



1 of the other participant in a way that honors their position; and

2 WHEREAS, elected officials, businesses, students, civic organizations, and churches  
3 can lead the way in these efforts to model the behaviors of civility; and

4 WHEREAS, it is especially important in a democratic society to encourage as many  
5 voices as possible to speak and take part in public debate in order to be inclusive and to  
6 encourage the making of wise decisions; and

7 WHEREAS, in the United States the *Speak Your Peace* civility initiative is a  
8 grassroots effort, emanating from the principles in *Choosing Civility*, and encouraging  
9 citizens to take the pledge to agree to abide by these principles; and

10 WHEREAS, civility crosses all boundaries of gender, race, ethnicity, social class,  
11 and age in that every person and every group deserves and should seek respect; and

12 WHEREAS, the nine basic principles that most learn as children should be employed  
13 as adults and will foster a return to civility and productive public and community meetings;  
14 and

15 WHEREAS, the nine basic principles are as follows:

16 (1) Paying attention. All should pay attention to the words being said, the body  
17 language and facial expressions in addition to the environment and extenuating  
18 circumstances in which a person is expressing his opinion.

19 (2) Listening. Audiences should not listen merely in order to respond, but to truly  
20 understand what is being said, the true intent of the speaker and the perspective from which  
21 the other person is talking. One may ask questions, but never interrupt.

22 (3) Being inclusive. One should always use language that the entire audience will  
23 understand. It is effective to invite and welcome others into the conversation.

24 (4) Do not engage in gossip. One should not speak poorly of another who is not  
25 present, including repeating derogatory information in that person's absence. When others  
26 engage in gossip, discourage such comments and remind others that this kind of talk is not  
27 productive, nor is it necessary.

28 (5) Show respect. Active listening demonstrates respect. Treat others as you would  
29 want to be treated. Calling names and making judgmental comments are disrespectful and  
30 should be avoided. Negative facial expressions should be avoided.

1           (6) Be agreeable. As a listener, look first for those points on which one can agree  
2 with the speaker and affirm those before moving on to aspects where there is disagreement.  
3 It is acceptable to disagree.

4           (7) Apologize. One should be the first to admit when one has misunderstood, made  
5 a mistake, or spoken in haste. An apology is not a sign of weakness, but the beginning of  
6 healing. Be empathetic, genuine, and sincere in all comments.

7           (8) Give constructive criticism. Listeners should always stay focused on the issue  
8 at hand. Do not be patronizing or condescending in comments to the speaker. One can  
9 present suggestions in the form of a question, encouraging the group to explore the topic  
10 fairly.

11          (9) Take responsibility. One should own and accept responsibility for one's  
12 behavior, words and effects on any listeners. One must control one's own behavior and not  
13 speak for someone else. Make comments to the group, not after the discussion to one or two  
14 people privately. Do not repeat hearsay and confirm facts before passing them along to  
15 others.

16          THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby  
17 recognize and support opportunities for civil discourse and discussion of the Nine Simple  
18 Rules, as suggested by Dr. P.M. Forni of Johns Hopkins University.

19          BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that, as elected officials in the state of Louisiana, the  
20 members of the Senate and the House of Representatives of the Legislature of Louisiana  
21 hereby encourage, urge, and request every legislator to agree to abide by the principles of  
22 civility as outlined in the *Speak Your Peace* initiative.

23          BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana will encourage all  
24 citizens to speak up, to become involved in government and in public debate and to request  
25 that individuals, businesses, churches, schools, local governments, and civic organizations  
26 adopt similar resolutions in support of the principles of civility and incorporate these  
27 principles into their everyday life and work.

28          BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to Rev.  
29 Lindy Broderick of the Greater Shreveport Chamber of Commerce.

