Kindness

Is anyone else noticing an increase in rude behavior in the world? This past weekend we were at our cabin in the mountains for Labor Day. It is a wonderful community and has been for as long as we've owned a cabin there.

Outdoor concert at White Mountain Country Club

On Saturday night, there was an outdoor concert at the clubhouse. It was a beautiful evening with music and dinner. Two women mistakenly thought I "cut" in front of them on our way to pick up our meal. They instantly attacked me in such an aggressive way. Quite frankly, I was speechless at the intensity of their anger. Fortunately, another kind soul witnessed it and was equally appalled.

So I think it is time again to share my post on Kindness. Is it a post-COVID behavior or are people just so unhappy? It feels so uncivilized to me to lash out at someone you don't even know, without giving someone the benefit of the doubt. What have we become if we cannot be kind to each other?

Kindness is one of those things that spans all barriers~~socio-economic, education, language, age and religion. It costs NOTHING yet its benefits are priceless. It may be easy when someone is mean or cruel to react in the same way. But kindness is the opposite. Its effects can lower the temperature of a situation or put wind under someone's wings.

Kindness has been top of mind lately because I seem to see less and less of it in today’s world.

When recalling kind gestures that have left an indelible mark on me, two come to mind. They both came at a time when I had experienced great loss.

A few years back, my Dad came to live with us in Phoenix after my Mom passed away. Our more moderate winter weather and sunshine seemed the perfect remedy for Dad vs. grieving alone in the cold Connecticut winter.

Unfortunately, after 5 months, in May 2015, he passed away here in our home. When the funeral home came to pick up his body, we watched these two strangers enter into this extremely personal and difficult time. They carefully and gracefully wrapped my father’s body in a beautiful tapestry cloth. When they were getting ready to move him onto the gurney, one of the men slowly tapped my Dad’s leg, as if to say, “Hey, buddy. It’s time to go and we will take good care of you”. It was such a simple act, but letting my Dad go emotionally was hard enough.

But that simple, loving gesture, allowed me to entrust a total stranger with my Dad, the man who has known me the longest. A man I had loved all my life. It was so respectful and done with great love.

The other kind gesture that I will remember forever was right after my first husband died. I was in my mid 30’s and we were having a second memorial service for him back in my home town. I went to get my nails done at a local salon/spa mostly because I needed an hour with a change of scenery. The nail person began working on my rather sad looking nails and we were making small talk about the weather, etc.

She then looked up from what she was doing and asked, “So how are you”? And the tears began. I was sobbing, you know, that uncontrollable kind. The kind of crying where you can’t even talk. She stopped what she was doing and just held my hands. It took me quite sometime to stop blubbering but until I did, she quietly and warmly held my hands in hers. Finally I was able to say, “I’m so sorry but my husband just passed away”. She squeezed my hands and offered her condolences and then handed me a tissue. Nothing more than that. It was the kindest thing anyone could have done for me at that time.

These are such small but enormous acts of random kindness from people I had never known and will never see again. But they taught me that being kind doesn’t have to be grandiose or public. Sometimes a simple touch, hug, soothing word or tone can have a monumental impact. I’m sure neither of them know how much their self-less gestures meant to me. See how

something so small can be so BIG.

Newport Beach

We never know *why* someone is acting rude or upset or why they have chosen to take it out on us. But we don't have to send that behavior back. Maybe asking a simple question, "I'm sorry but it looks like you are having a bad day" or paying a

compliment with a smile, would be a better response. I don’t want to perpetuate negative energy. Instead, I want to change it and be part of the solution. Those who are mean and angry need our prayers.

A rose in our garden

Imagine a world where for one day, everyone was kind. Wouldn’t that be amazing? But kindness comes from within~~each and every one of us can choose to be kind. Please think about that the next time a negative thought or word is getting ready to leave your body. We can make a difference, one kind act at a time.

Peaceful journey

Sending kind and loving thoughts your way.

Mary

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