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THE PROBLEM WITH DOORS



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MANY OF US HAVE A LOVE-HATE RELATIONSHIP WITH DOORS. OVERWHELMINGLY, IT LEANS TOWARD LOVE. AFTER ALL, THEY SERVE US BY PROVIDING CONVENIENT INGRESS AND EGRESS. THEY PROTECT US FROM SUCH THINGS AS THE WEATHER OR UNWANTED VISITORS. THEY LEND US PRIVACY. AND MANY ARE MAJESTIC PIECES OF ART, WHAT'S NOT TO LOVE?

And the true value of doors? Just ask someone who's survived a zombie outbreak!

But there is a problem with many doors. Or, we could say the problem is in us. What is it? We hate to touch doors. Why? One word: germs. Yes, many of us are germaphobes and the thought of placing our hand where many others have placed theirs is just . . . well . . . uncomfortable. And unsanitary!

In fact, we will put ourselves through all sorts of contortions to avoid touching the door with exposed skin. Or if it has to be skin, such as handles on the pull side, we'll try to use one or two digits, the outside of our hand, our elbows, our umbrella, or whatever. Round handles are, of course, the worst. There's no choice but to fully grasp them.

In fact, this reminds me of getting gasoline in my car. Yes, I also hate to touch that fuel pump handle that so many have touched before me. That's why, for one reason and one reason only, I like winter: I can wear gloves without looking foolish. But I digress.

Those of us in the door trade will go to great lengths to make touching the door easy. We'll even place push plates on doors that don't need them, only to have users touch anywhere but that plate!

Now, I can be relatively happy on the push side of a door. After all, I have a shoulder, my forearm, my hip, or my rear end that I can use to get through such a door. This can, of course, be somewhat

dangerous for someone who may be on the other side at the same time! And, yes, the return trip is more problematic.

Some hardware manufacturers have introduced antimicrobial finishes. They may claim to have a lifetime treatment. Now, I'm all for advancing technologies that make life better. But would I trust these handles more than another? Not likely. It just doesn't make sense to me that the finish on hardware could mitigate the effects of germs, viruses, bacteria, and fungi, along with a host of other nasty things that can cling to the door or its hardware.

No, I would need to see something equivalent to a bug zapper at work to put my full trust into touching the door or its hardware.

So, the next time you are in the mood to observe people entering or leaving through a door, make note of their touching patterns. I'll be the one reaching high on the push side, up where no one has gone before. (Or, at least that's what I tell myself.) And, on the pull side, I'll either be daintily touching the handle with my pinkie or I'll be the one wearing gloves in 95-degree temperatures.

If you see me in distress, toss me a bottle of hand sanitizer (unopened container preferred). +