



CULTIVATING THE SEEDS OF CHANGE ©

Renée Canali, Life Coach Vol.1, Issue 7 July 2004

Welcome to the second half of the year 2004! Since summer is a time for fun and relaxation, I am eager to try something new. I have invented a game called Conversation Tag. I invite you to play.

Objective: To have at least one conversation with someone new each day for a month.

Rules: 1. You must initiate the conversation.

2. If the person you choose as your conversation partner chooses not to play, give them a big smile and choose a new partner.

3. Think of new ways to start the conversation other than, "How are you?"

4. At least 5 out of 7 conversations must be with a stranger or someone you very seldom talk with, like someone in another department at work or a neighbor you seldom run into.

5. One point for each conversation you attempt.

Two points if the person responds.

Five points for making them smile.

Ten points for initiating a conversation with someone you usually avoid.

How to play:

The game begins with your first opportunity to speak with a stranger or someone with whom you usually do not talk. You can choose specific times each day to focus on playing, or you can play all day long. There are three levels of experience: novice, intermediate and expert.

-Novice: Asks a question which demands a safe response, such as "Where are the restrooms?"

-Intermediate: Starts a conversation by making a personal observation, "That is a unique tie. I've never seen one with actual feathers on it!"

-Expert: Engages the person in an exchange for a minute or more. "You are always cheerful when I come in here at lunch. What's your secret?" "If you were to sell your secret to me, how much would you charge?"

Each day after you have a conversation with someone new, make a note on how they responded. Were they eager to "play"? Did you feel like you came from Mars (or Venus)? Did you leave them smiling? How did the "game" affect you?

The Final Challenge: *Forward a copy of this newsletter to as many people as you can.* (This is the "tag" part.) Share your observations with someone close to you. Ask them to play the game and share their observations. Email me at Renee@landofpossibility.com and share your comments, observations, and experiences. See the Gardener's Action Plan for suggested conversation openers.

Contact me by email: Renee@landofpossibility.com to explore the Possibilities of Life Coaching. Experience a sample 30-minute coaching and together we can refine your goals and strategize you into action!

GARDENER'S ACTION PLAN FOR JULY 2004©

Renée Canali, Personal Life Coach

In order to support your efforts in playing Conversation Tag, here are some suggested ways to begin a conversation with someone new to you:

1. Smile and say, "Nice to see you!"
2. "How are you enjoying this weather?"
3. Comment on their pleasant demeanor, brightly colored shirt, their kindness towards someone nearby that you may have observed.
4. Thank them for smiling at you.
5. Tell them something you appreciate about them, such as speedy service at the drive thru during lunch or their suggestion on how to save money at the office supply store.
6. Say something to help turn around a negative experience, such as "It's a good thing that person took the parking space you were waiting for...that one is reserved for people having a bad hair day."
7. While waiting in a long line, ask someone next to you, "What would you think of them turning on a sprinkler to keep us cool?"
8. If you work somewhere (UPS, FedEx, store associate) that you would require someone's signature, instead of "Sign Here" say, "We're collecting autographs of important people and I noticed we don't yet have yours."
9. Break the ice at a meeting by asking someone what their favorite vacation spot is and why.
10. Ask someone what game show they would participate in and why.

Trying something different can help you break out of an old pattern and can have a positive affect on not only you, but the person you engage with in conversation. Do you remember the last time you were struggling through the day and someone started a conversation with you that changed your mood? If not, try one of the above conversation starters on yourself; the funnier or more creative, the better!

Communication works for those who work at it. John Powell

Here's my way to start a conversation with you:

- ❖ How do you feel about communication in today's world? Do we connect with those around us each day or are we losing at the "game" of communication?
- ❖ How often do you experience meaningful conversation each week? With who do you experience this with most often? Co-worker, spouse or partner, family member, acquaintances?
- ❖ Is it more natural for you to initiate a conversation, join one or participate after someone "invites" you in?
- ❖ When you recall your last meaningful conversation with someone, what would you say made it meaningful? The topic, the other person's interest, your willingness to listen, the environment (open, honest sharing)?

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