

Protocol Calling

blank with your name... The other person can ease the awkwardness also by giving his/her name at the point of greeting, if they detect a challenge!

The social charmer
South African Zelda du Toit has been offering grooming courses in and around Dubai for the last six years — only her focus is primarily on youngsters, aged five to 18. The classes address various subjects, including poise and posture, manners that matter, table etiquette and overall body care (www.beautifymedubai.com). While these are just a few of the modules offered, she notes they are also the sessions most sought after by parents for their kids. "Etiquette is something many pre-teens and teens lack," she feels. "But it's also something we all need, if we want to stand out above the rest!"
"A lack of etiquette in front of strangers will only put you down, as a newcomer," she contin-

"PEOPLE FOCUS ON YOUR WAYS TO GAUGE WHO YOU ARE AND HOW YOU GO ABOUT THINGS" — ZELDA DU TOIT

ues. "When you are new, people focus on your ways in order to gauge who you are and how you do things. That's why it's so important to always show your best side, and never be false." Living in a multicultural country like the UAE means every nationality might have a different opinion on etiquette, Zelda agrees. But, she adds, in every country, "being kind to each other" comes in at a very basic level and it's one place you can't go wrong. "Parents can help lead by example, and train their children to behave



SAVOIRE-FAIRE: Nour Khoury Roumieh demonstrates napkin etiquette during a grooming session at the Finishing Touch school. Photo: Mukesh Kamal



well, whether at school or at play!

Would it be rude to ask about good old chivalry at this point? Does giving up one's seat for an older person or holding open the door for a lady still count in this age of 'feminism and equal rights'? "Older or disabled people need respect, wherever possible," says Zelda. "Holding a door open for a lady is just a very nice gesture but I'd say women should not go about expecting it; rather enjoy the moment if it occurs. We live in a multicultural region, and

not all cultures believe in holding open a door for a lady!"
As with other areas, over recent years, social etiquette too has had to evolve with technology so that it now includes mobile and email etiquette as well. According to a recent survey of more than 500 UAE residents by Intel, 70 per cent of respondents agreed that there should be etiquette rules governing the use of mobile devices in public places. The top mobile etiquette gripes were: the use of mobile devices while driving (71%), talking on a device loudly in public places (62%), and losing awareness of surroundings or conversations while texting or typing (54%). Yet, 50 per cent of respondents also admitted to texting or typing while in meetings

or at dinner with friends. Enough said?

Dining with grace
At the Finishing Touch school in Knowledge Village, nine precocious boys and girls sit listening around an oblong table, as Nour Khoury Roumieh, the school's managing partner and trainer, attempts to teach them the art of fine dining. They're about seven to 11 years old, but seem to know more about where food and drink are placed (breads to the left of plate, drinks to the right), how a knife should be positioned (blade always facing in) and which cutlery to use (starting from the outside in) than is expected for their age. "Everywhere in the world, people are focusing on communication and soft



ETI-QUOTES

- > Politeness and consideration for others is like investing pennies and getting dollars back.
Thomas Sowell
- > Nothing more rapidly inclines a person to go into a monastery than reading a book on etiquette. There are so many trivial ways in which it is possible to commit some social sin.
Quentin Crisp
- > The high point of civilisation is that you can hate me and I can hate you but we develop an etiquette that allows us to deal with each other because if we acted solely upon our impulse we'd probably go to war.
Stanley Crouch
- > Good manners: The noise you don't make when you're eating soup.
Bennett Cerf
- > The world was my oyster but I used the wrong fork.
Oscar Wilde