

Guilt and Inhibition

by C.A.T. Ford

Have you ever finished cleaning out the dead Hedgehog from the out side drain or something equally unpleasant?

Having spent a couple of hours up to your armpits in unspeakable filth and then half an hour cleaning it off, you find yourself with half an hour before dinner.

"Ah Ha!", you think - just time for a quick bit of work on that kit and so you get the box and sit down to spend a quiet time enjoying yourself after all that gunge.

You open the lid take out the instructions pick up the first piece and a voice (usually a partner) behind you says, "You could be decorating the bathroom but there you are playing with that thing". You couldn't really be decorating the bathroom there isn't enough time and if you had started the comment would have been, "what have you started that for there's only half an hour before dinner?"

Of course you feel guilty instantly perhaps you should be doing the bathroom? Perhaps you should be painting the shed? Perhaps you should be painting the chapel ceiling or polishing the cat? What ever you should be doing it most certainly is nothing to do with model railways the seeds of guilt are sown.

This will happen if, having taken a days leave, you respond incorrectly to the question, "What are you doing today?" by saying, "Well I want to spend a couple of hours putting the sidings in on the layout". The normal repost to your answer will be the guilt inspiring "All you ever do is play with your trains".

This is patently not true. Like most of us you probably try hard to squeeze some modeling into any reasonable gap left between your responsibilities to home and family. Generally it is not possible to do anything else in the spaces you have left other than to fit a couple of parts together on a wagon kit before you clear away to do something else much less start and finish a major D.I.Y. Job. Once created the aura of guilt is exploited by others as they know you are likely to respond in the way they want because you feel bad.

Let's try the spare half hour before dinner again you know the sort of thing. "Dad take us to the park to play football". Now it's a ten minute drive to the park each way and a three minute walk from the car park to the football pitch so you refuse. The answer comes back dripping with guilt, "You never take us anywhere Mum says you're always playing trains".

Are you always playing trains? Didn't you take them to that theme park on Saturday? Perhaps helping with homework doesn't count? Or the game you were playing with them before you started cleaning the dead Hedgehog out of the drain.

Worse still the exploitation of guilt can be moved outside the family group. Take Mrs. Bloggs. She's Just had a new patio fitted and the comment when she shows you it goes like this. "Oow! How nice I wanted something like that but he's always on with that railway of his". The fact that Mrs. Bloggs' contractor charged her a couple of grand to do the job doesn't enter the equation the reason you don't have one is because of your railway. Pay cheque not big enough? Wait for " If you spent as much time on your job as you do on those trains...".

What leads from all this guilt? The answer is inhibition. "Ah - but that's a mental disorder', you say. "I can't have that."

Oh yes you can! Your mind is deeply effected by guilt which is a powerful emotion. Unless you are completely unfeeling it will only take a few comments before you start to feel uncomfortable about touching your Hobby when your family are around. Soon you will not touch it at all and if you do you will feel guilty even though no one has said a word to you. This is inhibition, the enjoyment you once gained from the use of your skill in a creative way has been destroyed and any attempt to indulge in your hobby sets up a violent turmoil in your mind in which guilt is uppermost. No one in your family will have set out to inhibit you but they will have succeeded wonderfully This condition will eat away at you and soon you will start to blame people for making you unhappy. Then things will go really pear shaped. Accusation will lead to recrimination and then to all out war. Most times it will not go that far, generally you will blame your hobby for causing the problem and stop doing it.

So what happens now when you finish the Hedgehog cleaning? You note there is only half an hour before dinner. "Ah!", you think, "just time to have a look at that kit I bought. Er - no, better not !" enters your mind along with a guilty feeling. Instead, you crash into an arm chair in the front of the television. "Oh poor dear you must be tired out after cleaning that drain".

Creativity ? Not on this planet.

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