

From the desk of the Secretary.....

DISAGREEMENTS and CIVILITY

Hello Brethren and Friends of Oakland Durant Rockridge Lodge 188,

Last month I explored Empathy and Effective Listening. This month I wanted to explore how to disagree.... In a civil manner.

We are not always going to agree on everything with someone we are talking to. Sometimes, we need to have difficult conversations where we disagree with someone. This is when I put all the tools I have discussed earlier into practice. When I have had to disagree with someone I try to follow the following steps:

- I try to fully listen and understand the person's viewpoint.
- I am careful not to be judgemental about it. I remind myself that based on that person's view, their reasons are probably valid to them.
- I give the complete picture as I see it; I may be mentioning areas or ideas that the other person had not considered. I try to explain where I am coming from with my views.
- After that background, I will explain how I arrive at my views. I always explain that feelings are personal and there are no wrong or right feelings. If you feel a different way, that is ok.
- And I keep the conversation framed in a positive way.

This method of civility has worked for me. I hope you can use some of these ideas in your own difficult conversations and continue to promote civility.

Fraternally,

Lawrence Altomare
Lodge Secretary