

Positively Speaking

By Mark Wilson

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The Secret of Getting Along

It is always more pleasant when people are getting along. As the Bible says, "Behold how pleasant it is when brothers dwell together in unity." One mother recently told her children, "I only want one thing for my birthday – Just a full day when you all get along with each other without squabbling!" They didn't make it. (You could say they gave her half-a-present!)

Ask anybody, and they will tell you they want to get along with others. However, more often than not, we find ourselves embroiled in controversy of some kind or another. Usually it's because of misunderstandings.

Understanding what frustrates others is, therefore the first step towards peaceful relationships. Why do people get upset?

Abrupt Change:

Mark Twain said the only person who likes change is a baby with wet diapers! Normally, however, people are not totally opposed to change. They just get worked up if it is sprung on them!

Unclear Expectations:

When we assume they know what we're thinking, we're asking for trouble. It's aggravating to have to walk on eggshells around a person who is unpredictable and inconsistent.

Broken Commitments:

It is far better to under-promise and over-deliver than to do the opposite. Every time a person breaks their word, they also break a trust.

Violation of Rights:

Ignoring basic rights of courtesy and respect will almost always bring an angry response. Every human being has the right to be treated with dignity.

Poor Communication:

People are always down on what they're not UP on. You can't just say something once in passing and then think you've communicated. A true communication has not occurred until the one receiving it has GOT it!

When it's Not Done Right:

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Normally, when someone is upset about something not being done “right” they mean “MY WAY!” It pays us all to remember that there is more than one way to look at just about every issue. There are very few things in life that must only be done one way.

_____:

I left this one blank so you can fill it in! Whatever and Anything! There are some folks who will get upset about anything. You can't do much about that except try to be patient, love and understand the best you can.

So, how do we go ahead and get along? Here are a few suggestions:

1. Get alone with God and pray about it. It's hard to stay mad when you're prayed up.
2. Make peace with yourself. Most conflicts are caused by inner turmoil.
3. Assume 80% of the responsibility for getting along. That means be proactive in the relationship. If you think it's 50% your responsibility (or less) you will wait around when you should be doing something.
4. Fix the problem, not the blame.
5. Never judge motives (unless you are assuming they mean well.)
6. Attack issues, not people
7. Look for common threads. Find what you agree on and put your energy there.
8. Go back and patch the holes. This means to apologize, to make amends, to reconcile and iron out the differences.
9. Make sure they know you care about them.
10. Remember, love covers a multitude of sins.
11. Use the 7:1 ration (seven affirmations to one correction)
12. Refuse to be consumed by negativity
13. Be easy on people when they fail
14. Put God first and the other things will fall into place.
15. Forgive 70 times 7.

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