

CIVILITY (Part 2)

As a reminder from Part I, civility denotes gentleness as a life skill that shows respect for others. Therefore, successful leadership is rooted in acts of civility. Yet, in recent years there has been a prevalence of dishonesty, bullying, and incivility.

Civility expectations are not new. We teach our children the Golden Rule (I hope)—Treat Others The Way You Want To Be Treated. I guess that is what we mean when the proclamation says that we live in a “Civil Society!?” It takes efforts of restraint when experiencing fierce uncivil disagreement. Some civil people define the ultimate source of civility as “love.”

According to Science Alert (a web-based portal), animals talk to each other with civility. And animals, in this way, are very human-like. A comprehensive study shows that many species take turns in their conversations, just like we do. So, suppose animals came before man (as some claim). In that case, the supported assumption is that civility is innate in our biology. We have learned civil conversation-sharing from animals--called “Turn-Talking.” Another example: Mothers in both the animal and human world engage in self-sacrificing behavior (civility), especially toward their young.

Many articles remind us that our behavior shows us to be inclusive or exclusive of other ethnicities and races than our own. To be exclusive of others who do not look or specifically think as we do is to meet the definition of “societal prejudice behavior.” Therefore, as a society, it shows tendencies toward our community to be “uncivilized.” Consequently, we are either inclusive or exclusive of others as being different from our ethnicity or race. Such thinking about ethnicity or race exclusion violates the spirit of civil morality.

Many of us are domesticated animal lovers. We care for and love their free essence of unconditional kindness and love (civility) toward us. They do not judge us for who we are but usually reward us for our civility toward them. My concerns turn negatively to the person who finds our faithful animal companions and friends not worthy of our civility (love). It defines a civil person who chooses to extend themselves to show civility (love) to these loving animals. If, or when, your animals under your care can someday speak of your behavior, will they express their caregiver’s appreciation for your civility toward them?

The research outcomes reported by the Korean Academy Nursing Administration indicate the recent overabundance of uncivil nursing behaviors—including rude or disruptive words. Also, social media has contributed to the ease of posting inappropriate, uncivil messages and demeaning photos. All this affects morale, increases stress, decreases commitment, decreases safety, causes unintentional violence, and causes a decrease in appropriate communication.

The big question: Why are we seeing and experiencing increased incivility? Is incivility inbred in us, or is it related to factors such as high stress or imposed long work hours? As if all these potential causes were not enough, the overload of Coronavirus with its potentially lethal transmission has added to community stress—therefore, “Hello, Potential Incivility!”

How can we encourage civility?

- 1. Teach and demonstrate to our children how to love and care for each other and domesticated animals**
- 2. Increase the teaching of civil behaviors in the classroom**
- 3. Assign a "Civility Ambassador" to every group gathering (see Part 1)**
- 4. Define yearly in meetings the difference between civil and uncivil behaviors**
- 5. Practice effective civil decision-making and behavior**
- 6. Learn to manage personal stress to have "room" for personal civility**
- 7. Recognize and reward acts of civility**
- 8. Express zero tolerance for incivility**

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