

PROBLEMS WITH NICE

Santa Claus is coming to town.
He's making a list,
And checking it twice,
Gonna find out
Who's naughty and nice.

Many people look at the opposite of nice as being bad. And, if you are not nice. . . . you are naughty or bad. Then, what will happen to you? People will reject you. People won't want to be around you. You will be alone and lonely. And, if you are alone and nobody wants to be around you (including Santa Claus) then what happens? Try this exercise: Right now, close your eyes and picture yourself in a deep pit. It is very dark, you've been there a long time. You feel despair. There is no hope. Take a minute for that to soak in. Wow, what was that like for you? Have you ever been in a place like that before? Is it no wonder, that for many people, they are willing to be nice at any price.

"Yes, that was nice." "You are a nice person." "It was a nice day." These sound like anything but ringing endorsements. "You need to be nice when the McFadden's are over (don't case a ruckus)." Nice passes for OK most of the time. What does being nice look like? What must a nice person be feeling so that they are nice? "If you are not nice, people won't like you and you won't have any friends." ***Being nice is not a state of being, rather, it is a façade that you assume so that people will not leave you!***

Being nice is a good thing, isn't it?

George Bach said it this way: "**Nice Guys' Wreck Lives!** Their own—and others too!" (See Creative Aggression) Nice Guys have many ways of wrecking their own lives as well as the lives of others.

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One of the problems of being a nice guy is that you can suddenly swing from the Nice Guy to being a Hostile, Aggressive Oaf. Think of it as two ends of a continuum. Over days or months, you can swing from one ends to the other.

Easy Going, Nice Guy ←————→ HOSTILE, AGGRESSIVE OAF

Another problem, Nice guys will tell you “I will come over and see you very soon.” And, that is the last you hear from them! Nice Guys will tell you what they think you want to hear, or they will say nothing and let you assume they agree. Nice Guys have trouble with follow through. They tell themselves, and others, or I’m going to do this or that, but then never seem to get it done. They make New Year’s resolutions, but seldom follow through.

Nice Guys are not “boat rockers.” Under the guise of being a nice guy, their motto is **Peace at Any Price**. Nice Guys, when asked, “What’s the matter, Hon?” will often respond with “**NOTHING, I’M FINE**.” The opposite of a Nice Guy is **NOT** being a Hostile Aggressive Oaf. The opposite of nice is not being bad or hurtful. **The opposite of nice is being congruent/transparent**; it is making what you say and what you do match. A congruent person is one whose inside feelings match their external demeanor.

It feels much safer to be around someone who is congruent, because you know when the congruent person is angry! You can see it in their face and eyes. You can hear it in their voice. You can tell when a congruent person is happy. You can see it in their face and eyes. You can hear it in their voice.

Congruent, transparent guys are easy to find, just look for two-year-old. At two years old, they have not learned how to be a nice guy. When they’re angry, they are angry, when they’re happy, they are happy, and when they sleep, they are at peace with the world. There is only one problem with the two-year-old. They have not learned how to express their feelings in constructive ways. They have modeled their communication on the communication skills of their Nice Guy parents.

Nice Guys believe that others will not tolerate their emotional honesty in communication. So, they defend their dishonesty because it **might** hurt others. Then, having rationalized their phoniness into nobility, they settle for superficial relationships.

Nice Guys often see themselves as victims who are used, misused and abused by others. Nice Guys come in degrees. There are no absolute nice guys, someone who is nice all the time. That is a pretty high standard to try to keep. So Nice Guys fall off the wagon from time to time. Then they get to feel guilty and blame others. “You made me angry!” The result is that few have emotionally close relationships. They may have many friends, but few that they would trust their soul to. Does any of this fit for you?

The fear of abandonment is so strong in Nice Guys that they would rather be dishonest than risk rejection. The result is a Nice guy/gal who is dishonest to some degree with almost all his/her feelings in their relationships. In their minds, anger is linked with not

being loved and with rejection. Being nice is a way to protect yourself from anger, your own and others.

The feeling of anger, is the feeling that most Nice Guys lie about, **“I not angry, I’m just upset.”** Lying about anger is the nice guy’s way of trying to control others, so they will not get angry at them. Nice Guys stuff their feelings, letting them build up and, when the last straw comes, they explode over everybody and everything in their way or, they turn it into a depressed pity party.

Nice Guys tend to be rescuers. As a result, Nice Guys find it hard to listen without giving an answer. They feel compelled to give answers and try to fix your “problem” even when it is not asked for, nor wanted. Then, they are surprised when others get angry at them.

It is not what you say; it is how you say it. Being honest does not include using the **Dirty Nine**: Judgments, Put Downs, Name Calling, Guilt Trips, Threats, Sarcasm, Controlling/Demanding, Blaming, and Silence. The opposite of using the dirty nine is being honest with your feelings, NOT your judgments.

If you do not want to be the Oaf or the Nice Guy, and if you want to never lose another fight. . . learn how to express your feelings! Many people confuse their feelings with their judgments. Here are some examples of what passes for feelings, but none are feelings. Let’s look at the dirty nine:

- **Judgments:** You are lazy and irresponsible. I’m not a go-getter.
- **Putdowns:** For a fat girl, you don’t sweat much. He is a rhinestone in the rough.
- **Name-calling:** Bitch, idiot, whore, fag, nigger, honky, gringo, round eyes.
- **Guilt trips:** You spend more time with your girlfriends than you do with me. I should call my mother at least once a week.
- **Threats:** If you don’t start taking better care of the house, I’m getting a divorce. If you get a divorce I’ll take you for everything you’ve got.
- **Sarcasm:** I’m trying to imagine you with a personality. Boy, that was a real smart thing to do.
- **Controlling/demanding:** You will jump when I say jump and ask how high on the way up.
- **Blaming:** See what you made me do! You made me angry, now see what happened.
- **Silence:** _____!

If these are not feelings, then what are feelings? Feelings are internal reports of your emotional state. Who knows what you feel other than you? So, it serves to reason that if

you share your feelings, no one can argue that it is not what you're feeling, or that you shouldn't feel that way. Here is a constructive way of responding: "Maybe I shouldn't feel this way, nevertheless that is what I'm feeling. I wish I had a button to push and turn it off. I don't like feeling this way either."

On a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 being a person that is **always** nice, and only sometimes the Oaf or the Scrooge who stole Christmas, where would you rank yourself? There are no perfect Nice Guys, nor are there any perfect Scrooges. So, be honest. Are you mostly the Nice Guy who believes that everybody should be nice and who is disappointed when other people are not nice to you?

How many of the nice guy indicators do you use? By being a Nice Guy, is it really working for you? If it is not, you have a choice. Do it even more or learn better ways of communicating your feelings. There is a third way, being congruent. People feel much safer with you when they can tell where you are emotionally.

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