Canopy Groups: Week of June 21, 2015 - Discuss the “Right Thing”

Ongoing Project
God wants this project repeated every two months

Project Participants
Everyone, age 15 and over

Need To Know Information About the “Right Thing”
From the sixteenth to the nineteenth century, the word “etiquette” was used to describe proper behavior. Old etiquette books, written in the nineteenth century, are available as free Kindle downloads. Although some of the behavior is outdated (e.g. a household with servants — who were probably slaves), about 50% of the behavior is still valid. Two modern etiquette books include:

- *Modern Civility: Etiquette for Dealing with Annoying, Angry, and Difficult People* by Cynthia Lett
- *99 Unspoken Rules of Social Etiquette: Are you rude and don't even know it?* by Nelly Odessa

Cynthia’s book is in print and will be added to the library (my mother read the book and could not put it down). Nelly’s book is only available as a Kindle book ($4.99). In her book’s Introduction, Nelly has a section titled “The Golden Rule.” She writes: If you read this book and end up following only ONE rule, let it be this one… • “Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.”

The Super-Easy Trick to Raising Polite Kids
In October 2014, I noticed an article on Yahoo titled, “The Super-Easy Trick to Raising Polite Kids” written by a parenting author named Jennifer O’Neill. Jennifer’s piece covers an etiquette consultant in El Segundo, California named Rachel Isgar who formed a company called Please Pass the Manners. Rachel makes a living training children ages 5 to 18 (and adults), but gives away plenty of free advice in Jennifer’s article. Anyone who is assigned a “Parent for a Week” task should read the article and visit the Please Pass the Manners Web site:

  http://www.pleasepassthemanners.com/

Are We Doing the Right Thing?
Dowsing takes the guess work out of wondering whether we’re doing the right thing. As I’m writing this, I’m being prompted to relay examples of situations that involved (sometimes difficult) guesswork. Today, parties involved in similar circumstances can dowse.
• **Water Glasses**
  When I dowse my father’s score for chauvinism, I get a “9.” At the dinner table in the 60s and 70s, he used to tap his water glass with his knife which meant that he wanted one of the women at the table to refill his glass with water. When my brother grew to be a teenager, he imitated my father and my mother never said a word. As I think about her parenting, I believe the correct response should have been, “the men at the table can refill their own water glasses.”

• **“Bimbo”**
  At work, when I heard a male colleague refer to a woman as a bimbo, I said, “that’s a derogatory expression. I know you would never use a derogatory expression to describe someone from another race, so I don’t understand why you would use that word to describe a woman.” He said, “Point well taken, let’s move on.”

• **Too Much Change**
  One of my favorite television show episodes that contains a “right thing to do” example is an episode of Monk in season 4 called Mr. Monk Stays in Bed.” In the opening scene, actresses Traylor Howard, who plays Monk’s assistant Natalie, and child actress Emmy Clark, who plays her daughter Julie, are waiting for a pizza delivery. Young Julie takes care of the transaction at the door and after the pizza delivery man leaves, she realizes he gave her too much change. Natalie sees Julie holding the pizza box with a smile on her face. Natalie reacts and tells her Julie that he might get fired for making a mistake. She then does the right thing -- by grabbing her purse to head out and search for him in her car.

• **Parents and CEOs Need to Provide Constant Examples**
  In 2000, I worked for a 3D graphics company called Brilliant Digital Entertainment founded by Kevin Bermeister. At a status meeting about a project, one of the staff made a disparaging remark about an employee who was not present. Immediately after the meeting, I had a chance to talk to Kevin alone and told him CEOs are like parent figures who need to squelch inappropriate behavior. I explained that by not saying anything, those present left the meeting with totally incorrect information. Kevin listened and within hours, he corrected the person who had made the remark—in front of a large group.

• **Computer Knowledge Abuse of Employee Credit Cards**
  In the 1990s, I worked for a Texas-based microcomputer training company in Manhattan that had a contract to provide classes at IBM Product Centers. When instructors traveled out of New York City, they used a personal credit card to pay for transportation that was later reimbursed. The group in Texas could cause cash flow stress for instructors who were given a significant amount of travel. To shield new instructors from cash flow stress, the staff in New York told newbies, “When they ask you if you have a credit card, say ‘No.’” Today, when I dowse the question, “Did we do the right thing,” the response is a “Yes.”

• **Letting Someone Else Do All (or most of) the Work**
  In Madison, Wisconsin, I was a volunteer Weston Price Chapter leader from 2005 to 2009. Once-a-month, I would give a free lecture about nutrition to a group of 25-30 people at Madison’s Wilmar Center that served meals to senior citizens. I’d arrive
40-50 minutes early to fold 6 large banquet tables and set up chairs. After the first few meetings, I realized that at the end of my presentation, everyone in the group put their coats on and left—leaving me with the job of putting the room back together. At the next meeting, and every other meeting, I would begin with request for volunteers to stay and help re-arrange furniture at the end of the evening. In the 4 years I led the chapter, one woman (Barbara Elmer) volunteered to help with chairs —entirely on her own (the right thing to do).

- **Upton Sinclair’s Quote (that Al Gore Used in An Inconvenient Truth)**
  Upton Sinclair (1878-1968), an American author, who wrote almost 100 books, said, “It is difficult to get a man to understand something, when his salary depends on his not understanding it.”

In 2007, I worked for a Wisconsin dairy and soil consultant named Gary Zimmer. That year, I learned about a condition known as **Displaced Abomasum (twisted stomach)** that can result from a cow’s diet that is too high in potassium. Gary, who understands dairy nutrition, and is particularly gifted in an understanding of biochemistry, would try to tell Vets to recommend changes in a cow’s diet. A surgical “fix” is an incision a Vet makes to physically straighten out the cow’s GI tract. The procedure costs about $200. Gary said there are farmers in Wisconsin with large herds that sometimes need as many as 17 surgical incisions. He has tried to explain the mineral requirement to farmers, and his staff has tried, but the Vets are the right source for this information. How many times to people think of their income first, and an animal’s or human being’s health second? The incision scar has a “zipper” appearance. At auctions, farmers who understand dairy nutrition, look for “zippers.”