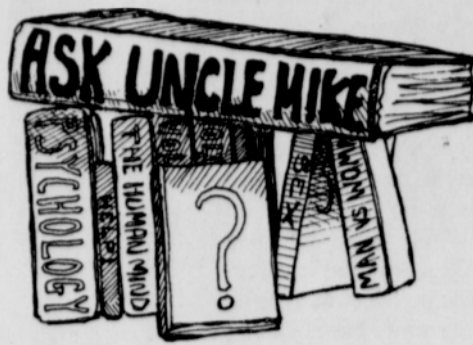


THE RAY PAGE

Dear Uncle Mike,

I'm not looking for advice, this is more one of those mysteries of life questions. Why is it when you're in a hurry and you go into a store or a bank the lines are always longer? I'm not kidding. I keep track and it happens a lot. How do these people know I'm in a hurry and why do they want to make my life miserable?

KMUN Listener



You can now contact Uncle Mike at mburgess@wcn.net, if you must.

Dear Listener,

Uncle Mike loves when people write not asking for advice. It makes him feel good knowing they took time from their busy day, not because they needed something from him, but just to ask his opinion on whatever they're currently obsessing abnormally about. It gives him reason to go on.

All investigations begin with the data. You seem undecided whether, when you're in a hurry, the lines are always longer or only longer a lot. This is an important distinction, one used by mental health workers to separate those who might benefit from therapy from those best suited to a sheltered environment. Aside from change, nothing always happens. Many things happen often, many of them not handcrafted by the universe to fit into our daytimer. Go figure. Uncle Mike hopes very much that your concerns over how "these people" know you're in a hurry and why they want to make your life miserable were a healthy attempt at humor. If not, there are issues afoot which Uncle Mike isn't likely to be able to resolve for you.

This said, the length of the lines is a manifestation of the unfolding of your fate. Or, in more useful terms, your karma. Consider matters this way: each of the humans in the line is the effect of some ordering principle which, to exist now, must have existed potentially from the beginning. They, as well as the office furniture and the produce section, are the end points of space/time lines that connect them to the first and last halves of forever. Add to this that, although the future exists only as potential, there are no accidents. You and they came together because, given all that came before, there was no other place you could be. You entered that bank or that organic coop at the moment you did because the events preceding it were ordered in a particular way; a particular way which was, of course, determined by the ordering of events that preceded it. And so on, as Kurt Vonnegut put it so well.

Back then to your question. If the space/time line of your karma has unfolded you into a long line on a busy day, you have two choices: a) to snarl and snivel at a universe hostile enough to interfere with your plans, or b) to be where you are. Option b is not only more productive and more fun but also gives one that special feeling of well being that comes from embracing reality. The questions worth asking while the nitwit in front of you haggles over the price of prunes are: what place is this?, who are these people?, and what about it interests me and brings me pleasure?

Approached playfully and with a spirit of adventure, interruptions become unplanned episodes with their own set of possibilities: secrets, keys to the mystery hiding in plain sight. Say hello to the right person and you could see a smile worth walking miles for. It happens. The way the fluorescent light hits the pyramid of machine waxed oranges could trigger some modest illumination. The color scheme and decor, considered with real interest, have much to teach about the importance of good taste and common sense. The signs above the tellers urging you to borrow money to buy a house larger and grander than your needs or a vehicle that swills gasoline like there was no tomorrow and tends to roll over even before its tires explode can remind you that a culture designed to maximize profit is always good for a laugh.

But Uncle Mike digresses. Just do this. While standing in line, chant silently: I am where I am and I ain't where I ain't. Given this, there's no room in the equations for down time.

Dear Uncle Mike,

Do you think it's possible that good manners will ever come back into fashion?

Laura, Lincoln City

Dear Laura,

Uncle Mike was unaware they'd gone out of fashion. He just thought there were many too many humans, most of them living in this country, who wouldn't know gauche behavior if it walked up and urinated on their shoe. Manners may be situational but they're a constant in the equation of every culture: the lubrication that keeps the gears of self interest meshing smoothly with the evolving flywheel of society. Manners are taught by those who consider them important and people who don't say please and thank you get the lives they deserve. Loneliness and pain are great teachers. For this reason alone, Uncle Mike faith is unshaken. Do unto others isn't a rule, it's an explanation of how life works.

Any intelligent fool can make things bigger, more complex, and more violent. It takes a touch of genius - and a lot of courage - to move in the opposite direction.

E. F. Schumacher

A Touch of Romance by the Sea

- Fine lingerie & Sleepwear
- Bath, body & home fragrance products
- Massage oils

239 N. Hemlock, #4, Cannon Beach • 436-0129

BISTRO

Memorable Meals Of Honorable Mention

RESERVATIONS: 436-2661
263 N. HEMLOCK • CANNON BEACH

Television is a device that permits people who haven't anything to do to watch people who can't do anything.
Fred Allen

LuLu's

A SHOE & ACCESSORY BOUTIQUE
503-436-0577 239 N. HEMLOCK
CANNON BEACH, OREGON

WATSU

"Unwind your body"
Receive shiatsu stretches and accupressure while floating in warm water

Lisa Friedman 717-2000

Icefire

GLASSWORKS

JIM KINGWELL

POST OFFICE BOX 382
CANNON BEACH, OR 97110
PHONE 503-436-2359

There is no bad publicity, except an obituary notice.
Brendan Behan

CANNON BEACH LEATHER

239 N Hemlock
503-436-0208
SANDRA L. WARD

URGENTLY NEEDED

A HANDFUL OR A HOUSEFUL OF BOOKS, ART AND ANTIQUES

BUYING:

- INTERESTING OLD BOOKS
- PHOTOGRAPHY
- POSTERS
- PAPER ITEMS
- ETC.

DAVID MORRISON BOOKS
(503) 295-6882

BUYING:

- PAINTINGS, POTTERY
- ORIENTAL ART, RUGS, CERAMICS
- TRIBAL & FOLK ART
- SILVER, JEWELRY, WATCHES
- ETC.

DANIEL BERMAN FINE ART
(503) 224-0086

48 years combined experience buying antiques and books

located in Portland-will travel
references on request

Deborah Albrecht, L.M.T.

craniosacral therapy
therapeutic massage
deep tissue

503 738-0790 Gearhart
by appointment

Cannon Beach Massage

Swedish • Deep Tissue • Prenatal
Hot Stone Massage

Valoree Gift, L.M.T.
503 436-2425

The Writers' Block

Readings & Interviews
on KMUN 91.9 FM Astoria
Wednesdays at 1pm