

## Getting it together

# Party manners hide socializing hang-ups

I have a party phobia. Parties both scare and attract me. I love discovering new interesting friends, and yet I feel clumsy about beginning new social relationships.

Oh, sure, I know how to make polite conversation. But what I want is to be able to relate comfortably as just plain me, not trying to impress anyone or play any role.

Most of the time, that's not such a difficult task. Yet, at parties, where I'm surrounded by new potential friends, it's almost always an uphill struggle.

Lately, I have been discovering that I have a lot of members in my uncomfortable-at-parties club. In fact, some people who appeared so smooth at handling the party scene have admitted to their own hidden feelings of awkwardness.

Even apparently avid party-goers have expressed reservations about partying. They call such events phony and competitive. And yet, they never miss an opportunity to socialize.

**WHY ARE PARTIES** so magnetic and simultaneously so uncomfortable for some? Probably because we hold parties so heavily with expectations and hopes for social satisfaction that we feel both drawn to the imagined possibilities and frightened that they will slip from our hands if we don't perform exactly right.

Most people, when they think of parties, conjure scenes filled with social adventure. Parties promise opportunities to widen our social sphere, to start fascinating new relationships, to experience childlike playfulness, and to temporarily escape the boredom of daily ruts.

We have come to believe, however, that these party treats are only available if we are able to create a certain atmosphere of gaiety and carefree abandon. Party guests often feel an expectation of witty conversation and uninhibited behavior.

To cope with these implicit demands and with the inner clumsiness

By  
**BOB TRENZ,**  
Ph.D.



they feel as they initiate new relationships, many individuals have adopted their own party manners, styles of behavior that they don't for the occasion.

**THE FOLLOWING** are nine commonly used party-coping styles. "Dip talk" is used to fill uneasy silence between chit-chat. It consists of comments on the dips, spreads, hors d'oeuvres, furniture and crowd at the party.

"Hiding" may take the form of reading a magazine, sitting in a corner with a bored facial expression, or even joining an animated conversation as an observer. It is often accompanied by occasional comments about how boring the party seems.

"Flirtation games" are played with varying degrees of seriousness as an interesting diversion. The goal of games is rarely to develop new relationships. Instead players attempt to score points by getting a willing partner to accept the bait and express interest.

"In the bag" is the old familiar attempt to completely anesthetize the brain with alcohol. The best in-the-bag players are able to get so intoxicated they can claim to have forgotten the whole evening by the following day.

"WITTY ENTERTAINMENT" is used by glib conversationalists. They often command an audience of several other party-goers with titillating can-you-top-these stories. A related

style is the party guru who holds court spouting wise psychological theories to a small audience.

The "quick pass" is used by party goers who really don't want to be at the party but couldn't say no. Sometimes the quick pass consists of coming late and leaving early. Other times it includes a pre-planned call from the babysitter with an "emergency."

"Huddling" is done by people who have a friend or a mate at the party. Huddlers engage their companion in "closed" discussions and thus avoid mixing with unfamiliar party guests.

"Fashion show" is used by both men and women. It involves treating the party as an opportunity to view the latest styles. This is frequently accompanied by an implicit costume competition.

Finally, the "Dale Carnegie—how to win friends approach" is used in an attempt to seem to be a successful party socializer. It consists of gimmicks like remembering names, trying to find out one interesting thing about each guest and acting like a good listener.

**AS A WHOLE,** it's a formidable list. No wonder it's so hard to just openly get to know one another at a party. The mere presence of someone using one of these party styles often scares me into defending myself with one of my own favorite styles.

Yet, the very frequency with which we can observe these defensive techniques at parties should give us some encouragement. People use them to protect themselves because, like a lot of us, they are also shy about socializing at parties.

The fact is that authentically relating to others is a risky venture. Being "just plain me" is always harder when it feels like no one else is—perhaps the reason party manners are used as smoke screens.

Parties full of shy socializers hiding behind party manners have got to be one of the most difficult situations of all.

Yet before we give up entirely on the possibilities of relating authentically to each other, a little risk-taking should be in order.

It is just possible that some of those competitive, phony party guests at the next get-together are just aching to meet someone who is taking the chance of admitting who he really is.

## Coed figures food for 35 cents a day

It took a lot of fancy figuring to build in variety, but a Michigan State University dietetics student proved that it is possible to eat a balanced and nutritionally-adequate diet for 35 cents a day.

Karen L. Hierema, a 23-year-old senior from Byron Center, Mich., performed her culinary magic as a voluntary special project for a course in human nutrition.

"The original idea was to feed myself for 75 cents per day," she said, "but after a close look at my normal diet, I found that I was doing that anyway."

