INDUCTION: **DIANE HOWARD**
April 21, 2011

RAIN CITY ROTARY

"MAKING FRIENDS BY SERVING"

HABITS

What is the difference between good people and "not-so-good" people? Are some humans born more useful and sunny than others? Why can you count on some people to make the wrong choice in uncertain circumstances? Why are there people like Donna, whose lemons arrive pre-sugared for lemonade? Why can you count on a thoughtful response from Perry? I could say something like this about each person in Rain City Rotary. There is a lot of goodness in the room.

Aristotle thought that the big difference among people lay in their habits. Any person may be helpful in some way occasionally. Hitler loved his dogs and art. John Hinckley had a vivid imagination. Napoleon brought Josephine flowers occasionally. Really good people, however, are good regularly. Virtuous people, Aristotle argued, develop good habits. They serve others like we brush our teeth. You just get in a routine of scrubbing your molars and before long hardly notice the details. The behavior becomes ingrained, part of one's constitution. Goodness becomes almost automatic.

How does one establish good habits? Many bad practices are easy to acquire, playing, as do all bad habits, on our innate weaknesses. Much remains to be learned about habit formation. Nevertheless, a few factors are plain. First, one must come to recognize that a preferable behavior may exist. Usually, we see such better behaviors in our companions and emulate them. Second, one must try to establish a new habit. Good habits have to be nurtured, like seedlings. Generally, most people begin habituating in a new behavior about a month into the change. Third, good habits need support. We are linked to one another in our depths. We, quite naturally, follow one another. When we are surrounded with people of good habits, who are seeking to improve their existing habits, our habits improve.

We become good people by doing good with good people.

Rotary is humanity seeking its best self. Habitually.

Welcome to Rain City Rotary, Diane.

BRAD LANCASTER
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