

## **FLORIDA OUTREACH CENTER FOR THE BLIND, INC.**

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### **COURTESY RULES OF BLINDNESS**

When you meet me, don't be ill at ease. It will help both of us if you remember these simple rules of courtesy.

I'm an ordinary person, just blind. You don't need to raise your voice or address me as if I were a child. Don't ask my spouse what I want—"Cream in the coffee?"—ask me.

If I am walking with you, don't grab my arm; let me take yours. I'll keep a half-step behind, to anticipate curbs and steps.

I want to know who's in the room with me. Speak when you enter. Introduce me to the others. Include children, and tell me if there's a cat or dog. Guide my hand to a chair.

The door to a room, cabinet, or to a car left partially opened is a hazard to me.

At dinner I will not have trouble with ordinary table skills.

Don't avoid words like "see or blind." I use them too.

I don't want pity. But don't talk about the "wonderful compensations" of blindness. My sense of smell, touch, or hearing did not improve when I became blind. I rely on them more and, therefore, may get more information through those senses than you do—that's all.

I'll discuss blindness with you if you're curious, but it's an old story to me. I have as many other interests as you do.

Don't think of me as a blind person, but as a person who is Blind.

CAROLYN LAPP, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

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