So Karen cut her food expenditures almost in half, restricting her food budget to 35 cents per day for five days.

**DURING THAT PERIOD** she ate two meals daily (part of her normal eating pattern) and made daily measurements of her intake of calories, protein, fat, carbohydrates and several essential vitamins and minerals.

Her weight remained steady at its normal 125 pounds, Karen reports, and she did not suffer from any fatigue, loss of strength or from any psychological upsets.

"I felt fine during the entire study," she said, "but the toughest part was planning variety into my meals so that I wouldn't get bored with them."

"If I had to feed a family on 35 cents per day, per person," she said, "meal planning could become a full-time occupation."

**ACTUALLY,** Karen's meals don't look too different than those that most of us eat. Breakfast might consist of orange breakfast drink, cereal, milk, coffee and toast.

Dinner was built around main courses of meat, fish, pasta or vegetables and then filled out with vegetables and bread.

Karen kept the cost low by careful shopping, controlling the size of portions and use of home-grown vegetables.

Bob Trenz is a Rochester psychologist and marriage counselor. Questions for Dr. Trenz may be sent to the Rochester Observer & Eccentric, 410 N. Main, Rochester, 6002.

**Out-of-the-ordinary gifts tell him he's special**

After all the loving things he's done for you, an ordinary gift just won't do. Thank heaven for Frederick's... where you'll find unique gifts in precious metals for that special man of yours. Gold key chain tagged with his initials, \$100. In sterling silver \$25. Twinkling diamond in a gold nugget tie tac, \$150. For the golfer, engraved gold place marker, \$35. Silver greens keeper, \$12. His own gold toothpick brightened with a diamond, \$95. Initialed gold cuff links, \$250.

**Fredrick Jewellers**  
of BLOOMFIELD HILLS

Christmas Hours  
Open M., F., 11-9  
Sat. 10-6 Sun. 12-5  
869 West Long Lake Road, just east of Telegraph... 645-0973

1925-1975

## Lazare's Furs Ltd.

**EXCLUSIVELY at LAZARE'S in WINDSOR**  
*Furs by Grosvenor of Canada--*

World famous for unique designs and supreme quality in Canadian Lynx, Alaska Snow Lynx, Canadian Fisher, Alaska Seal, Weasels, Lamb, Silver Fox, Blackpoint and Rancher Wild Mink. Feel them try them on, snuggle into them and take advantage of our...

**50th Anniversary Sale!**

**ONLY 2 WEEKS TO SELECT THAT SPECIAL CHRISTMAS GIFT AT LAZARE'S OF WINDSOR**

Canadian Fisher Coats	Reg	NOW
Female skins, Full length, Fully let-out	\$5000	\$3900
(Male skins reg: \$2500)	NOW \$1825	
<b>Canadian Lynx Coats</b>		
As illustrated, Full length, Fully let out	\$2400	\$1875
<b>Canadian Red Fox Coats</b>		
Full length, Fully let out	\$1750	\$1399
<b>Mink Coats, Pastel and Dark Ranch</b>		
Full length, Fully let out	\$1950	\$1295
<b>Norwegian Blue Fox Coats</b>		
Full length, Fully let out	\$1550	\$1175
<b>Violet Mink Stoles</b>		
Full length, Fully let out	\$650	\$595

**OUR PRICES, STYLE FOR STYLE, DEFF COMPETITION**

**DUTY AND TAXES REFUNDED**

**Lazare's Furs**  
493 Ouellette Ave. in Downtown WINDSOR 1-519-253-2418

**All B. Siegel Stores Open Every Night Till Christmas**

## Personal Gifts for Your Fair Lady Glamour Robes

Romance begins at home... or give her charmer for leisure loveliness.

**Right** Maribow lavished wrap robe done in soft polyester fleece. Side slash pockets. Peach or aqua. By LORI TILL. Misses' sizes 8 to 16... 80.00

**Left** The Chinese influence in this mandarin styled robe of Dacron polyester fleece. Clip side closing, contrast lining at collar and cuffs. Red with black, or aqua with orange. By BILL TICE. Misses' sizes 8 to 16... 60.00

*Robe Dept. - all stores*

**B Siegel**

WOODWARD AT STATE  
7 MILE AT LIVERMORE  
EASTLAND CENTER  
BIRMINGHAM  
THE VILLAGE PLAZA  
BIRMINGHAM  
NORTHLAND

### CROWN HOUSE OF GIFTS

WILL BE OPEN FOR YOUR SHOPPING CONVENIENCE

Monday thru Saturday

9:30 am to 9 pm

Sundays Noon to 5 pm

*Crown House of Gifts*

643-6565

Somerset Mall