

AS SEEN ON FACEBOOK

ALL YOU NEED IS

LOVE

REAL STORIES
OF
KINDNESS

All You Need is Love

Real Stories of Kindness

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Real Stories of Kindness

First Edition

Published 2014 by Bimini Books

www.BiminiBooks.com

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About This Book

THE FOLLOWING ARE real stories from real people, in their own words. Some are small, seemingly mundane or everyday occurrences, while others are much more outstanding. What they all have in common is the fact that they display love and kindness at a basic human level—something that can be so easy to overlook or take for granted.

All of these stories were collected on Facebook. I started a group and invited friends and family to join and share their own experiences. Within hours it quickly grew to 567 members—many of whom

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shared stories of their own—and it continues to grow today. The stories are compiled here so that you can read them whenever you need a boost.

Let these stories be a reminder that there *is* good in the world, and that you need not even look far to find it. In fact, you can always go create a new one.

Stories

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“I HAVE JUST WITNESSED something amazing. My 20 year old Kevin asked his brother Ryan (16), if he was hungry and that he would make him something to eat. Ryan said, "I'm good, but thank you for asking. " This is a history making moment!!!! It was LOVE between brothers!!!!”

— KCL

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“YESTERDAY A WOMAN STOPPED in front of me in traffic to move a tortoise out of the road; she put him back where he came from. A man stopped next to her and explained that said tortoise would keep heading in his desired direction so, MANY drivers across a four lane highway kept traffic stopped so these folks could carry the tortoise all the the way across to the area he was obviously headed. Definitely the right decision because little guy just keep on going AWAY from the road. A tortoise will always head in their chosen direction, no matter the danger, thankfully these folks made the effort!”

— VWP

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“FAITH IN MANKIND, TEMPORARILY RESTORED! An anonymous man in Saudi Arabia installed a giant refrigerator in front of his house. He and his neighbours leave their leftovers in it daily, providing free food for the less fortunate children in his town. He wants to spare them the "shame" of begging, and provide them with proper meals instead. How much do we like this guy?!”

— TM

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“HAD TO SHARE! SO our friend Paul is a pilot—a Captain with American Airlines & learned that his neighbor's son, who was in the military (army I think), was flying back from Afghanistan. He learned the soldier was on American from NYC to FLL, so he found out who the Captain on the flight was, called him, & asked for him to be put in First Class (Paul does this on every flight he flies, checks the manifest & puts military personnel in First a Class if there's room!).

The Captain arranged for it & then learned that the flight from overseas was delayed a bit, so he held the plane. Meanwhile, First Class was now full—someone else from the connecting flight made it. The flight attendant explained to the soldier of

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the plan, but that he was being bumped from First Class because a paying customer made the flight. A woman in 1st Class overheard & gave up her seat, one she'd paid for, & insisted that the soldier sits in First Class!! This just happened last week! Now isn't that a classy lady? There is kindness in the world in the most unlikely places. Apparently it isn't necessarily American's Policy, but this culture of kindness & respect to the military has evolved throughout their pilots & personnel!! Makes me love American Airlines & gives me joy.”

— RF

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“TODAY I WAS THE recipient of some amazing love and grace. The AC in my van died yesterday. My daughter and I travel from FL to NC every other week for medical reasons. I can't imagine that trip with no AC. So I was looking at a costly repair (on an 11-year-old van), or replacing the van.

A wonderful friend swooped in and set me up with her husband who is a mechanic. He made a house call this morning and was able to fix the problem for just \$90.

I am overwhelmed with appreciation.”

— CCF

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“OK, SO THE OTHER day I was in Walgreens buying some \$1 toothbrushes and other necessities. There were 2 people in line ahead of me, the man checking out and one woman behind him. The man checking out realized that he did not have enough money on him to buy the \$2 carton of half and half (strange purchase, right?). So, I stepped up and told the cashier that if he would ring my few items up with this gentleman's, I would cover his purchase.

Well, the woman in front of me did not like this at all! She yelled, "excuse me!!! I was here first! I am next in line!" I let her know that it was not some devious plot to cut in front of her, I was only offering to help this man with his purchase. To which she proclaimed, "I WILL Pay for him!!! I

AM next!" Can you believe it; she was in such a hurry to be nasty that she actually had to do a good deed to keep up her argument with me! I love it! I went away laughing! My offer to do a good thing caused her to do one. That may have been the first one she had done in a while! Not even sure she realized the irony in her actions!"

