

Nil Desperandum

April 2020

Isolated but not alone



The idea of **Nil Desperandum** came from the suggestion Brian Bridges made about cheering people up during these unprecedented times. He offered to provide an anecdote (see page 1) to kick-start the first issue. We are looking for other contributors who have an interesting story to tell or a contribution to make this a meaningful publication. Please write to me at mpollins@onesmartplace.com

Etiquette during the Lockdown

Probably the most significant event to take place this century, COVID-19 has not only impacted billions of lives around the world, but our behaviour, too.

Debrett's have been comparing the 'new' etiquette with that of only a month ago. Some of the changes are arguably for the better, we cannot help feeling nostalgic for the good old days. Recently, Debrett's (who know more than a thing or two about etiquette) published the following:

Old Etiquette	New Etiquette
The double-kiss	The distant wave
Crossing the street to greet a neighbour	Crossing the street to avoid a neighbour
Calling once a week for a catch-up	Calling once a day to check in
Giving up your seat on public transport	Giving up public transport
"I hope you are well"	"I hope you and your family are safe and well"
"Kind regards"	"Take care"
Travelling to the other side of world for a meeting	Changing your virtual background on Zoom
Dress down Friday	Dress down every day

Debrett's have published some more on etiquette: whether we're shopping, exercising, or out and about in public, we can all keep calm and courteous by remembering a few basic principles:

- 1.) **Make way for others:** particularly wheelchair users, the elderly or infirm, and those with buggies or small children.
- 2.) **Exercise (with caution):** if you're out jogging or cycling, the onus is on you to give others enough space.
- 3.) **Be patient** when confronted with queues or other people browsing.
- 4.) **Say thank you:** to anyone who makes way for you – as well as to shop staff, of course.
- 5.) **Smile**

Anecdote from Brian Bridges



Following my release from national service in the summer of 1959, I was invited to stay for a month with my grandparents in their delightful Cotswold stone thatched cottage in a small Oxfordshire village. It was the very epitome of tranquillity. My grandfather, a retired stonemason tended his picturesque garden whilst my grandmother, a retired district nurse, had long been the village 'layer outer' who, whenever someone passed away, pedalled off on her squeaky bicycle with her little Gladstone bag of bandages and potions.

Late one balmy evening I strolled to the end of the garden alone, sat down and paused for some time gazing up at the heavens in wonder at the carnival of light. The stars and planets winking and shining with only the sound of a distant dog barking to confirm the stillness. The moon was full until a gentle breeze heralded the arrival of a few dark clouds who commenced their journey across its face. After a while, a light rain started to fall on my upturned face and I thought to myself, *'I really must help grandfather put a roof on this toilet'*

Brian Bridges. News at 10 South Chailey.

Know the words (or some of them)

(Sources:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-52182658> where marked with * and World Health Organisation **)

** Coronavirus

A family of viruses that cause illness ranging from the common cold to more severe diseases, such as Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS-CoV) and Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS-CoV). The novel coronavirus recently discovered has been named SARS-CoV-2 and it causes COVID-19.

* Covid-19

The disease caused by the coronavirus was first detected in Wuhan, China, in late 2019. (It is the name given to the disease caused by the novel coronavirus, SARS-CoV-2, and is an abbreviation for “Coronavirus Disease 2019 **).

Essential Activities

Tasks essential to main health and safety, such as:

- Obtaining medicine or seeing a doctor;
- Getting necessary services or supplies for themselves or their family or household members, (getting food and supplies, pet food, and getting supplies necessary for staying at home;
- Engaging in outdoor activity, such as walking, hiking or running provided that you maintain at least 2 metres of social distancing;
- Performing work providing essential services;
- Caring for a family member in another household;
- Caring for elderly, minors, dependents, person with disabilities, or other vulnerable persons;
- Healthcare operations, including home health workers;

- Essential Infrastructure, including construction of housing and operation of public transportation and utilities.

* Flatten the curve

To slow the transmission rate so the peak in terms of numbers of cases is flattened into a smoother curve when drawn on a chart, to prevent a very high instance of coronavirus cases overloading health services.

Furlough

A temporary leave of absence to employees due to special needs of a company or employer, due to economic conditions caused by Covid-19.

* Lockdown

Restrictions on movement or daily life, where public buildings are closed, and people told to stay at home. Lockdowns have been imposed in several countries as part of drastic efforts to control the spread of the coronavirus.

* Pandemic

An epidemic of serious disease spreading rapidly in many countries simultaneously.

Quarantine

Separating and restricting the movement of people exposed (or potentially exposed) to a Covid-19.

* Self-isolation

Staying inside and avoiding all contact with other people, with the aim of preventing the spread of a disease.

* Social distancing

Keeping away from other people, with the aim of slowing down transmission of a disease. The government advises not seeing friends or relatives other than those you live with, working from home where possible and avoiding public transport.

