

ISSUE 5

YOUTH

ZONE

**The Sun and
the Wind**

**Nails in the
Gatepost**

**Humor
Saves
the Day**



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FROM THE EDITOR:

Once a king dreamed that all his teeth had fallen out. Immediately he sent for one of his wise men to interpret the meaning of the dream. With a sad face and mournful voice, the wise man told the king that the dream meant that all his relatives would die and that he would be left alone. This angered the king and he sent the servant away.

Another wise man was called and the king told him of the dream. At this, the wise man smiled, and replied, "Rejoice, O King; the dream means that you will live many years. In fact you will outlive all your relatives." This pleased the king a great deal, and in his joy, he gave the interpreter a rich reward. The two men had said the same thing, but in different ways.

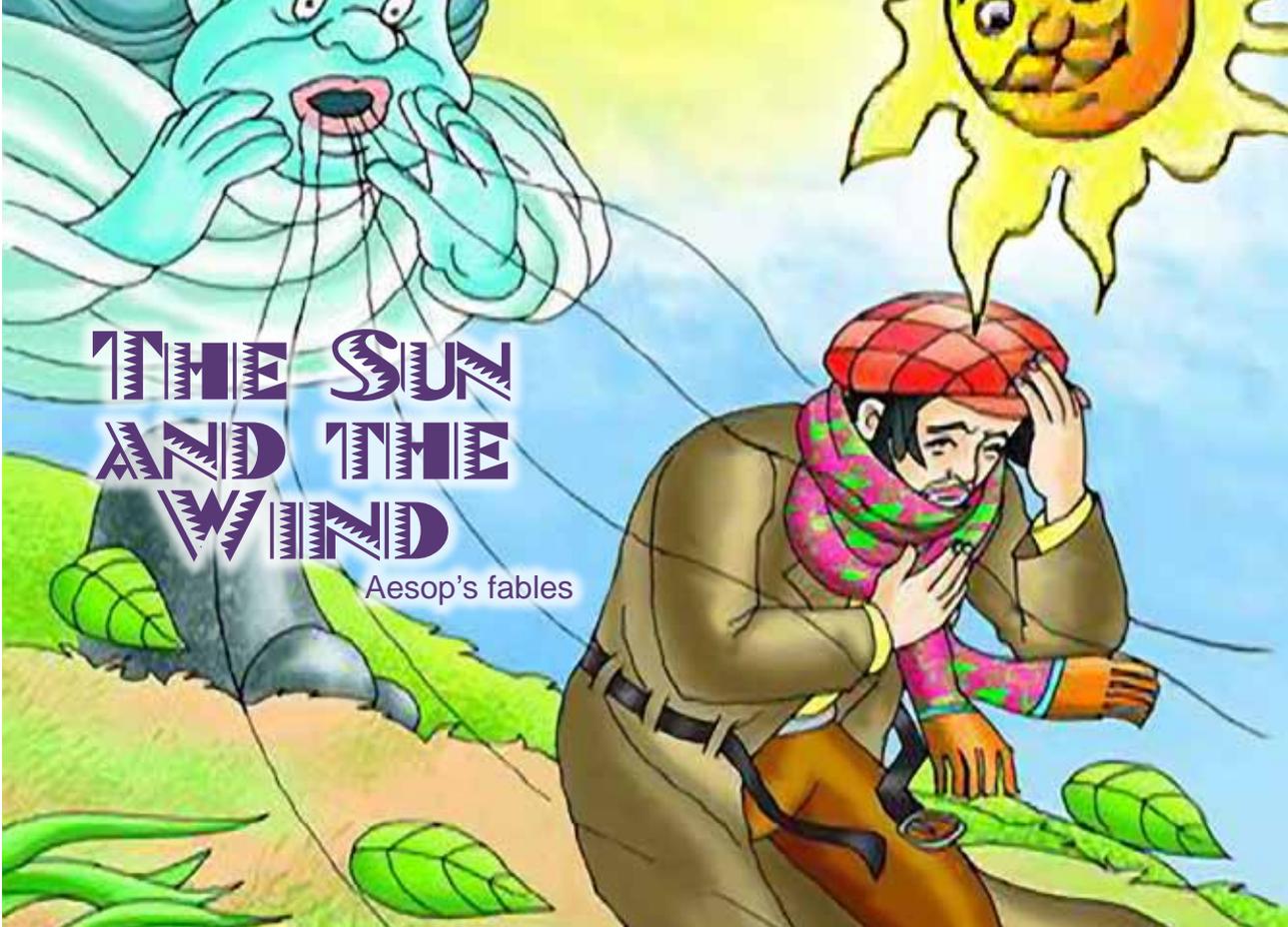
This story illustrates the importance of good communication. If we don't think about the words we speak, or how we present things, or if we don't even consider it very important, chances are that we won't get along very well with people.

