

THE POWER OF A SMILE

*The following is an article written by my father,
Thomas J. Wolff.*

“Failure is only the opportunity to begin more intelligently.” Henry Ford

Many years ago I was invited to participate in a speaking tour. I was teamed with a man from Pennsylvania named Charlie Jones. Charlie was a fantastic motivational speaker. We lectured in four cities and got to know each other well.

I learned many things from my platform mate. One idea in particular affected my life and subsequently the lives of many others in a significant way.

On the first morning of the tour, Charlie and I had breakfast together. A waitress came to take our order. It was early and she probably hadn't gotten all the sleep she would have liked. Her demeanor sent all the wrong signals to a group of waiting guests. I hadn't slept well myself and without looking up from the menu I mumbled my order. Others around the table did likewise.

Finally the waitress came to Charlie. He looked up at the waitress with a big smile on his face

and said, “My but that's a good-looking smile you are wearing this morning.” I saw a miracle occur. A huge smile lit up a very pretty woman's face. She looked back at Charlie and said, “Thank you so much. That's the nicest thing anyone has said to me in a long time.”

I looked around and everyone at the table was wearing a smile. We received outstanding service. The entire breakfast was a totally upbeat experience with much pleasant talk, some of which included our waitress.

Charlie told us he had been greeting people this way for many years and suggested that we all follow his example during our tour. We did and we had a ball. Not only did we put smiles on hundreds of faces, but we also were smiling and laughing most of the time.

Many details of that trip have faded from memory. But Charlie's great idea has survived. Whenever I meet people who are providing a service, I greet them by saying, “My, but that's a good-looking smile you are wearing.” The response is nearly always a similar one to the one I first heard from our waitress many years ago

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