

CIVILIZED PEOPLE



A thespian haunted by her childhood fame is forced to join an anger management group full of eccentric characters when she physically assaults a casting director, putting her career in jeopardy.

Robyn Neath

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“Tell Us About Yourself.”

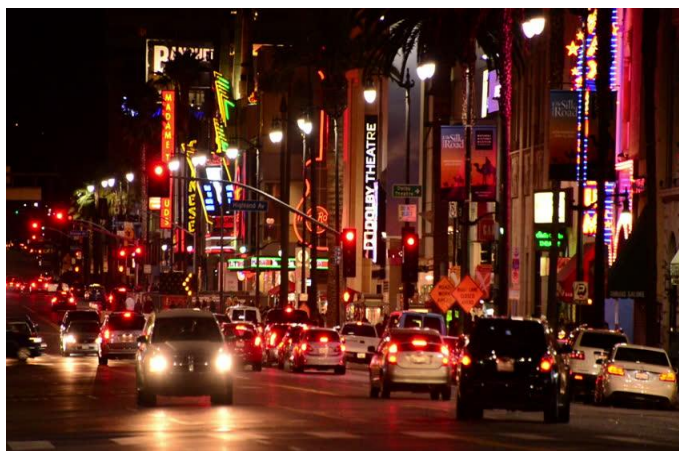
Have you ever been so attached to a television show and its characters that when the series ends, or it's been a while since you've last visited it, you feel this certain type of home-sickness? And once you're able to indulge in that world again, you're filled with this sort of comfort that only that show could deliver? Sometimes, it's the only comfort a person has access to. I know that for me personally, these shows must include the following: misfit friendships, root-worthy romances, cry-laughter, and weirdness unmatched. I also know that there's been a dramatic decline in these types of shows (at least, done well) in the past five years. I've seen enough about the nerdy underdog, or political propaganda dressed up as a “comedy”. Frankly, it is time for somebody to step up to the damn plate and DELIVER! That's why my show is so important, and so needed right now. It's a show about making the most of the situation you're stuck in, realizing that growth is uncomfortable but understanding that you have to endure it, and it's especially about trying to talk your friend out of her third dose of lip fillers in the past month because she's starting to look like that one creature from Monsters Inc.

Civilized People follows Leslie Banner, a late-twenties, semi-successful thespian who's stuck in a type-casting rut. She finds herself in hot water when she butchers an audition she'd been banking on, and physically assaults a casting director as a result. Who was once seen as a darling child star with talent to boot is now a menace in her field and to those who work in it. To repair her tarnished career, she woefully agrees to court-mandated anger management classes at Serenity Private Practice in Los Angeles. She is horror-stricken to discover these therapy sessions are not one-on-one, and feels immediate dismay by the group of wealthy lunatics she is forced to rehabilitate with: highly spoiled but swanky teen influencer Theresa “Tibby” Williams, gruffly sophisticated novelist Cyrus Aziz, flamboyant and critical playwright Bartolo Moreno, and the charming yet emotionally repressed professional athlete Cain Derman. In spite of their varying ages, goals, and personalities, they find themselves bonding over the course of their treatment; some of them more than others. This causes Leslie's initial rejection of anger management and the group to do a total one-eighty. Living in posh L.A. but in not-so posh situations really unifies them - that and navigating their rather eccentric and inept therapist Stevie Harris who often relies on them for guidance and a shoulder to cry on. Attempting to balance getting their careers back on track plus successfully completing their course to return to their ordinary lives as “civilized people” is a journey perhaps none of them are cut out for.

“Welcome to Serenity Private Practice.”



White walls. White furniture. White teeth. When you enter a Hollywood Therapy Clinic, these are your surroundings. “Miserable faces in beautiful places” - they almost put that on the sign at *Serenity Private Practice*. A home for the wealthy but not mentally healthy, some of LA’s elite conjugate here weekly to be therapized. Imagine if “Community’s” *Greendale* was redecorated by the *Kardashians*; this is where you’d be seeking treatment (as long as you have money, emotional trauma and, you know, sometimes get recognized at *Whole Foods*). Every room in *Serenity Private Practice* could be found in *Elle Décor* Magazine. While you watch, you can’t help but envy the glamour, but that envy does not extend to the lives of our patients; socialites with big heads and bigger tempers.



“How Did This All Start?”