This issue of *Youth Zone* is full of communication tips that will help you build strong relationships, show you how to use tact to prevent arguments, and humor to spice up your presentations. There's something for everyone!

Christina Lane
FOR YOUTH ZONE

THE SUN AND THE WIND

Aesop's fables



One day, the sun and the wind quarreled about which one of them was stronger. The wind said, "I'll prove I am. See that old man down there with a coat? I bet I can make him take off his coat quicker than you can."

So the sun went behind a cloud and the wind blew until it was almost a tornado, but the harder it blew the tighter the old man wrapped his coat about him.

Finally, the wind calmed down and gave up; and then the sun came out from behind the cloud and smiled kindly on the old man. Presently, he

mopped his brow and pulled off his coat. The sun then told the wind that gentleness and friendliness were always stronger than anger and force.

The wind is like the force we use when we are frustrated—it blows hard but doesn't necessarily gain any friends or get the desired result.

Kind words are like the gentle rays of the sun that will warm other's hearts. We should always look for ways to be kind to someone. It is the most effective way to change behavior. 🌿

What Is Communication?

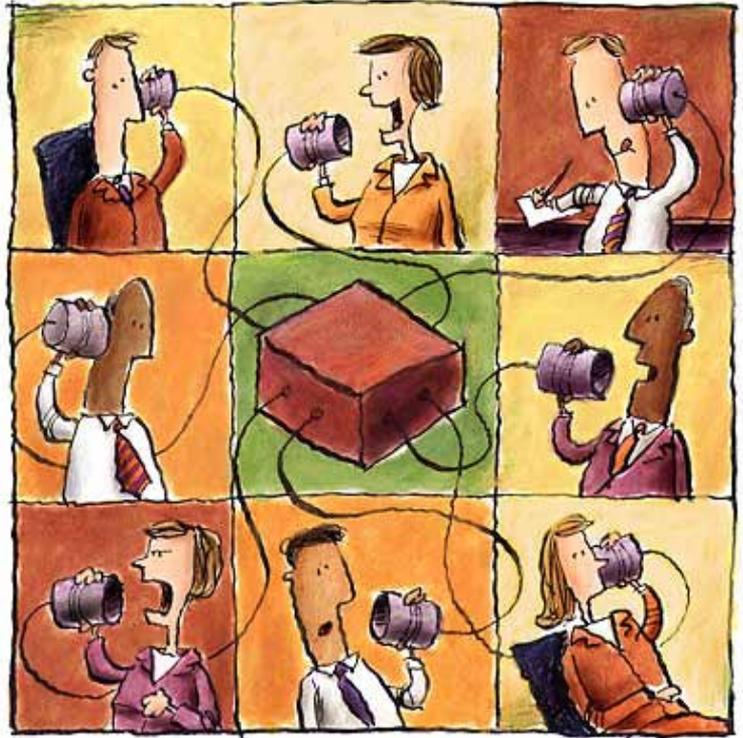
Tomoko Matsuoka

The dictionary (Encarta 2011) says that communication is “the exchange of information between individuals, for example, by means of speaking, writing, or using a common system of signs or behavior.” Simply put, communication is anything you do that conveys a message to someone else. For example, each of the following can be a means of communicating:

-  Facial expressions, gestures, and the way you carry yourself can communicate your feelings to others.
-  Your behavior can tell others about the kind of person you are, and your personality.
-  Written words can be a way we communicate to others when we are not able to do so in person.
-  Sign language is how the deaf communicate with each other.

