

Indifference does not help

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A few evenings ago, at a dinner, I met a well-regarded scholar. He spoke about many topics that kindled my interest. In my enthusiasm, I offered to have dinner with him a couple of days later and promised to call the next day and confirm. Amidst my pre-occupations, I forgot to call him. Promptly, the morning after, he called and in a mild manner reprimanded me for my insensitivity. "Calling and saying you can or cannot make it, are both alright. However, not calling after committing to do so, smacks of indifference, and it hurts," he said. The message was clear and I felt guilty.

When we promise to call someone at a particular time, or when someone sends a mail that he or she expects a response to, it is important that we act. We may not agree to the request being asked of us, or we may not be able to oblige. Yet, the least we can do is to inform that person. Otherwise, we are in effect telling that person: "You are unimportant." or "I do not care."

Mother Teresa is reported to have said, "Tell me you don't like me, or that you do, but please do not be indifferent to me, for it hurts."

Indifference not only devalues the person, it also undermines the relationship.

Therefore, next time, remember to respond irrespective of whether you want to or not, for in doing so you will only be displaying humaneness.

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