

## Manners Make Life Easier! By: Ann Michael Henry

How many times have you walked down a street or a stairwell only to end up doing the Cha-Cha with some one heading in the opposite direction? Or hosted a dinner party only to have people RSVP late or not at all and in both cases expect you to accommodate their last minute decision to come! Or had a car pull out right in front of you? Can you feel the stress? The frustration? Is your blood pressure going up?

Good manners and etiquette exist for a reason. They make life easier.

Many years ago when I was fresh out of college and working my first job, I had the pleasure of working with a salesman by the name of Greg. Joining him on client calls was always a great experience. I learned so much about business from him and his coaching helped shape my successful sales career. Ah, but his manners were impeccable. I remember one day having a conversation about what a pleasure it was to be in his company and what a gentleman he was. As we went from meeting to meeting he would share with me the manners that he was taught:

- When going down stairs or an escalator, the man goes first, just in case the lady trips...he can catch her.
- When going up stairs or an escalator, the man follows, for the same reason.
- When entering and exiting an elevator, the man holds the door open and lets the woman enter or exit first.
- When entering a building open the door for the woman so that she may enter first.
- Upon exiting a building, go to the same side of the woman that the door hinge is on, reach around her, push open the door and hold it while she exits.
- For revolving doors, let the lady enter first, gently get the door moving, step in to the next "stall" and continue pushing so she doesn't need to.
- Always open a car door for a woman.
- When walking down the street, a gentleman should be between the lady and the traffic.
- Walk on the right hand side of a sidewalk or aisle. If the person coming from the opposite direction is also on his right, you'll never do the Cha-cha.

Keep in mind, I am not a female that needs, or expects, to be coddled. Good manners and proper etiquette isn't about equal rights, it's about mutual respect. Good manners are about doing something nice for another person, regardless of their gender. Also appreciate that just a few short months before I began working with Greg I attended an ERA rally in Chicago. I am a successful businessperson who now owns her own business. I've traveled the world. I hike, back pack, lift weights, cook, clean and parent. None of which matters when it comes to manners.

We lead incredibly busy and complex lives. We often pass through our days wondering when something good is going to happen. Think about how a simple gesture, as the giver or the receiver, could change your day. We've all experienced those moments, albeit it rare, and we've been touched by the good feelings they generated.

So, have fun with manners! Be polite! Smile! Live by the old adage "do unto others as you would have them do unto you". It's easy. It feels good, and generally it doesn't take any extra time; when it does, the feeling you get in return is worth it. So...say thank you, RSVP to the party when the invitation arrives, wait for the car to pass before pulling out in traffic and delight when the door is opened for you. Ah, don't you feel calmer already?

© Copyright

**All rights reserved. Reproduction of any kind of this article is not permitted without written permission from the author.**