Think about this: Jeffrey was at the park and he saw his friend Calvin by the basketball court. He smiled and waved at Calvin and walked toward him. Jeffrey didn't say anything out loud, but the message Jeffrey communicated to Calvin through his smile and wave was that he was happy to see him.

But what if Jeffrey didn't wave or smile when seeing Calvin? What kind of impression do you think Calvin would receive through Jeffrey's behavior?



We are continually communicating with others through both our words, as well as our behavior.

The way we communicate (through words and behavior) is how others will view us to be. If you say kind words, people will see you as a kind person. If you are thoughtful in your interactions with others, people will see that you are a thoughtful person.

People want to be with those who will encourage them, and since loving actions are often reflected in a loving response, our friends will be encouraged to be more loving and thoughtful in their communications with us, and others too. 

Words Alone

Words Alone

Words Alone

This activity demonstrates how important words are, especially when the person talking and the listener cannot see each other.

Materials Needed:

Small pieces of paper with one of the following words written on each:

Book	Pizza	Children	Downtown
Apple	Grapes	Flowers	Garbage
Sunset	Box	Summer	Ice Cream

How to play the game:

When together with your family, friends, or in your class, ask one person to pick a word and describe it to everyone else. Tell them to concentrate on the careful choice of words. Use descriptive words relating to all five senses (smell, touch, etc.), but avoid hand-motions and non-verbal signals as much as possible.

Example: ice cream – cold, smooth, soft, fluffy-looking, sweet, flavors.

Afterwards:

Talk about the following questions:

1. How easy/difficult was it to express the idea, using only words?
2. How did you (both talker and listener) feel doing this activity?
3. What does this remind us to do in our own communication?

NAI|LS IN THE GATEPOST

Author unknown

As a young boy, I had a fiery temper that often caused me to say and do unkind things.

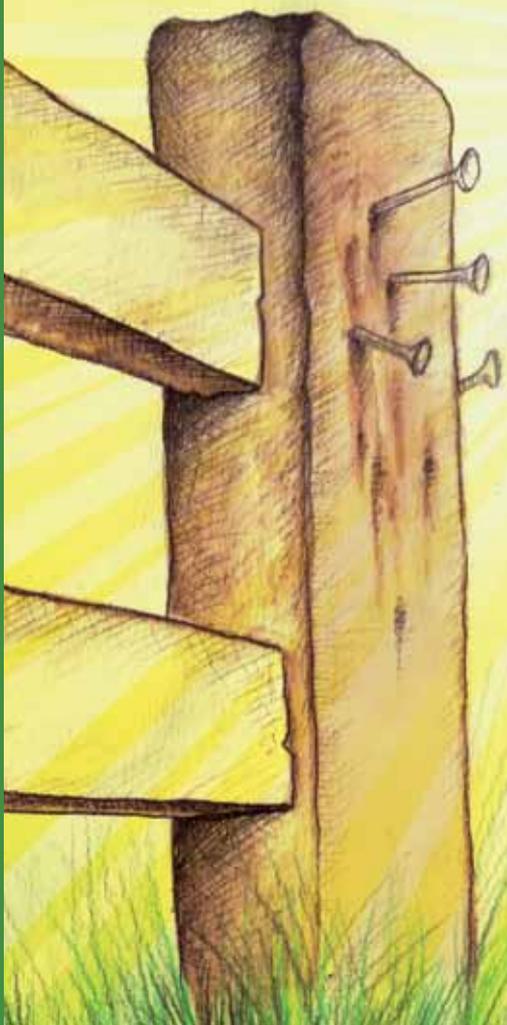
One day, after an argument had sent one of my friends home in tears, my father told me that for each thoughtless, mean thing I did, he would drive a nail into the gatepost in front of our house. Each time I did a kind or good deed, he would pull one nail out.

Months passed. Each time I entered our gate, I was reminded of the reasons for those ever-increasing nails. Finally, getting them out became a challenge. At last, the wished-for day arrived—only one more nail!

As my father withdrew it, I danced around proudly exclaiming, “See, Dad, the nails are all gone!” My father gazed intently at the post as he thoughtfully replied, “Yes, the nails are gone—but the scars remain.”

