



Ask for Help

I remember reading ages ago that the trick to John F. Kennedy's success was that he always asked people for help. He also sent everyone a handwritten thank you note—even if they were written by someone else in his office. Whether that's true or not doesn't really matter because I embraced the concept of asking for help and have written thousands of thank you notes.

The first time I reached out to a famous person, it was late at night, and I was preparing the next night's formal, black-tie dinner for CEOs of major Fortune 500 companies. I couldn't get my lemon mousse gelatin to firm up. The recipe I was using came from an old magazine that by then had gone out of print. It did mention in the article that the chef, Bert Greene, lived in Amagansett, New York. I didn't really know who Bert Greene was at that point. It didn't really matter because I was in panic mode. At 10:30 p.m. I just wanted this guy to tell me why his recipe wasn't working. So I called information and got his number. He answered and I started in on how I needed his help. He stopped me and said, "How did you get this number or even find me? Oh, and who are you? Slow down." I told him. Then the kindest man in the whole world began asking me how I was making the mixture. I had no idea how famous he had become. He treated me like family. I had added the rum too soon. We fixed the problem and the mousse got an ovation. Bert became my friend and mentor. I miss him.

Sometimes getting to the actual place where help can happen takes persistence, creativity, and imagination. A great General once said, "Go around, under, and over. If those don't work, then go through." There's always a way to get help. Today with YouTube one can find just about any video on how to do something. Remember, most people love to be helpful. We humans survive by helping each other. When asked for help, the other person becomes engaged and takes notice. It's a different way to gain acceptance and trust. After joining organizations, first look for help while learning, then give back to the new person following you.

And when someone does open their heart to help you, then be darn sure you thank them in as many ways as you can. A handwritten thank you note can be left on a co-worker's desk. When introducing someone who did you a favor, be sure to mention how successful they had been. Send flowers often. Be sure to repay a favor if the request comes your way.

My friend Jane Russell's Lemon Mousse recipe somehow became my mousse of choice—I think because it's pretty fail safe. Thank you, Jane, for always being there when I needed help.



Lemon Mousse a lá Jane

Ingredients

2 large yolks, whites separated (*use the egg whites the next day for an omelet*)
2 tablespoons sugar
1 fresh lemon
½ cup whipping cream
1 teaspoon Knox gelatin
1 ounce water (2 tablespoons)

Beat together egg yolks and sugar until very thick. Grate the lemon and squeeze juice. Beat the juice and lemon peel into the egg yolk and sugar mixture. The juice will thin out the mixture. Measure one ounce (2 tablespoons) of water into a small saucepan. Sprinkle gelatin on the water and allow to stand without stirring for three minutes. Melt the gelatin over low heat. Whip the egg whites until stiff. Whip the cream.

Fold all the ingredients (yolk mixture, gelatin, cream and whites) together and pour into individual serving dishes. Chill and top with extra whipped cream and slice of lemon.

Serves 4.