

9-13-13 The Pedicure Codes

I am familiar with pedicure codes in the sense of regulations regarding such items as methods of cleaning and sanitizing, especially the filter in whirlpool footbath styles pedicure chairs. However, I am unfamiliar with the pedicure codes of conduct. Do we chat? Do we acknowledge the fact of overhearing the comments by others? These are communication challenges seen in any new situation. Do you remember when the ATM-s came into existence and people were somehow supposed to know enough to give a little space and not be looking at “your” screen. After all, there weren’t any stanchions, with ropes and signage indicating where to stand and to wait to be called.

So, the first time I had a pedicure, of course, I saw it through the eyes of a health agent. As I flipped a magazine while waiting, I kept glancing up to see what procedures were in place. Were disposable items disposed? Was the footbath area cleaned? (I can’t help it!)

When it was my turn, there wasn’t anybody in the next chair and I practically fell asleep, the whole process was so relaxing. I became convinced of its health benefits. The cleaning of the feet is akin to a spiritual act, reminiscent of biblical accounts. The massaging of the foot must improve circulation! While it may not specifically treat or address health problems, as in reflexology, I am convinced of the power of the pedicure to heal. For me, it is not so much about the color choice of the polish; it is the relaxation and massage.

Arriving for my second-in-my-life- pedicure, I saw that someone else was in the next chair and I recognized the young woman who would soon provide this health benefit for me. She smiled when she looked up and saw me. Nice. I noticed the woman in the other chair was quite chatty and seemed to be a regular.

By the time I was sitting next to her, there was a conversation going on breaking all the invisible space barriers. The owner asked a question. My “neighbor” talked about her job. “My” woman even looked over and asked her how her summer was! My neighbor’s answer indicated her husband was sick over the summer and they weren’t able to do much but finally visited the Cape a couple times. “Oh, that’s nice.” “My” woman said. I read my magazine. I pretended to not hear.

And that is when another barrier was broken. The woman in the next chair looks right at me as she says, “He had Lyme disease.” “Oh, that’s too bad. That can be serious.” I tell her.

You know my head was thinking all kinds of things, now that I was not only the health agent again but also a caring neighbor who has had Lyme disease three times. Still, I waited for some sign from her indicating her desire to continue the topic. And she did.

She looks right at me, with an expression clearly saying, “Serious? Oh, yes. It was serious!”

She proceeded to tell me he had meningitis, drooping of the left side of his face (aka Bells' Palsy), and needed a daily infusion of medicine. I nodded my head with sympathy as I recalled my second case requiring the same but I didn't tell her that because, well, this story was her story. Right?

She added, "And I know where he got it, too! He got it golfing! He got going into the woods and looking for his balls. Well, not his balls but his golf balls."

Since she did not indicate any need for laughter in response to her humorous comment about her husband's balls, I did not laugh; just smiled and nodded. But I did add, "Well, it's everywhere. I was sitting on a bench one time next to a plaza, surrounded mostly by concrete, and I looked down to see a tick crawling toward me."

"Oh, we've made all kinds of changes in our yard, mowing it, cutting brush, and, I'm sorry; I know we're supposed to care about the environment but I say they should be spraying for this! This is getting too serious!"

Ah, spraying for ticks; this is a wish list topic I hear more and more frequently. What should I tell her? She seemed keen on improving people's chances of avoiding this disease. Did she even know of all the other diseases borne by ticks? It seemed to me I owed her my knowledge.

I had learned that Pedicure Codes can be complicated and can be modified, as the individuals change. Pesticide Codes can be complicated, too, requiring choices and responsibility; more on that next week.

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