**The kindest word
in all the world
is the unkind word,
unsaid.**

—Author Unknown



What Is Tact?

Web Reprint, adapted

As a rule, honesty is the best policy. However, the truth is not always pretty, and sometimes, blunt honesty can be hurtful.

The word TACT means being honest, even when you need to say something difficult, but you choose your words carefully in consideration of the other person's feelings. In other words, if you are saying something that could upset a person, use tact.

Tact is truthful, but not insulting or rude. The art of tact involves phrasing things to avoid hurt feelings and give helpful criticism.

Here are some examples:

Situation: Your friend asks you, "Do you like my new coat?"

Rude Response: "No, it's ugly."

Tactful Response: "It's a nice coat, though it's not really my style."

Situation: Your friend asks if you want to go to the park together.

Rude Response: "I'm tired of playing with you."

Tactful Response: "I don't feel like it right now, but thanks for the invitation."

Situation: Your teacher asks if you enjoyed reading your book.

Rude Response: "No, it was dumb and boring."

Tactful Response: "It was not my favorite book, but I still managed to read it."

In each situation, there is the potential for hurt feelings or anger, but by emphasizing the positive, and offering solutions for the negative, you can provide tactfully honest answers that do not offend anyone.

An older woman was hosting a party. During the party, someone approached a young man who she was talking with and asked him to guess her age. With a smile he said, "I have several ideas, but I'm trying to decide whether to make you 10 years younger because of your looks or 10 years older because of your intelligence."

Now You Try!



Think of a tactful way to respond in each situation. Remember, using tact means you are still honest, but you use your words carefully to avoid hurting someone's feelings.

1. For your Birthday, your grandmother gives you a shirt, which you think is ugly. She asks how you like it. What should you say?



2. You are watching TV and the phone rings. Your mom answers it and tells you it's Jane. You don't want to talk to her. What should you say?



3. Your friend has a new baby sister and you think it is the ugliest baby you've ever seen. Your friend asks you, "Isn't she the cutest?" What should you say?



