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KINDNESS

When I was young I went to Brownies every week, which is an organization for girls too young to be Girl Guides. We used to play a game called “pass the squeeze”, in which we would all stand in a circle and hold hands. We would “pass the squeeze” by squeezing the hand of the person next to us in sequence while singing a song. If the song stopped when your hand was being squeezed, you were to do a good deed for someone during the following week. This game was always a highlight of my week, and I would always hope that the squeeze would land on my hand. I was inspired to do good deeds every week, regardless of who the squeeze landed on. Random acts of kindness are infectious. They make us feel good about ourselves, just knowing that our words or actions brightened someone's day. The people that we are kind to will eventually do something kind for someone else, and thus these acts of compassion spread like wildfire.

Kindness can be passed on to anyone. Being cheerful and saying ‘hello’ to someone on the street who looks unhappy can be enough to brighten their day. C.N. Bovee once stated that “Kindness is a language which the dumb can speak, and the deaf can understand.” Everyone appreciates compassion. Regardless of who you are or where you come from, simple acts of benevolence are truly appreciated. When you pass on the gift of compassion you start a chain reaction. Robert Alan uses a plant analogy where the random kind act is thought of as a seed: “The flower of kindness will grow. Maybe not now, but it will some day.” In my own life I have found this to be true, as the simple act of a stranger smiling and saying hello as they held a door open for me was enough to inspire me to do the same for others whenever I can.

Being kind to someone who looks down could save their life. You never know when someone is wavering on the brink of despair, ready to throw their life away. Showing someone you care could pull them from the ledge, and convince them that their life is worth living. Albert Einstein believed that “Only a life lived for others is worth living.” I agree with Einstein on this theory, because as long as we are helping others we are filling our hearts with the love of life, and we all seek that feeling of fulfillment. When it comes to helping others through depression, “kind words can be short and easy to speak but their echoes are truly endless.” Mother Teresa saved countless lives through her compassion, and her kindness alone earned her recognition on a global scale.

Our lives are too short to waste on being hateful and cruel to others. When I reach the end of my life I wish to look back and not regret a single action. If I live my life devoted to being compassionate to others, I will reflect on a life full of happiness and love. Looking back onto a life wasted with selfishness and cruelty would cause regrets and pain. "Life is short and we have never too much time for gladdening the hearts of those who are traveling the dark journey with us. Oh be swift to love, make haste to be kind." Henri Frederick Aniel's advice is something that I strive to heed every day.

At the end of every day ask yourself "Did I make anyone's life easier today? Was anyone cheered by my company? Did I leave kindness in the world that wasn't there yesterday?" If you answer yes to any of these questions you have done a great service to those whom your life has touched. The Dalai Lama lived by these questions. He stated "My religion is kindness." The laws of life were set down so firmly in the golden rule: "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you." Today having done my good deeds I pass the squeeze to you. What random act of kindness can you impart upon the world?