

The Business Connector

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Join the Club

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One thing that every human being has is drive. This so-called desire to be better is instinctive to our species. This drive is merely a survival mechanism held over from a time when continual improvement was truly a matter of life or death.

Beyond survival, our drive has motivated humanity to control the world around it. It has propelled the human species out of caves, into high-rises, and off horses, onto machines with horsepower.

This drive to be better influences almost every aspect of human lives. It drives us to look better, it drives us to be healthier, and it compels us to advance ourselves professionally and financially.

There are all sorts of remunerations for this drive. We make more money. We gain greater control. We have more security. We have more leisure time. We simply feel better.

Beyond these benefits, however, everyone takes great satisfaction in having others recognize the fruits of their drive. These are compliments and they serve to build the spirit of those who receive them.

When we tell someone, "WOW, you have lost weight and look great," we immediately spur them on to continue with whatever diet and exercise

program in pursuit of shedding the next five or ten pounds. Thus, there is merit in continually looking for ways to lift up those around us with well wishes and praise.

In the 1920s, George W. Crane gave the students in his social psychology class at Northwestern University an assignment: Each day for 30 days give someone an honest compliment. He called this *The Compliment Club*.

During the course of this project, not surprisingly, Crane's students noted that their sincere compliments had a positive impact on those around them. Those involved in *The Compliment Club* lifted up the people they praised.

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In her book *Dare To Connect*, Susan Jeffers reminds us that "the purpose of the compliment is not to make [others] like you, but rather to enrich their lives in some way." In short, complimenting is altruistic.

Knowing this, is it possible to make complimenting others a part of our routine? In her book *Nonstop Networking*, Andrea Nierenberg offers a suggestion for

developing a habit for maintaining membership in *The Compliment Club*. She recommends that until you get in the habit of giving daily compliments that you start each day with five pennies in your right pocket. Then each time you give a compliment or offer up some genuine praise, you simply shift one penny from your right pocket to your left. Obviously, the objective is to end the day with all five pennies in your left pocket.

Whether we use a journal or a handful of pennies in our pocket, we can consistently and continually find opportunities to compliment our children, our vendors, administrative staff or anyone for that matter.

Moreover, we do not need to wait for superiors to offer us praise. After all, there is no rule that says compliments must flow from the top down. Compliments can and should go in any direction. Therefore, we can give our bosses, clients and parent the accolades they deserve.

Therefore, whether we are most comfortable sending compliments flowing top-down, bottom-up and side-to-side, it is likely that the accolades we provide will come back to us. Nevertheless, in no time, no matter what comes back to us, we will have developed a new altruistic habit and we will have ensured our membership in *The Compliment Club*. ▼