— KBF

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“MY FAVORITE BARISTA LOOKED awful this morning. I asked her how she was feeling, she shared that she woke up feeling terrible. I grabbed her some fresh squeezed orange juice. Hoping she feels better soon.”

— JN

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“WE READ THIS POEM in class today, and I challenged my students to try random acts of kindness this weekend and bring back their stories next week. One student said that today is Pay It Forward day, so a good day for an act of kindness.”

— RR

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“A FRIEND OF MINE died last night. I met him when his wife died in February and he came in the funeral home every few days to talk. He and his wife had been married for 66 years but had no children. His nephew called me a few weeks ago to let me know he was under Hospice care. When I stopped by to see him he was not accepting any visitors but I went back again and was told he would see me. I visited him every day, fed him ice cream, watched westerns and musicals on TV, we talked about our families, he had been a Marine and a sharp-shooter. We sang 'Easter Parade' last Sunday.

I held his hand, fed him ice chips and kept my hand on his forehead (my cold hands were a

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blessing to him). I found out today that I was the only person he never turned away that tried to visit him. I was so very, very blessed to have gotten to know him and love him for the last few weeks of his life. In my 20 years as a funeral director I have never done anything like this, I NEVER visit hospitals, hospices, etc -but this was an amazing thing and I will always remember you Mr. Cates - and I will be wearing an Easter Bonnet next Sunday.”

— JBD

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“EVERY DAY I DRIVE past a homeless woman in the intersection at Commercial and 441. Every day she is barefoot. Every day it breaks my heart. I imagine how hot the asphalt must feel on her feet. Today I stopped. We wear the same size shoes. I need new shoes. My heart is happy.”

— TM

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“I’M NOT THE ONLY one who stops for local wildlife! The woman in the car ahead of me just stopped 4 lanes of traffic so she could rescue a HUGE leatherneck turtle... I’m not sure I would have been brave enough to pick it up, but I was happy to cheer her on!!”

— TFR

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“AT PEPPERTREE SANDWICH SHOP today I told the proprietor, "You've got a beautiful place here, you know that?" She brightened right up, made eye contact, smiles. I think I felt even better than she did.”

— RT

“LAST WEEK, A FRIEND'S 4yr daughter was diagnosed with leukemia. In the last week, the outpouring of love has been massive and beautiful. It is actually overwhelming. People who know the family are banding together to support them but there has been an amazing outpouring from strangers too. Fundraisers and benefit events are already in the works and a special website has been created but the labors of love are the most amazing. Meal dropoffs, childcare for the other children, cleaning the home and car to make it chemo precaution safe for the family, visiting the hospital and sending carepacks, sweet handmade gifts like dolls and hats made for Lily and her sisters, children making cards and pictures to cheer up their friends, children holding their own little

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fundraisers with handmade crafts and lemonade stands, a blanket being made of fabric squares decorated by the girls' friends, and the list just goes on and on.

It makes my heart ache to see our sweet Lily sick but it also makes my heart burst with joy to see how awesome and loving people are. Especially all the projects the kids are coming up with on their own. These kids know the meaning of friendship and what love is and how to show it in the most simple, heartfelt ways.”

— MB

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“SMALL ACTS... HELD THE door few times today, gave away a Jiffy Lube coupon. Funny how suspicious people are until they realize there's no catch!”

— RD

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“MY SON GAVE HIS dinner to a homeless guy downtown tonight. He was standing on the corner with a sign that said "I am hungry." I'm not sure if it was my kid's kindness that made me cry or the look of gratitude on the man's face as he received warm food and experienced kindness. It's such a hard world. It's really only something as magnificent and wonderful as love that makes it bearable some days. My thanks to you all for your conscious kindness.”

— DK

“MY OLDEST SON RILEY is in 6th grade. He has a friend that really likes My Little Pony. Apparently, this boy has been getting teased by classmates. Riley, who also likes my little pony has a Dr.Who/MLP t-shirt that he wears to school. Now if you know Riley, you know he will wear anything or do anything to get a laugh. He has more confidence than his mama. Anyway, Riley only wears this shirt under a hoodie because he is afraid to be teased as well. Until this week. He chose to wear it to show unity with his buddy. He refused to sit by and allow this boy to be teased any longer. My heart swells and when asked "you like My Little Pony?" His response was "yeah, who doesn't?"

