

GOING FILTERLESS!

By Donna Deos

Joy number two of aging: going filterless, or saying things more truthfully and from a place of wisdom.

Okay, I know you're thinking – those are two very different things. They can be, but they can also be related. Here's how: the longer we live, the more we experience, learn and grow; and the more we have to draw from in helping and guiding others.

Likewise, the more we have seen, experienced and been influenced by has worn down our ability to be ultra-politically correct anymore. Or, in some cases even remotely! We simply don't have the time, patience, or willingness to coddle people anymore.

Now we have talked about Grandma losing her filter before and sometimes that can be very funny. Other times it can be very hurtful to the person caught off guard who ends up being in the line of fire. These are two very different things.

There is a way to use the truth and experience and the filterlessness together – it's called honesty.

Most of us spend most of our lives worrying too much about what everyone else thinks. We spend far too little time on what we really want and need; and how best to go about it. Instead, we base our words and actions on how others seem to want us to be.

Part of losing the filter is not giving a darn anymore what other people think. It's a place of freedom. It's a place where what you want and think can finally win out. Sure, they could have told you 40 years ago that they thought and felt a certain way, but then 40 years ago they were where you are – caring too much about what you thought and not wanting to hurt your feelings.



Now, let's realize, they don't want to hurt you now either. They simply have no more capacity for pandering to what everyone else feels, thinks and wants. Are you following me?

Believe me, when you get to the point where you no longer care about what everyone else thinks you will feel amazingly free. It is a beautiful thing!

So, here's where the honesty part comes in. You can find nice ways to let people know you don't agree with them. You can find nice ways to show you care while still being firm in your differing belief. One way is to lead by example. When someone says something you don't agree with, accept that as their belief. You don't have to change them, just like you don't want them changing you.

You can either let it go at that point, or you can say something like: "I see your point. Here's how I see things though that's different: and then give your example." This will hopefully lead to a nice open discussion where you can come to understand each others views without arguing. Plus it can lead you to know areas of discussion to avoid moving forward.

If for some reason it doesn't go that way and it starts getting ugly

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you can say something like, "well, I see we aren't going to agree on this and I value you in my life, so let's just change the subject." That's a very nice way to not back down, take the high ground and let them know this subject is now off limits. And, you're stating the value of the relationship which is always something people want to experience.

Unfortunately, most of the time, by the time the filter is gone, the filter losers are used to you not listening to them anyway (refer back to last month's article on listening to the aged) and so they let slip what really is going through their head versus the kinder gentler version. It just seems to happen. They figure you aren't listening to them anyway so what difference does it make. But then, "Shazam!" happens when you are listening and do react. They are just as shocked as you are. Most of the time they feel bad about it, however, the truth is now out – like it or not. It really is an honest mistake most of the time.

Here's what I'm suggesting: we listen to each other more now. We tell more kindly worded truths now. We stop being so judgmental toward those who don't think as we feel they

should now. What will happen is, when we all lose our filters, it should be kinder and gentler world because we've honestly spoken up about what we disagree about in an environment where it is okay to do so rather than bottling it up until it all flies out sideways and people get hurt.

Now, for the younger generations, who likely aren't reading this anyway, but here goes: I know you are all way more open than the older generations. This doesn't make you better than them. It means your generation is different and that is a good thing. In some ways it is much better because you are less judgmental of diversity and differences. However, you are very judgmental about those who are not open to the things you are. So, take that with a grain of salt and sit with it. If you truly want to be as great as you are aiming for, you need to respect your elders. Respect is something we should all have for each other and it is something that is earned. Let's use that for our topic for March!

Until then, try some truthful filterlessness that hopefully isn't hurtful!

All my best,
Donna

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