

Character Community



E-News



A Town of Richmond Hill initiative.

A Town of Richmond Hill Character Community monthly e-letter

April is Respect

I will treat myself and others with consideration, high regard and dignity.

April 2009

Town of Richmond Hill

Character Community Organizations

- The Amici Centre
- Arts Richmond Hill Inc.
- Between Friends
- Catholic Community Services of York Region
- Community Living York South
- The Curtain Club Theatre
- Girl Guides of Canada York South Div.
- Helpmate Community Information
- Hill House Hospice
- Ja'fari Islamic Housing
- Learning Disabilities Association of York Region
- Lions Club of Richmond Hill
- Music to Care for Your Life
- Opera York
- Optimist Club of Richmond Hill
- Region Of York Recreationists (ROYR)
- Richmond Hill Aquatic Club
- Richmond Hill Canoe Club
- Richmond Hill Chamber of Commerce
- Richmond Hill Community Church
- Richmond Hill Community Food Bank
- Richmond Hill Community Sports Council
- Richmond Hill Lawn Tennis Club
- Richmond Hill Model Airplane Club
- Richmond Hill Rams Hockey Club
- Richmond Hill Soccer Club
- Richmond Hill Social & Bocce Club
- Richmond Hill Training Centre
- Richmond Hill Winter Carnival
- Royal Canadian Legion Branch #375
- Spiritual Assembly of the Bahai's of Richmond Hill
- St. Matthew's United Church Health Cabinet
- Stroke Recovery Network
- Top o' the Hill Co-operative Nursery School
- Volunteer Association of York Central Hospital
- Wilderness Lifeskills of Youth Inc.
- York Region Support Group of Parents of ADHD Kids
- Youth Assisting Youth

"You got to show folks some respect, sister!"

by: S. Hein

Every human needs to feel respected, even the least powerful. (We might even say, especially the least powerful.)

This point was etched into my brain when I saw a homeless man soliciting the patrons of a fast food restaurant in Florida. The cashier, a street-wise New Yorker, loudly and coldly told the man that he needed to leave. Everyone in the restaurant looked up to see what was happening. I suspect the man felt embarrassed, humiliated, rejected and attacked. I was surprised, though, at how defensively he reacted. He chastised the cashier for her manner of speaking to him and said, among other things, "You got to show folks some respect, sister. That ain't no way to be speakin' to nobody!"

While the cashier and the man argued, I felt empathy for both of them. I could understand both of their perspectives. I felt a small amount of fear that the situation was escalating out of control as they both raised their voices. I realized that by not showing respect for the man's feelings, (by defending herself and invalidating him) she actually was causing more problems for herself and causing more of a disturbance in the restaurant. In other words, she was acting counter-productively. Clearly, everyone, even the homeless street person, needs to feel respected.

Respect is one of those words that is so widely used it has many different meanings to different people. We all seem to know it is important to respect each other, but I am not sure we could all agree on just what respect actually is.

Source: <http://eqi.org/respect.htm>



Character Community Awards at Theatre!

It is the belief that good character is essential to living and working together to create strong, safe communities as well as in maintaining and enhancing the quality of life of communities. Developing strong character gives the ability to overcome obstacles and achieve success.

The third annual Character Community Foundation of York Region Awards is a community wide celebration of York Region citizens who exemplify the character attributes of Respect, Courage, Responsibility, Inclusiveness, Honesty, Fairness, Integrity, Optimism, Compassion, Perseverance, and Initiative.

This year Richmond Hill is hosting the regional Character Awards at our new *Richmond Hill Centre for the Performing Arts* on Tuesday, April 28. For more information on the awards, contact the Region at 1-877-464-YORK ext. 1522, or by e-mail at character.community@york.ca.



Showing and Earning Respect

Respecting someone means respecting their feelings and their survival needs. **Here are ways to show respect for someone's feelings:**

- asking them how they feel
- validating their feelings
- empathizing with them
- seeking understanding of their feelings
- taking their feelings into consideration

For this process to work efficiently several things are required. For example:

- Each person must be aware of their own feelings; i.e. know how they feel.
- They must be able to express their feelings.
- They must know how to listen non-judgmentally & non-defensively.
- They must know how to validate feelings.
- They must believe that feelings have value.
- They must believe that feelings matter.

If respecting someone means respecting their feelings and their survival needs, then if a person does not respect your feelings, they don't respect you. If those in positions of power and authority do not respect your needs and feelings, they will not earn your respect.

Here are some specific ways to show respect:

- Asking others "How would you feel if..." before making a decision which affects them
- Voluntarily making changes and compromises to

accommodate their feelings, desires and needs

- Not interrupting them
- Soliciting and allowing feedback. Trying to understand their beliefs, values and needs
- Giving them the opportunity to solve their own problems without underestimating them, in particular:
 - Avoid telling them what to do
 - Avoid telling them what they 'need' to or 'should do'
 - Avoid giving them unsolicited advice, sermons and lectures



Photo: <http://www.hreoc.gov.au>

Remember that the most effective way of finding out how well your efforts are working is to simply ask, "On a scale of 0-10, how much do you feel respected by me?" If you have created a safe environment, you are likely to get an honest answer. Then if it is lower than 10,

you can ask, "What would help you feel more respected?" Then you have the specific information you need to improve your 'rating.' I have found that most people are more than willing to express themselves when asked such a question. And the answers are typically articulate, and often surprising.

Source: <http://eqi.org/respect.htm>

Respect Quotes



"Building respect for each others cultures will break down barriers and help us to celebrate our diversity and inter-cultural society."

~ **Edwin Poots**



"The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others."

~ **Mahatma Gandhi**

Next Month's Attribute:
May is Responsibility



Town of Richmond Hill Staff Raise \$56,036 for United Way!

The Town of Richmond Hill's staff United Way Fundraising Campaign was recently recognized with the United Way of York Region's 2008 Municipal Challenge Award. Commissioner of Engineering & Public Works and Richmond Hill United Way Committee Chair, Italo Brutto presented the award to Mayor Dave Barrow and acknowledged staff's ongoing commitment to the community.

Character Community E-News is a monthly e-mail newsletter to share information about upcoming events within our organization and beyond. If you would like to contribute upcoming Character Community event information, story ideas or photos, please forward it to the Editor, Michelle Lipkus, at mlipkus@richmondhill.ca.