4. Your teacher is walking down the hallway with a piece of paper stuck to her shoe heel. What should you say?

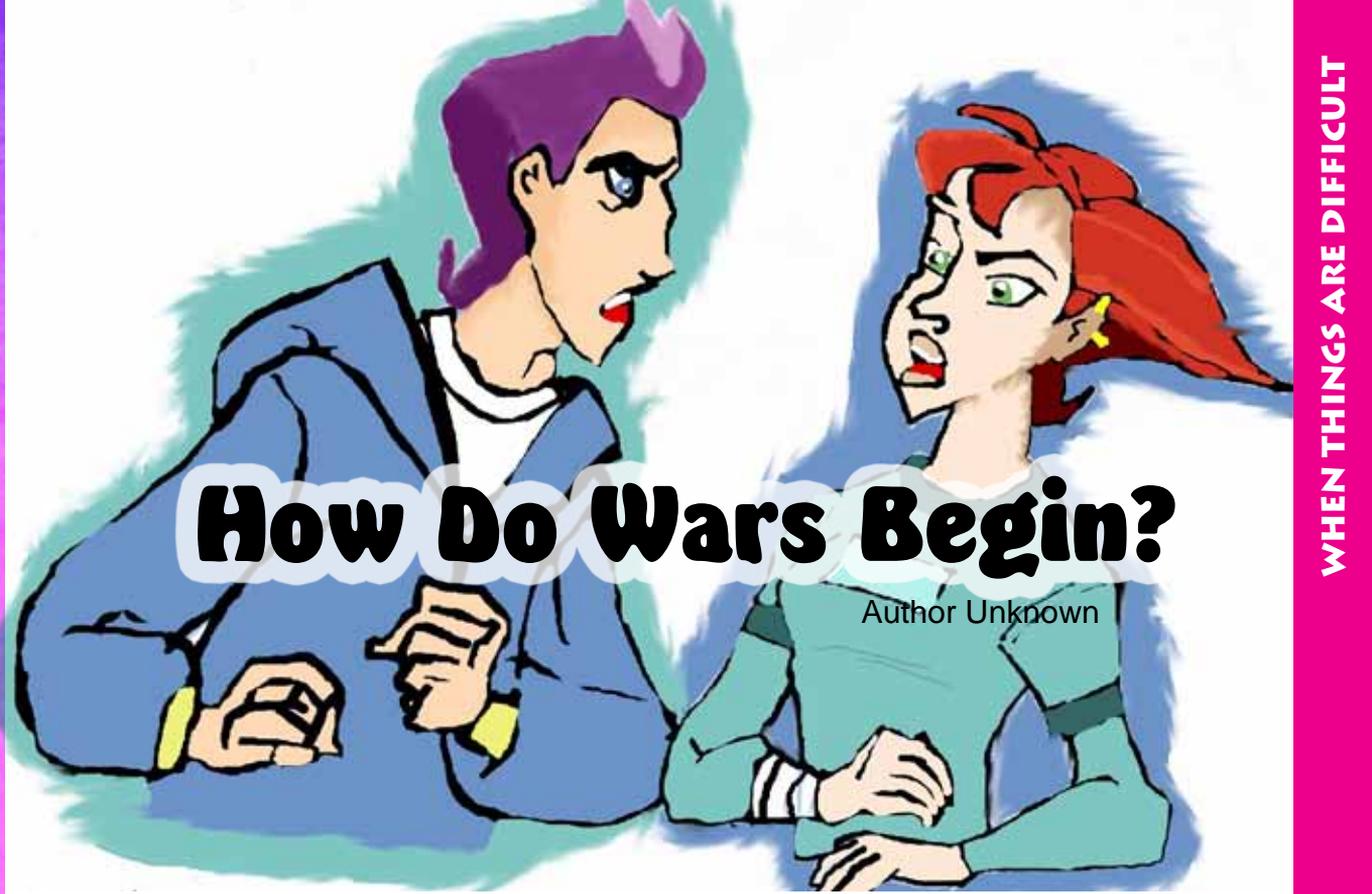


5. Your friend has been talking for 10 minutes with a big piece of green vegetable stuck between his teeth. What should you say?



6. You are visiting your friend's house and your friend's mom serves liver and onions for dinner, which you really don't like. What should you say?





How Do Wars Begin?

Author Unknown

A boy once asked his father, "Dad, how do wars begin?"

"Well, take the First World War," said his father. "That got started when Germany invaded Belgium."

Immediately his wife interrupted him, "Tell the boy the truth. It began because somebody was assassinated."

The husband drew himself up with an air of superiority and snapped back,

"Are you answering the question or am I?"

Turning her back upon him in a huff, the wife stormed out the room and slammed the door as hard as she could.

When the dishes stopped rattling in the cupboard an uneasy silence followed, broken at length by the boy: "Dad, you don't have to tell me how wars begin; I know now!" ❀

**I try to watch the words I say,
And keep them soft and sweet.
For I don't know from day to day
Which ones I'll have to eat.**

5 Ways to Prevent an Argument



1. **Keep quiet.** Never answer an angry word with an angry word. It's the second one that produces a quarrel. Remember the saying, "When an argument flares up, the wise man quenches it with silence."

2. **Keep cool.** Delay your answer if you have to, or ask the other person what he means. You may not have heard or understood him correctly. If you take time to think before you react, you will avoid many unnecessary fights.



3. **Listen.** Give the other person a chance to talk, and let him finish. Don't interrupt. Don't start resisting, defending, or debating, this only raises barriers. Try to build bridges of understanding.



4. **Don't give advice.** When another person is angry, the worst thing you can do is say, "Now don't get angry!" When you say this, it has just the opposite effect. Instead, try saying, "I'm sorry if something I said is making you angry. What can we do to work this out?"



5. **Attitudes are contagious.** If we show the right attitude—calm, trusting, and patient—this is how others will react. But if we get flustered, impatient, sharp-tempered, and sharp-tongued, this is apt to be the same way that others will respond.

How Well Do You Work Together?

With a group of your friends, or in your class, discuss together and give examples of when you need to cooperate with others. Cooperating—working together with others—involves a number of things, like being patient, accepting differences, compromise, and communication. You will need to use these skills for the following activity.