* Virus

A tiny agent that copies itself inside the living cells of any organism. Viruses can cause these cells to die and interrupt the body's normal chemical processes, causing disease.



Poetry

A Poem from Pam Ayres to cheer us up...

I'm normally a social girl,
I love to meet my mates,
But lately with the virus here,
We can't go out the gates.

You see, we are the 'oldies' now,
We need to stay inside,
If they haven't seen us for a while,
They'll think we've upped and died.

They'll never know the things we did,
Before we got this old,
There wasn't any Facebook,
So not everything was told.

We may seem sweet old ladies,
Who would never be uncouth,
But we grew up in the 60s,
If you only knew the truth!

There was sex and drugs and rock 'n roll,
The pill and miniskirts,
We smoked, we drank, we partied,
And were quite outrageous flirts.

Then we settled down, got married,
And turned into someone's mum,
Somebody's wife, then nana,
Who on earth did we become?

We didn't mind the change of pace,
Because our lives were full,
But to bury us before we're dead,
Is like a red rag to a bull!

So here you find me stuck inside,
For 4 weeks, maybe more,
I finally found myself again,
Then I had to close the door!

It didn't really bother me,
I'd while away the hour,
I'd bake for all the family,
But I've got no flaming flour!

Now Netflix is just wonderful,
I like a gutsy thriller,
I'm swooning over Idris,
Or some random sexy killer.

At least I've got a stash of booze,
For when I'm being idle,
There's wine and whiskey, even gin,
If I'm feeling suicidal!

So let's all drink to lockdown
To recovery and health
And hope this awful virus
Doesn't decimate our wealth.

We'll all get through the crisis
And be back to join our mates
Just hoping I'm not far-too-wide
To fit through the flaming gates!

It's not funny, or is it?



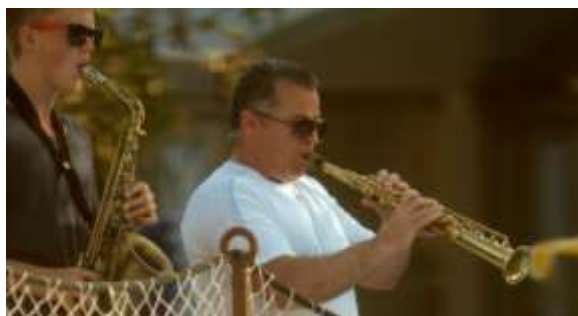
Donald Trump goes on a fact-finding visit to Israel.

Sadly, while he is on a tour of Jerusalem he suffers a heart attack and dies. The undertaker tells the American diplomats accompanying him, "You can have him shipped home for \$50,000, or you can bury him here, in the Holy Land, for just \$100."

The American diplomats go into a corner to discuss for a few minutes. They return with their answer to the undertaker and tell him they want Donald Trump shipped home.

The undertaker is puzzled and asks, "Why would you spend \$50,000 to ship him home when it would be wonderful to be buried here and you would spend only \$100?" The American diplomats replied, "Long ago a man died here, was buried here, and three days later he rose from the dead. We just can't take the risk."

Music by the Pool



Click here to hear:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ThjY6GizZqc&feature=youtu.be>

Fun



Watch the Domino Effect: social distancing and the virus spread

Click here:

<https://youtu.be/djN4zvUOg50>

Masters of Logic

Here are two logic puzzles for you to exercise your brain and think about something other than Covid-19:

(1) Masters Of Logic Puzzles (Dots)

Three Masters of Logic wanted to find out who was the wisest amongst them. So they turned to their Grand Master, asking to resolve their dispute.

"Easy," the old sage said. "I will blindfold you and paint either a red, or blue dot on each man's forehead. When I take your blindfolds off, if you see at least one red dot, raise your hand. The one, who guesses the color of the dot on his forehead first, wins."

And so it was said, and so it was done.

The Grand Master blindfolded the three contestants and painted red dots on all of them. When he took their blindfolds off, all three men raised their hands as the rules required, and sat in silence pondering. Finally, one of them said: "I have a red dot on my forehead."

How did he guess?

(2) Masters Of Logic Puzzles (Hats)

After losing the "Spot on the Forehead" contest, the two defeated Puzzle Masters complained that the winner had made a slight pause before raising his hand, thus derailing their deductive reasoning train of thought. And so the Grand Master vowed to set up a truly fair test to reveal the best logician amongst them.

He showed the three men 5 hats - two white and three black. Then he turned off the lights in the room and put a hat on each Puzzle Master's head. After that the old sage hid the remaining two hats, but before he could turn the lights on, one of the Masters, as chance would have it, the winner of the previous contest, announced the colour of his hat. And he was right once again.

What colour was his hat? What could have been his reasoning?

The answers can be found at:

<http://brainden.com/logic-puzzles.htm>

