

Sage STRATEGIES

Head and Shoulders, Knees and Toes

“The Things You Think About at a Chamber Banquet”



March 6, 2020 Cathy Shull

Last night I was at the Fort Morgan Area Chamber banquet and in the dinner line (yes, you read that right) we got to talking about face touching, sneezing in elbow and protecting ourselves from virus transmission. This morning I woke up with a head cold (someone is on my list) and decided it was time to take on this subject in a very unscientific way.

I reached out to friends to share what greeting they use when meeting someone either in business or in general. Lots of good though and of course, there is always that one, but more about that later.

I like to be forward thinking as I attend lots of meetings and interact with a variety of people, so I reviewed what was out there to see how I might adjust my greeting.

Hugs: I'm a hugger, I just can't help it, plus I'm old enough I generally never make anyone feel uncomfortable. I hugged someone at the banquet last night, I hope they are feeling well today. I must learn to stop this and hope there comes a time again when we can hug freely.

Handshake: This is the greeting of the business world, though I did have an Uncle who shook hands with everyone, even his own kids. Probably best to cut back on this unless you carry Purell spray to use before and after. That might be awkward!

Fist Bump: I've used this like a High Five when celebrating something special. I've never used this for a greeting and besides are knuckles really any safer. If we are going to use this and chance contamination it at least has something after the fist bump like an explosion of fingers or something to make it cooler.

Toe Bump: I just heard about this while watching morning shows and I'm like "HELL NO". Remember I said I'm old, I would tip over. I'm not as stable as I once was. If you use this, you have left out a vital, knowledgeable, active part of the community. And, then I'm thinking (I'm a rural girl) where has your footwear been?

Elbow Bump: I have just now been able to adjust my behavior to coughing or sneezing into my elbow rather than just covering my mouth. This was the start of this discussion last night at the chamber banquet and a nurse was encouraging this way of your germs not being spread. BUT if we are putting our germs in our elbow – why would we bump elbows. I say BIG petri dish.

Head Nod and "Hey": I am practicing this because I can use it as a greeting, use it to acknowledge someone across the room and if I practice enough, I think I can make it really cool and the new trend. The head nod

will be the key to whether I look cool or looking stupid. Let me know if I use it on you!

Now, what did my friends say. I noticed a definite difference in age in their replies. The older they were the more they were willing to adjust their behavior. Overall, they weren't of any help as their answers were all over the place. A salute came up but that brings up the face touching thingy again. The "there is always one" advocated for tongue kiss or booty grab. (Surprisingly, I got this more than once) Do I have strange friends? Finally, I have the cousin who is a hugger, will always be a hugger and I will gladly hug her.

Yes, these were in part brought about by the Corona Virus, but maybe the Corona Virus is making us think about this more seriously. I could go into the health care risks, costs, etc. but that is for another blog.

For now, I sing Happy Birthday when I wash my hands, carry hand sanitizer and will be much more cognizant of spreading my germs especially in a business setting. No reason to panic, but every reason to be aware and be thoughtful.

P. S. This song will be in your head all day and you are welcome!

Cathy Shull is owner of several businesses all focusing on advocating for rural areas. [Sage Strategies](#) is her consulting firm focusing on "Building the economies in our backyard"; [Discover Rural](#) is an online event guide promoting rural activities and events and [Rural Drive By, Photos From The Road](#) share the life and look of rural America.