— TFB

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“MY SON AND I spent a good portion of the weekend volunteering at a huge country music event here in Melbourne, and yes, we saw plenty of crazy, but I definitely saw—and was the recipient of—many small acts of kindness and generosity. From people making way so others could more easily get through a crowded area, to those later in the event who thanked us for our efforts and for doing a good job... It was heart-warming to see the abundance of goodwill in the midst of slight mania.”

— LLC

“FOR MY SON, I would like to give a shout out to some random acts of kindness towards him. We went to Megacon with some friends. My son didn't have a costume. He wanted to be Darryl from *The Walking Dead*, and needed a vest. Kathy Chumley's son let my son use a vest. Very nice. On the way home Jennifer Norris's boy and Carolyn Perrine's daughter had my boy giggling like crazy. Jeri Russell's daughter wrote him a secret note when he was not confident during his play and told him to believe in himself. Hugs and love!”

— KCL

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“ME AND MY FRIEND went to a convention this weekend and as we were crossing the driveway of the hotel, this car came out of nowhere and was going super fast. So us being a little freaked out, stopped. Well the person then got apparently mad at our reflexes (which were normal) and rudely beeped his horn at us. We quickly hurried out of the way, and when we got to the sidewalk where the parking guys were standing one said. "What a (expletive)." The other way said "Don't worry ladies, we'll get him for ya." We laughed and thanked them and continued inside. It wasn't a big deal, but with the absolute craziness of these conventions, it's nice to have a couple of people be just really nice.”

— AM

“THIS WEEKEND WAS ALL about love. I hate crowds and costumes make me more than a little nervous. But to watch my daughter positively giddy watching everyone in their costumes was so amazing. Watching her beautiful face beam with pride when people asked to take her picture was absolutely priceless. And even though at first I was overwhelmed I loved watching how polite people were and how much they appreciated the time and effort people put into their cosplay. I'm so grateful I was able to experience this with her.”

— EMM

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“WE WERE IN SALLIE'S Beauty Supply and Maddie said, "What's with all this hair dyeing and make up?"

A shopkeeper overheard her and said, "Well, we can't all be naturally beautiful."

Maddie replied, confused, "We ARE all naturally beautiful."

From the mouths of babes.”

— JN

“WE ARE IN THE community college pavilion and I am crying, listening to this woman play "Let It Go" on the violin for Maddie. A Perfect stranger sharing her talent and love for other people. For no reason other than the pure joy of it.”

— JN

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“ALL THEIR LIVES, I’VE attempted to teach my kids to smile at the people they are standing in line with and the cashiers, to listen to the answer when they ask someone how they are and to assume everyone on the road has had a bad day. And what a difference we could make in their day if we let them in or waved or smiled at them. So at times, we may look a little odd but we are trying to give a friendly face to that person whose day has just not gone their way.”

— VWP

“WHEN I WAS TURNING into Wal-Mart off of Hollywood in PB I let everyone who was sitting waiting to get out go before I turned in. I make this a regular practice because I figure I am only crossing one lane, they are crossing two, and besides they were there first. It is especially important at this intersection because I have been stuck here for over 10 minutes trying to get out.”

— JW

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“ALAYNA, MADDIE AND I were out today. We saw an older man who had locked his keys in his car. A woman walked by and saw him struggling, she turned back around and offered to drive him to get a spare key.

Reminds me of one of my favorite quotes, which goes something like—there are no great deeds, only small deeds done with great love.”

— JN

“ONE NIGHT MY HUSBAND and I were coming out of Sam’s Club. It was about 30 degrees out, and a gentleman on a bike rode up and asked for a few bucks so I gave him 3. As he went to leave I asked what he needed the money for. He said he was trying to get a hotel for a night out of the cold, a hot shower, and coffee. My heart was sad for him as I was getting into a heated truck so I gave him a 10. That was all I had.

As we drove away my husband rolled his window down and handed him the rest of the 35 he needed. He tried to hand my husband the extra 7 he had over the amount he needed .My husband just shook his hand told him to share his room and get a bite... it wasn't much—we don't have much but for

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one nite it felt like a lot to someone else... I just want to add this is not what we did for him how sweet was he to offer the overage he had when he had nothing it was Huge.”

