

Taking advice, from difficult younger siblings

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Recently my brother has been bullying me the way only a belligerent younger brother can. Since I have been working for our Dad the last year my brother thinks I should take the time to complete my legal training and qualify as a solicitor.

Quick back history: 10 years ago passed my Legal Practice Course, worked for a year in firm of criminal solicitors, then decided to choose taking on a church job rather than going down the legal route. family were a bit disappointed. It has at times been a point of conflict.

Mentioned my brother's badgering to my wife, and she just casually commented how it sounded like an ok idea. And suddenly hearing that from someone who I am not usually in conflict with, shifted my perspective.

It's so easy to filter out advice from people who we experience conflict with and whose approach to communication we find a bit rough. But it's actually worth looking beyond those initial feelings and considering their ideas, and proposals objectively.

The fact we disagree on politics and religion shouldn't prevent us from taking each other's advice seriously.

Religious people some times feel a strong calling to want to bless other people with a chance to experience faith and a relationship with God. The funny thing about all of this is that they are often so sure and intent about having a blessing to pass on, wanting to witness to their God, they stop God working through other people, possibly of no faith, atheist, agnostic etc, when God wants to bless them, the religious folk.

I think I am learning as I get a bit older to let other people bless me with what they have to give and share with me, before I start racking my brain about how I should share my theology. This makes a lot of common sense when those you want to bless are possibly v resistant to your concepts of faith in the first place.

Dear religious friends, we are often much better off showing a good model of receiving before we start to try and give.

In being willing to receive from others, however they might go about it, we also discover a very beautiful way to give. Being willing to listen to someone else's advice can be incredibly empowering for the one who is trying to help you. They begin to believe that you trust and respect them, and trust tends to breed trust.

