



GWTA – “Get With The Attitude”

Ronnie & Kathe Vaughn, our National Rider Education Directors, have coined the phrase “Get With The Attitude” to encourage folks to keep their spirits up. I really like the idea, but was encouraged to write about what constitutes the right “Attitude”.

Merriam-Webster’s Dictionary lists one of the definitions of Attitude to be: a) a mental position with regard to a fact or state; b) a feeling or emotion toward a fact or state .

I have a few points I think work for having the right “GWTA Attitude”. These include Fun, Service, Openness, Don’t Take Things Personally, and have Big Dreams. Together, they’ll help us maintain the spirit upon which our GWTA was founded.

One of my core philosophies is that, “If we’re not having fun, we’re probably not doing it right.” Riding and socializing with other GWTA members should be enjoyable, not a chore. Time and time again I have found that riding with folks builds memories which bind me to people; a shared experience that I keep in my heart, and am able to revisit whenever I want. Riding seems to be the great equalizer on my fun meter: whenever I go riding, even with folks I’m not particularly familiar, I tend to have fun and either make new friends, or strengthen the friendships we already have. Riding = Fun to me.

Anyone who’s ever organized an event of any size will tell you that it sometimes (many times?) takes effort to have fun. The organization and coordination of an event is the service some folks offer for the fun and enjoyment of others. To me, you get out of something what you put in. I tend to have fun whenever I’m working with someone to make something happen. Again, it adds to the shared experience. For our organization to work better, we need more people to volunteer to step up and serve as organizers, officers, and just plain old helpers.

Our GWTA organization was founded on the openness to a new idea. As members, we need to be open and welcoming to new ideas from others, especially new members. New members give our Chapters energy. It might be a new place to ride, or a new place to eat, or a new concept to consider. You’d be surprised how much people are willing to work to put together a new idea, if you are just open to it and give it a chance. And, if it doesn’t work as well as originally planned, you can try something else.

My friend Don Miguel Ruiz has a book about “The Four Agreements”. The second is: “*Don’t take anything personally.* When you are immune to the opinions and actions of others, you won’t be the victim of needless suffering.” While I must admit that I, too, struggle with this one, I must also say that I have spent far too much time worrying about what others think of me, rather than what good my fun, service and ideas can do for others. Sweating this small stuff diminishes our ability to have the fun potential we want and deserve. Worry less, have more fun.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, I think the best GWTA Attitude is one that has Big Dreams. Our organization got started when a few folks had some Big Dreams, shared them, found support, and made a miracle happen. We're unlike any other Association I know of. But we also need to keep the Big Dreams coming to find new ways to share the fun and excitement of our approach to touring.

(I'll share a Big Dream I have: I want to find a way to help our organization grow back to more than 10,000 members in the next four years. Crazy, you say? I think not.)

Having the right GWTA attitude also takes a BALANCE of all these things. We can't just be out riding; we need to find a way to share the fun. We can't just be dreaming Big Dreams; we need to take the time and effort to make them happen. We can't be just not caring what others think; we need to invite new ideas and new dreams from others. Yes, in some cases it takes real work to make something happen. We (you and me) need to step up and offer our help.

Together, we can all "Get With the Attitude", and help others find their way to "Destination Friendship."