Materials Needed:

Popsicle sticks, glue, aluminum foil, construction paper, scissors, straws.

Activity:

- Divide your group into pairs. Each pair receives the same amount of materials—10 popsicle sticks, glue, one 2" X 2" square of aluminum foil, one 8 1/2" x 11" (A4) piece of colored construction paper, one pair of scissors, and two drinking straws.
 - Each team has to make some kind of creation with the materials you were given. You don't have to use all of the materials. Anything is acceptable, as long as each person contributes to the creativity.
 - Allow 30 minutes for each team to finish their creation, after which you can all look at what each team has created.
 - Back in the large group, discuss what compromise, discussions, and skills were required during the activity:
- ➔ Did you get angry or frustrated with your partner while doing this?
 - ➔ Did you like the way your project turned out?
 - ➔ What kind of voice did you use to tell your partner what to do?
 - ➔ What would you do differently next time?



The Angry Customer

Excerpt from “How to Win Friends & Influence People” by Dale Carnegie

One morning, an angry man stormed into the office of Mr. Detmer. Julian F. Detmer was the founder of one of the world’s largest wool companies.

The man who stormed into his office was a customer who lived in another city. He owed Mr. Detmer a small sum of money, but he flatly denied it. Everyone at Mr. Detmer’s company knew the customer was wrong, so they insisted that he pay. After getting a number of letters reminding him to pay, the man was so upset that he packed his suitcase, traveled to Chicago and stormed into the office to tell Mr. Detmer that not only was he not going to pay the bill, but that he was never going to buy anything else from him again.

Mr. Detmer listened patiently to all he had to say. He wanted to interrupt, but realized that it might only make things worse, so he let him talk it out. When he finally simmered down Mr. Detmer said quietly, “Thank you for coming to tell me about this. You have done us a great favor, because if we have annoyed you, perhaps we may annoy other good customers, and that would be a pity. Believe me, I am more eager to hear this than you are to tell me.”

That was the last thing in the world the angry customer expected him to say. Maybe he was slightly disappointed, because he had come

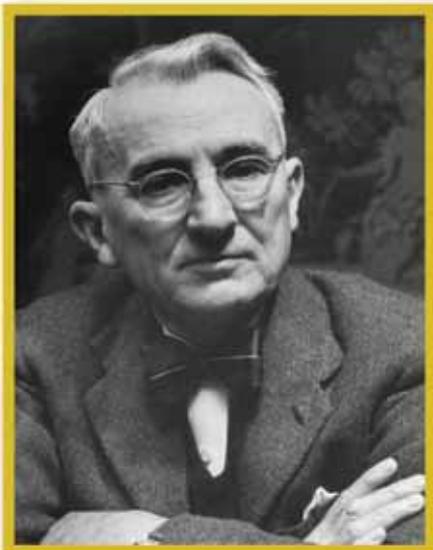
to Chicago to argue with Mr. Detmer, but there he was thanking him instead of fighting.

“We will immediately wipe your charge off the books and forget it,” he added, “because you are a careful man with only one account to look after, while my clerks have to look after thousands. You are less likely to be wrong than they are. I understand exactly how you feel and if I were in your shoes I would be just as upset,” he concluded. Since he was not going to buy from them anymore, Mr. Detmer recommended some other companies where he could find what he needed.

In the past, when the customer came to Chicago, they had usually had lunch together, so Mr. Detmer invited him to lunch again. The customer accepted reluctantly. When they got back to the office, the man placed a larger order than ever before.

He returned home in a better mood, wanting to be just as fair with Mr. Detmer as he had been with him, so he looked over his bills and found one that had been misplaced. He sent Mr. Detmer a check with his apologies.

