

Choosing Civility @ OSU Libraries & Press



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Fuzzy norms:

On a full bus, who do you give your seat up to? In this day and age, what other norms might need to be clarified? Having a student take a personal call while you are providing assistance?

All I Really Need to Know I Learned in Kindergarten (excerpt),

Robert Fulghum



Share everything.

Play fair.

Don't hit people.

Put things back where you found them.

Clean up your own mess.

Don't take things that aren't yours.

Say you're sorry when you hurt somebody.

Wash your hands before you eat.

Flush.

Warm cookies and cold milk are good for you.

Live a balanced life -

Learn some and think some

And draw and paint and sing and dance

And play and work everyday some.

Take a nap every afternoon.

When you go out into the world,

Watch out for traffic,

Hold hands and stick together.





SIR (state, inform, request) in action:

You Hear Offensive Jokes: You overhear a group of co-workers telling jokes that, for whatever reason, you perceive as offensive.

Recommended Solution: One option is to just leave. Another is to explain why you are leaving (“I find this kind of humor offensive”). A third is to ask your co-workers to stop (“I am not comfortable with these kinds of jokes. Would you please refrain from telling them when I’m around?”).



Take aways:

- 1) People generally want to be nice
- 2) Fuzzy norms make that hard
- 3) Some “old” norms are worth saving. Bring them up to date.

Future reading:

Billante, N. & Saunders, P. & Centre for Independent Studies (Australia). (2002). *Six questions about civility*. St Leonards, N.S.W : Centre for Independent Studies.

Carter, S.L. (1998). *Civility: Manners, morals, and the etiquette of democracy*. Basic Books: New York.

Forni, P.M. (2008). *The civility solution*. St. Martin’s Press, New York.



Websites to visit:

OSU Libraries Civility: <http://osulibrary.oregonstate.edu/civility>

Howard County Choose Civility: <http://www.choosecivility.org/>

Dr. Forni’s Civility: <http://krieger.jhu.edu/civility>

Everyone Matters: <http://everyonematters2012.com/>