The pilot of “Civilized People” will introduce us to Leslie in the opposite of her prime. We discover through a heated interaction with Katherine, the casting director she attacked after her failed audition, that because of her aggression, she’s been forced into court-mandated anger management sessions. She painfully learns that no amount of pleading can get her out of it when Katherine sends her home with her tail between her legs.

After a pep talk from Pauline, her agent and rock, she’s off to the races, if races were an over-priced private practice on a busy street in downtown LA run by an incompetent therapist with mommy issues and no concept of social graces (you can just call him Stevie). It is here that she is informed her therapy sessions will not be one-on-one like she had thought, but that she will be rehabilitated with a group of wealthy lunatics whose ages vary from 18-56.

We go straight into the session and meet Cain, Tibby, Bartolo, and Cyrus, and suddenly Leslie would rather be in court pleading insanity. The meeting quickly turns sour when their clashing personalities all come to fruition, and when Stevie abandons ship to go find his “therapy for dummies” book and have a solid cry, we’re left wondering how Leslie is going to manage in this dysfunctional group - and here’s the thing - she doesn’t. She sneaks out to call Pauline to get her out of this mess and doesn’t leave any page unturned when describing her distaste for each and every one of the group members, who all, unfortunately, overhear the entire conversation. The group calls her out for her bullshit, something she’s not used to, and it only goes downhill from there.

She storms out of the practice for a much-needed moment of self-pity in her car that she can’t afford, which turns into her breaking down and realizing she needs more help with her anger than she thinks. The group welcomes her back for the rest of the session and we get the pleasure of hearing about Bartolo’s porn habits to finish off the episode. And that’s what you missed on Glee!



“MEET OUR CLIENTS.”

Our protagonist, Leslie Banner, will be the one we follow into anger management. Her likability despite her audacious nature will fuel a lot of the story.

- **LESLIE BANNER** - late 20's.
 - She's *brash*, but somehow still poised and clever. When her anger isn't getting the better of her, she's actually a really great friend; definitely someone you'd want on your side.
 - The love-child of Don Draper and Robin Scherbatsky, mentally and physically. Slender, dark hair, beautiful in a unique way.
 - She was forced into theatre at a young age by a mother who believed in her too much. Turned out, she was *good*, and after finding success starring in *Annie* (do NOT sing her The Sun Will Come Out Tomorrow) at age 9, her career was pretty much set in stone for life.
 - Ever since her *Annie* stint, she's been type-casted as “theatre's darling”, a nickname she gained as a child and *despises* more than anything. Her dream is to escape the small stage and make it big in film. She feels suffocated in her career, and despite plenty of auditions for parts she feels suited for, she's constantly turned down.
 - After a butchered audition that caused her to...lash out at a casting director, she finds herself and her career in hot water - who was once seen as a darling child star with talent to boot is now a shameful, crashing, and burning hot mess. This whole fiasco is the reason she winds up in anger management.
 - She's overpowering and too independent in her relationships and prefers to be a lone wolf. The independence part is attractive to a lot of men, but sometimes it becomes a power struggle. If Leslie doesn't win, she leaves.
 - She can be a bit selfish and career-focused, but if you're one of the few people she comes to care about, she will fight for you

just as hard as she does for herself.

- A true know-it-all. Always assumes she's right. When she admits defeat or utters the phrase "I was wrong", pigs will be flying.
 - Loves to give off the illusion of wealth, but with her career failing and her money running out, her spending habits are slowly destroying her.
 - Actually incredibly talented, she just keeps getting in the way of herself.
 - Very insecure about being close to 30, and never discloses her age.
 - She finds herself weak in the knees for Cain which pisses her off because she doesn't want to need anyone. She feels drawn to him because he is sweet and gentle, something she yearns to be. They compliment each other in their differences, even when Leslie is pushing him too hard to be brave or when Cain is trying to protect her from herself.
- **CAIN DERMAN** - late 20's
 - Soft-spoken, bottled-up emotions kind of guy. You're most surprised to see someone like him at anger management.
 - He's a professional soccer player for reasons similar to why Leslie's in theatre - ambitious parents. Unlike Leslie, though, he didn't inherit any of their ambition, and hasn't changed his career simply because "why bother? I'm already doing this."
 - He let his rage build up to the point that he was suspended from playing on his soccer team for continuously scoring on his own net when his team was down in a wild temper tantrum that was both hilarious and after he had calmed down, his worst nightmare. He enrolled himself in anger management.
 - Has been pining after the same girl since college who truly pays him no mind. Despite his charm and endearing

bashfulness, he can't see past this girl no matter how hard he, and other women, try.

