



**Angry Manors,
Please + Thank You & DQ**

Ink Free # 3

August, 2024

Sitting in the dentist's chair bathed in blistering light, listening to questions I could not answer with an open mouth full of cotton, drills, picks, and hands, I heard more pleasant, respectful dialog than perhaps ever before. "thank you Ms. Luz, for the cleaning solution," "Your welcome Doctor." After almost an hour of removing an old crown, repairing a cavity, cleaning and measuring for a new crown, installing a temporary one to protect my tooth, and their work for the two weeks it will take to fabricate a new crown, all their dialogue showcased personable, respectful with kind manors. They thanked each other for every motion and action needed to complete their work. Wow! In no way is my recent experience like the 1890 image below.



Compare this with my next stop, Costco. Somewhere between fighting for a package of bathroom tissue, loading up birdseed, and looking for an SD card, I realized I was in a no-smile zone. This is also a no-eye contact zone and full-contact shopping cart racing.



While I noticed the difference between Dr. Screamdrill's office and a discount box store retailer, I soon reasoned the hostile atmosphere is not just in the store; it started in the parking lot. Wait, before that too. Long lines of cars turning into the complex always counted more than 10 in a left-hand turn lane

designed for 7. Once in the lot, try to find a parking place. And if you are driving anything more than a tiny smart car, good luck getting your pickup or SUV into slots designed to maximize the number of spaces at the expense of door scratches, dings, and forcing slim diets. I hold no ill will with Costco; I find the shoppers' frame of mind truly disturbing.



I finally reached the checkout lanes, with two self-checking and five registers with real people. Almost done. Scan, box, pile in the cart, and then tap the card. The attendant says, "Have a nice day," to which I respond, smiling and saying I will. She did smile, and I pointed out that she is the only one in the store with a pleasant face. She whispered to me, Yes, this atmosphere is very depressing. There are still more steps: receipt scan upon store exit, find my truck, squeeze into the cab, back out with three cars jockeying for my spot,

find the lot exit, and finally merge onto a real street. I am wrung out exhausted and do not want to think about what I forgot to look for. I can order that online.

On the way home, over a senior discount DQ chocolate cone, I tried to understand why the dentist's manner and ambiance is so cheerful and relaxing while buying food turned out so angry and hostile. No answer did I find.



This juxtaposition reminded me that good manners, tolerance, and a smile should start with me. Given a choice, I will go back to Dr. Screemdrill any time and go out of my way to smile while shopping.

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Pondering along in old age without fear, excepting what I can do
Enjoying every minute of it!