

Teaching through kindness and sharing goes a long way

by
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This is an amusing, fictional story, not aimed at anyone, but to make a point that kindness can go a long way, especially during the upcoming albie season.

I was fishing off Narragansett one afternoon with a fellow RISSA member when all of a sudden this guy in 20 footer comes barreling down full-bore on a school of blitzing bluefish.

My friend said, "Look at that idiot the way he plowed into that school and put them all down!"

When the fishing suddenly ended, I calmly said to the aggressive boater, "Wow! How skillfully you maneuvered your craft in a tight and dangerous situation like that."

The other captain looked perplexed, then said, "Are you some kind of wise a...s?"

"No skipper," I said. "I'm not jerking you around. I admire the way you keep control of your craft in a tight situation with all the present danger around. There could have been loss of property or serious injury here."

"Yeah," the skipper said and ran off to find more fish.

"What was that all about?" my friend asked.

"I am trying to bring some sanity back to fishing again," I said.

"It should be fun and enjoyable any time you are out on the water. I believe it's the only way we can save the place from ignorant, selfish boaters so we can all enjoy the experience."

"How can one man save this waterway from these types of behavior," my friend said.

"It's not one person," I said. "I believe the suggestion may have given him something to think about next time. Suppose he does that a dozen times today. Maybe one of those times he's on fish and someone else does the same thing to him. Maybe then he'll realize what I said and makes a constructive comment to the next guy. Now I've started the chain of good behavior. Eventually the proper attitudes could spread throughout the Sound. Now that isn't bad, is it?"

"But you're depending on that wise guy to pass your goodwill to others."

"I'm not depending on it," I said. "I'm aware that the system isn't foolproof so I might deal with ten different people today. If out of ten I can make three improve their behavior, then eventually I can indirectly influence the attitudes of thousands."

"It sounds good on paper," my friend admitted, "but I'm not sure it works in practice."

"Nothing is lost if it doesn't," I said. "It didn't cost me anything but a little time to tell that man his behavior was



Bluefish feeding frenzy

unacceptable in a roundabout way. If it fell on deaf ears, so what? Tomorrow there will be other situations out here, maybe along the breakwalls? I'll just start over again."

"You're some kind of a nut," he said.

"That shows how cynical you have become. I've made a study of this. The thing that seems to be lacking, besides money of course, for State workers is that no one tells workers what a good job they're doing."

"But some are not doing a good job,"

he said.

"They're not doing a good job because they feel no one cares if they do or not. Why shouldn't someone say a kind word to them?"

The tide was slack and the fishing dropped off so we agreed to go home and catch up on some RISSA e-mail fish reports.

"Boy I've got a stack of 'em too!" I said.

He said, "Who really cares about the endless fishing trips that produce no fish?"

"Hear! Hear!" I said. "Answer a few of them even though you may think the subject is petty."

"But for what reason," the member quipped.

"Just to show some encouragement. Some of these guys spend an awful lot of time and thought posting suggestions. Just make them feel that their time isn't wasted."

My friend said, "I haven't seen anyone like you since The Man from LaMancha."

"When those members digest your words, they will feel better for it. Somehow they will benefit from your goodwill."

"But you can't do this all alone!" my friend protested. "You're just one man."

"The most important thing is not to get discouraged. Making people on the Internet kind and understanding is not an easy job, but if I can enlist other people in my campaign. . ."

Besides encouraging them to express their thoughts into words and proper grammar goes a long way to solicit their talents. Maybe someday they will step up and volunteer to serve on a committee. Just think about that for a minute? That would be a fantastic.

Just a little light laughter to get you thru the day. Kindness can keep the door open to pleasant fishing trips.

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Capt. Stachelek at the helm of his 23' Everglades Castafly.