



Nine Tools of Civility

1. Pay Attention

Be aware and attend to the world and the people around you.

- Be informed about what is occurring in our community
- Focus on the issue - on what the person is saying
- Consider the whole picture; issues are connected
- Open your mind to new perspectives; strive for objectivity

2. Listen

Focus on others in order to better understand their points of view.

- Seek to understand; hear what is said
- Ask effective questions
- Respect the person and his/her view through your words and body language
- Give thoughtful attention; avoid distractions such as: your emotion, multi-tasking, or formulating a response instead of listening

3. Be Inclusive

Welcome all groups of citizens working for the greater good of the community.

- Know the community system in order to be inclusive (social, economic, environmental, technical, etc.)
- Intentionally and sincerely invite diverse perspectives
- Seek participation; take responsibility; include yourself!
- Use common language; avoid jargon

4. Don't Gossip

And don't accept when others choose to do so.

- Go to the source for the facts; validate the information
- Communicate with respect and a positive intent; own what you say; be accountable
- Model integrity and mutual respect; set a good example for others
- Honor those who are not present

5. Show Respect

Honor other people and their opinions, especially in the midst of a disagreement.

- Value the person; appreciate his/her contributions, experiences, passion, culture, norms and values
- Use questions to clarify
- Value ideas that are brought to the table
- Demonstrate positive body language

6. Seek Common Ground

Look for opportunities to agree; don't contradict just to do so.

- Rise above emotions; focus on the issues
- Build relationships; make a connection
- Work toward mutual trust

7. Repair Damaged Relationships

Be sincere; apologize and forgive.

- Take responsibility for your actions and words
- Accept an apology
- Practice forgiveness; let go of the past

8. Use Constructive Language

Be mindful of the words you choose.

- Address conflict with the intent of resolution
- When disagreeing, stick to the issues and don't make a personal attack
- Learn from others' perspectives and feedback

9. Take Responsibility

Practice accountability in language and actions.

- Take ownership; use "I" statements
- Don't shift responsibility and blame onto others
- Be trustworthy
- Tell the truth



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