Later, he gave his newborn son the middle name of Detmer, and he remained a friend and customer until his death twenty-two years afterwards. ❀



Dale Breckenridge Carnegie

(Nov. 24, 1888 – Nov. 1, 1955)

was an American writer and speaker. He developed famous courses in salesmanship, public speaking, and interpersonal skills. Born in poverty on a farm in Missouri, he was the author of *How to Win Friends & Influence People* (1936), a massive bestseller that remains popular today. He also wrote *Stop Worrying & Start Living* (1948), and several other books. One of the core ideas in his books is that it is possible to change other people's behavior by

changing our reaction to them. He founded Dale Carnegie Training in 1912, which is available to this day. You can learn more about him at www.dalecarnegie.com

The Ten Rules Of Human Relations

1. Speak to people. There is nothing as nice as a cheerful word of greeting.
2. Smile at people. It takes 72 muscles to frown; 14 to smile.
3. Call people by name. The sweetest music is the sound of their name.
4. Be friendly and helpful.
5. Be cordial. Speak and act as if everything you do is a genuine pleasure.
6. Be genuinely interested in people. You can like everybody if you try.
7. Be generous with praise—cautious with criticism.
8. Be considerate of the feelings of others. It will be appreciated.
9. Be thoughtful of the opinions of others. There are three sides to a controversy—yours, the other fellow's, and the right one.
10. Be alert to give service. What counts most in life is what we do for others.

Humor Saves the Day!

In many cases, a joke or a bit of laughter is all we need to reduce tension, make others feel comfortable, or keep a conversation moving in a positive way.

We don't have to be a comedian or a great joke teller to be able to add humor into an exchange. Many of us cannot remember a punch line to save our lives, yet we are able to surprise ourselves now and then with a bit of wit—like the examples below, posted by the Principal of an Elementary School.

Teacher: Are you in the top half of your class?

Student: No, I'm one of the students who make the top half possible!

Teacher: The picture of the horse is good, but where is the wagon?

Student: The horse will draw it!

Teacher: Why are you reading the last pages of your history book first?

Student: I want to know how it ends!

Teacher: Can anyone give me the name of a liquid that won't freeze?

Student: Hot water!

Teacher: Does anyone know which month has 28 days?

Student: All of them!

Teacher: I told you to stand at the end of the line?

Student: I tried, but there was someone already there!

Teacher: In 1940, what were the Poles doing in Russia?

Student: Holding up the telegraph lines!



Talk about It

Has humor ever saved your day? Share what happened with your family, friends, or in your class, and have a good laugh together!

What They Did Before TV

Adapted from an article by Jim Elliff

Do you ever wonder what people did before there was TV and the Internet? Here is a story about a family nearly 80 years ago...

My mother was the youngest of fourteen children growing up on a farm. She lived in a typical old-fashioned house divided into a boys' room, a girls' room, a kitchen, and the parents' room. A porch surrounded the entire home.

"Mom and Dad's room" was the gathering place at night. The fireplace blazed and everybody sat and talked. Besides eating peanuts or maybe darning a sock, that's all that happened. They talked and talked and talked until they could not keep their eyes open. Then the kids ran off to their rooms and into bed.

This family treasured their growing up. It wasn't because they had much, or had it easy. They were dirt farmers during the Depression*, and worked hard, but they loved it all. Why? Because of the beauty of relationships built on mounds of talk. Nobody turned on a TV. Nobody turned on a radio, or a "record player." Never!

Today, it is hard to imagine that there was life before television. Add computers, iPads, iPhones, and



fast food, and we have very little time left to just sit and talk. Days and weeks can pass with almost no conversation at all. Without face-to-face communication, the home can become an electronic desert.

Here is a suggestion:

Take a total break from electronic media as a family. Read a great book together. Play together, take walks and go to the park. Eat outside, drive into the countryside, sit down and eat a real meal together with everyone helping to clean up. Invite friends over to "visit," do a project together. Drink lots of tea or hot chocolate, plant a garden, sing around the piano or with the guitar, or just sit down ... and talk together.

We are made to communicate, but often the TV and other media are doing all the talking. Let's do something about it. Start a conversation today! 

* The Great Depression was an economic crisis, which started in the US in 1929, and lasted more than 10 years. It was the longest and most severe depression of the last century.

WORD Power

**A careless word may kindle strife.
A cruel word may wreck a life.
A bitter word may hate instill;
A brutal word may smite and kill,**

**A gracious word may smooth the way;
A joyous word may light the day.
A timely word may lessen stress;
A loving word may heal and bless.**