- Tall, fit but on the lankier side. Dark hair but we find out he has bright red hair and dyes it, which the group never lets him live down.
 - He finds himself very comfortable around Leslie because she is so unabashedly herself, and it makes his awkwardness almost melt away. Leslie will make sure to tease him if he slips up on words or stutters, though.
 - Loves to pry Leslie about her age, and calls her Grandma often to piss her off. Doesn't find out how old she is until he gets hold of her wallet to see her I.D.
 - Leslie gives him the drive he needs to try, to get him out of his rut and remind him how exciting life can be when you make the decision to make it matter.
 - Doesn't realize he's falling for Leslie until it's so obvious that he can't believe it took him so long to see it.
- **BARTOLO MORENO** - late 30's
 - Short, fit man who is very stylish in a flashy, flamboyant manner. Very Italian, very confident, very exuberant.
 - Shares too much about his sex life to anyone with willing ears.
 - He is extremely posh, and one of his biggest struggles is being called "Bart" for short. He will not hesitate to tear you apart for this mistake. It is Bartolo to you, thank you. The only person he lets call him Bart is the barista Matthew at the *Starbucks* he goes to every morning before therapy, for whom he "has a massive hard-on". His words, not mine.
 - He's obsessive, and takes himself and his job very seriously. If there's something he desires, for example, having Toni Collette play the mother in a script of his that just isn't getting picked up, he will go to dire lengths to make sure it happens. This obsession caused him to harass producers via telephone,

email, social media, and the odd break-in...he may or may not have a criminal background because of this. This led him to therapy, and he does NOT want to talk about it...Unless you ask. Which he'll prompt you to. Then he'll tell you EVERYTHING.

- Our comic relief when the tension gets to be too much, and the occasional voice of reason for Leslie, the duality of this man knows no bounds.
 - He's a romantic, and despite his very forward way of talking about love and sex, deep down, he craves a deep, human connection, something he has never truly had. As the series goes on, we watch Bartolo learn to respect his heart and body as much as he respects his art and professional reputation. He learns to value people.
- **THERESA "TIBBY" WILLIAMS** - 18-20
 - Grew up extremely rich and it shows. Blew up on social media and gained fame for little reason. Imagine Zoe Kravitz physically but with Paris Hilton's lifestyle. She's modelesque and always dresses to have eyes on her. Her earrings cost more than Cyrus' entire wardrobe.
 - Super "valley-girl". Always wants things done for her, and lacks independence; practically the total opposite of Leslie. That's why it's a funny dynamic when the two form such a bond. Leslie doesn't like to admit how much she grows to adore Tibby, but everyone else can see it.
 - Leslie becomes a sort of "big sister" to Tibby, which Tibby needs because her family isn't around much, and she'd never say so, but she's very lonely. She surrounds herself with fake friends and doesn't have anyone safe to confide in until she meets the group.
 - Her parents (who very blatantly live off their daughter's money) put her in anger management when a brand deal

dropped her due to her bad temper and spoiled-brat attitude. She learns to be more caring through the group.

- Throughout her journey, we'll get the pleasure of seeing her mature into a smarter, more responsible woman who uses her platform for a more meaningful (for her) career in fashion.

- **CYRUS AZIZ** - mid-late 50's
 - Picture a grizzled, handsome Persian cowboy (minus the hat and stirrups). Wears his grey hair in a short, low ponytail.
 - Refuses to admit he needs glasses. Uses a magnifying glass when reading, as if that's less humiliating.
 - Very much a hipster. Has no idea what that word means.
 - They're working on his political correctness. Although he has more of a filter than Tibby, sometimes he's a little behind the times and doesn't realize certain things shouldn't be done or said.
 - Blew up at a fan during a book-reading who couldn't stop sneezing throughout his recitation. His wife, whom he adores, encouraged him to attend anger management, so of course, he went.
 - He and his wife often host the group at their home and become a sort of mother/father figure to everyone.
 - He is often a source of wisdom for the group. He helps all of them on their journeys, and they keep him young and serve as the children he and his wife were never able to have.

- **STEVIE HARRIS** - late 30's
 - Pleasantly plump, gargantuanly tall. Hagrid without the beard; a true gentle, loveable giant.
 - Sticks out like a sore thumb.
 - Absolutely terrified of conflict.
 - Too polite for words. Usually lets the sessions get taken over by

someone else with a bigger agenda. This group is his first ever, and he is way in over his head.

