performance, and an overall unmotivated workforce. It is critical to cultivate effective communication in the workplace to maintain a productive and efficient workforce where all employees feel respected and comfortable. The four most common barriers and how to overcome each one in the workplace:-

### **1. PHYSICAL BARRIERS**

Cubicles, walls, wings, and doors do exactly what they are designed to do- divide. While these structures are essential to ensure personal workspace, adequate concentration, and private conversations, they can pose as a hindrance to communication. A new employee to your workforce could view these dividers as uninviting and unwelcoming. These dividers may also be evident to your employees that have been with your organization for a longer period of time.

### **2. LANGUAGE BARRIERS**

In our ever-evolving, diversified society, we are seeing more and more people entering the workplace who have English as a second language, which can become a barrier. Additionally, employees from different regions in the same country, or even the same city, can have different styles of communicating and use different words with the same meaning. HR managers can take additional steps on their end to make sure that the entire workforce is aware and accepting of everyone's language and cultural differences. This can be achieved through special programs such as diversity training.

### **3. STATUS BARRIERS**

Status barriers are evident in organizations where high-context culture and low-context culture exist. In high-context cultures, rank of receivers within an organization really affect the way messages are received and interpreted. For example, a nurse practitioner will approach tasks assigned by the chief medical officer with more seriousness and urgency than they would if it were assigned by a student in residency. In low-context cultures, rank of receivers within an organization may or may not affect the way messages are received and interpreted. In order to overcome status barriers, managers should reiterate that the organization is a team and each member's role is significant and beneficial to the organization regardless of rank.

### **4. GENDER BARRIERS**

Gender barriers typically occur in organizations where there is a disproportionate amount of male individuals to female individuals and vice versa. The minority gender in an organization might feel uncomfortable communicating with their counterparts due to fears of inferiority. If unaddressed, the issue could plague communication lines and ultimately affect their work performance. To eliminate gender barriers, HR managers should ensure that both male and female employees feel of equal status and are empowered to communicate openly.

Communication is fundamental to the workforce and should not be viewed as a lesser matter. Poor communication can lead to conflict, stifled performance, and even resentment of management or other employees. In order to properly overcome the barriers of communication- managers must recognize the problem, assess the problem with the workforce, and implement solutions to the problem. This will be an on going effort for the HR department and the company as a whole.

# reflections

*Failure will never overtake me if my determination to succeed is strong enough.*

***Work hard, be kind, and amazing things will happen.***

***Conan O'Brien***