



Five clues to the new "good behavior" come to mind, but much more work is required here.

1. SPREAD RECOGNITION. Backhand, forehand, direct, oblique, however, but RECOGNIZE everyone you meet. Eye contact, body language, personalized letters, small talk -- all are ways of giving the other recognition. It amounts to acknowledging that you are in the place you are in. Be present to whom you choose to be present. Present yourself without intruding, but with all your being there. After a little of this, you will be able to tell when it is absent, and actually sense you have insulted someone by being distracted, and they never even noticed. But you did. For what you are communicating is that the other exists and is noticed. Those messages are immensely effective in a time when we all are searching for a special place in the scheme of things. In our urban civilization where we meet thousands of people in a given day, it is impossible to be present to all of them. So make your selections. But do it consciously, and do it at the maximum rather than the minimum. This is about consciousness in human relations, and it is not easy. We're all good at withholding recognition. But reconciliation requires giving it out freely.

2. EXPRESS SIGNIFICATION. Discern and say what is the importance of what someone else is doing -- be it positive or negative. See through the job to the service component and the long-range impact. Avoid trivializing what someone else is spending his or her life doing. After all, in the New Age, we all DO affect the future, and to express that to another is simply to acknowledge the indicative. It will come as a surprise, for we all tend to diminish our own impact on history. As well we should: no one of us controls the future, individually or collectively. Awareness of the Ultimate Dimension of Reality leads to real appreciation of the insignificance of all things; but its paradoxical insight is that of wonder that anything is, at all. However trivial the task, it contributes to creating the future; however grand the endeavor, it will eventually come to nought. This is the perception that makes possible the expression of significance which releases reconciliation.

3. GIVE FACE. It's very easy to claim the blame and give away the honor. Try it. It's quite a rare feat, but requires so little. Consider your contacts eminently worthy. But to do so is not to deny your own lucidity. Here's a clue: grind into yourself total and utter conviction of everyone's utter fallibility to the highest degree in every dimension. We are all Sons of Bitches, bar none. Ground that in your being. Then ABSOLUTELY AND TOTALLY FORGET IT! Act as if you lived in a world of saints. With that dialectical consciousness, it is no trouble at all to give face without loss of your own standards and integrity.

4. KEEP YOUR OWN CONSCIENCE. You and I as purveyors of the new manners do not require the approval of anyone else. People's criticisms can be received without devastation or threat. And my interior struggles with The Way Life Is are simply not anyone else's business. Get for yourself a private space -- whether it be internal or external doesn't matter -- but go there at least daily. Touch base with your own perceptions. It is said that the educated person is one who, when calling upon himself (herself), finds someone at home. So it is with the new manners: from outward appearance, no one need know the interior story. They couldn't know it anyway, and certainly couldn't understand it. The important thing is that YOU know it.

5. DEMAND INTEGRITY. It is not possible to experience authentic reconciliation so long as you or I are living in illusions, whether deliberate or unwitting. Therefore, the hard task of demanding reality from each other comes into play. This is difficult and often jeopardizes reconciliation. Many of us are not willing to acknowledge the truth about ourselves. All the foregoing has been an attempt to "gain chits" enough to be able to lay the demand for truth on each other. One who is looking for recognition or for face or for significance or for approval can never hear the demand for integrity; but without it, nothing lasting can be achieved.

Now, these are marks of New Age Manners, of personal relations: ways of getting along with people of radical difference -- more importantly, ways of preventing the explosions which will maintain the adversarial mode. But they are no more than the tip of the iceberg. Far more is required if we are seriously to deal with the contradictions to reconciliation. A social ethic is demanded, and the image for that is THE ETHICS OF SERVICE.

Do we have a chance? Two of us were on a call to McDonald's recently and inquired of the operations manager what contradictions they were facing in the future. "Only one," he replied, " -- the eating habits of Asia, specifically, the practice of eating rice, which means that hamburgers are only a snack, not a full meal. But", he went on, "we're dealing with that. We have developed an advertising campaign that begins next month which in three years is going to change Asia's eating habits!"

If McDonalds can seriously strategize to change Asia's rice-eating habits, shifting the global adversary mode will be easy.

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