- Recently divorced and broke. A sad sack that is so adorably annoying.
- Always tries to insert himself into the group's outside life. Calls Leslie at all hours of the night to ask for dating advice. She answered once and hasn't answered since. Don't worry, he'll leave a voicemail.
- Throughout the show, he'll learn through the group how to be more confident, and that he is worthy of love. He essentially has to unlearn everything his ex-wife made him believe about himself.



OTHER RECURRING CHARACTERS:

PAULINE - 40s. **Leslie's Agent.** Cool without trying, except when she's drunk at karaoke.

STEF - late 20s. **Cain's College Obsession.** Can do no wrong in his eyes, but is the devil reincarnate.

She's manipulative and only reciprocates Cain's feelings when there's something in it for her.

BIANCA, - early 20s. **The Receptionist.** Stevie's niece. She's bratty with no filter and has way too much access to his banking info. Has her exes Netflix password tattooed on her forearm, and frequently uses the practice after hours to drink with Tibby.

TORIE, - mid-late 50s. **Cyrus' Wife.** Kinder than Stevie and Jesus combined. 100% wears the pants in her marriage.

“And How Did That Make You Feel?”

Civilized People brings five strangers together that would never interact on purpose. They learn the hard way that you do not get to choose who you attend therapy with and that your temper can either make you or in their case, break you. My series will explore the depths of human connection through the forcing-together of contrasting personalities, and why this can be a good thing for people who truly need to branch out and grow in some way or another. It's a slice of life, except it's not a slice of delicious, sweet pie...It's a slice of lemon, and we watch our main characters struggle to find the sugar and water to balance it out. It's funny, it's endearing, it's bizarre; it's what you want in a half-hour sitcom. The show exists to hopefully inspire. Anger is a complex emotion that I'm honest to god grateful to lack a lot of, but I've also seen people benefit from bitching to a company or demanding that money a friend owes them, and I think it's worth exploring more, especially within the world of *our group*; they're all, in their own way, broken individuals, but despite being heavily flawed, narcissistic, and egotistical, respectively, they're good people. Add in the fact that they're all full of an unfathomable rage, and you've got a show like no other. I want real and raw emotion blanketed by laughter, making sure it never takes over. At its core, it's a through-and-through *episodic sitcom*, it's just not afraid to look itself in the mirror and get serious. I strive for the wittiness and originality of *Community*, with the heart, and impossible not to adore characters of *New Girl*. With some truly unhinged people trying and failing to re-hinge their anger issues so that they can escape each other, without realizing that they need each other, it's a clusterfuck of emotion and hilarity.



“Our Next Sessions Will Include:”

Some future episode ideas include the following:

1) No, You're the Angriest!

The group spends an entire session arguing over who needs anger management the most, and we are walked through countless different cut scenes of each character being hilariously aggressive like Tibby getting accidentally run into on the dancefloor at a club, and she turns to the apologetic girl and shoves her back so hard she goes flying off-screen, then she resumes dancing, or Bartolo having to replace his cardboard straw after each sip of his drink because they keep disintegrating, and he loses his mind.

2) Okay, I'm Drunk.

Cain finally gets a date with Stef only when she learns he's being honoured at a sports dinner and she likes the fame aspect. This angers Leslie beyond words, but she knows how much it means to Cain, so she takes up Tibby's offer to go for drinks to keep her mind off the situation. This leads to Tibby accidentally getting Leslie absolutely inebriated. This is when we learn about Tibby and Bianca's frequent break-ins after hours to drink at the practice. The rest of the group joins in and let's just say Cyrus ends up letting Bartolo pierce his ear. Leslie calls Cain and confesses her love to him, but forgets about it in the morning. He spends a lot of time in future episodes battling over whether to tell her or not.

3) Tibby Gets Catfished

Tibby excitedly tells the group she matched with (insert relevant male celebrity here) on Tinder and has a date with him tonight. The group all checks out his profile and try to warn her it's fake, but she brushes it off and decides they're all jealous, and if they don't support her, then she doesn't need them. The group all secretly follows Tibby on her date, and when some weirdo shows up, she bails. The group ends up following her around LA as she gets a hot dog, sees a movie alone, etc. while she tries to convince them over the phone that she's on the best date of her life.