— LVP

“I AM RUNNING A food truck selling BBQ. Yesterday after lunch there were several homeless people gathered near where we were parked. Rather than put away the left overs, we put it all out for them to share. They put their pockets together and tried to give us their meager funds. We told them to take it and buy someone that needed it some food. We watched as they ate and cleaned up the plates. Then as we were pulling away we watched as they handed the change to a latecomer who then went in a nearby shop for a sandwich. Pay it forward!”

— EN

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“I STOPPED TO PICK up dinner and when one of the patrons at the bar saw my hands were full and I was walking with a cane, he got up and crossed the restaurant to open the door. Chivalry is alive.... thank you, sir.”

— JBD

“AFTER WE HAD DINNER at Sonny's in Tampa last night I stayed back and asked for the manager. I was surprised to see our waitress, Katie, ask if I needed anything. I said no problem just wanted to see the manager for a moment, nothing wrong. She explained she WAS the assistant manager on duty at the moment. We both laughed I told her I wanted her to know how great the waitress was. She assured me her general manager would find out as well!”

— RT

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“MY DAUGHTER'S FIANCÉ WAS in a car accident Christmas eve. Thankfully he wasn't hurt but car was totaled. We went round and round with people that hit him only to find out they had no insurance. Well my daughter was telling a family friend one day what happened and he gave her their family's old mini van. It was so sweet.”

— EMM

“A MOM IN THE homeschool co-op class we attend gave me a Boy Scout card with coupons for McDonalds and Sonnys. She said she bought it for \$5 and used the Publix \$5 off but wouldn't use it for the other coupons. How sweet was that she thought of my family out of all the others there?! Thanks fellow mom!”

— BT

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“I WAS AT A stop light yesterday in the midst of this Orlando traffic that seemed to never end.... It felt like I hit every red light along the way... Anyways, this car that was also waiting at the light had their music blasting... a man sitting at a bus stop on the corner suddenly gets up and starts dancing like crazy to the blasting music... I was hysterical... thanks guy at the bus stop for making me realize traffic can have it's happy moments!”

— TMM

“MY DAY JOB IS mixing live audio for a TV news station. I've worked in TV news for 20 years, so I think it is safe to say I've heard virtually every story there is to hear. But, there was one story in particular that really jumped out at me. In fact, it still sticks with me to this day.

It was January of 2010. Though we live in Florida, it was an abnormally cold winter... both naturally and economically. Our TV shows were drenched with stories about sweaters, layoffs and uncertainty as to what the economic winter might bring. While we all (you and I) did what we could to stay afloat, there was one lady who was not so lucky.

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Her name is unimportant. What is important, though, is that she was the mother of 5 or 6 kids whose husband suddenly decided he was tired of family life. So, he simply packed up his stuff and left.

In an instant, they were abandoned...a mother and her army of children were on their own. (If I remember correctly, one of her kids had special needs.)

In time, the financial shock to the household and the extreme demands of her situation, teamed with that economic winter, proved to be too much. First she lost her job. Then, she and her children lost their home. And, to add insult to injury, I believe the shelters were full.

When our reporters found her, she and her children were living on the streets. The STREETS! Can you imagine helping your child do his/her homework on the sidewalk? Me neither.

Fortunately, this story has a bright spot.

A local resident learned of the family's situation. Heartbroken, he searched and found a hotel equipped with rooms, kitchens and all the amenities a family would need. He approached the family and directed them to a suite that was perfect for them. He then reached into his pockets and paid for all of it! He got this mother and her children off the cold streets and into warm beds. As you can imagine, their gratitude was immeasurable.

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While the man could only afford a short stay, he was smart. HE SHARED HIS STORY WITH A NEWS OUTLET!

Knowing the money would eventually run out, I called my wife with tears in my eyes. I insisted that we ignore the faltering economy and instead extend her stay. She immediately agreed. We were not made of money, and we still aren't, but we had infinitely more than this poor mother and her innocent children.

I contacted the hotel, spoke to an employee who sounded as though she was close to tears, and I asked if I could extend her stay even longer. (My contribution kicked in once the previous man's contribution ran out.) I then explained that I could

not afford groceries, but I would be grateful if she would search for a food donor. She did... a grocery store, I believe.

I then contacted some well-to-do friends and co-workers and explained to them the situation. They (anonymously) extended her stay longer, and so on and so on. (I also tried to find a way for her to learn a new trade to no avail. "Giving a man a fish" only lasts so long.)

When the hotel worker asked if she could give the mother my name, I refused. I wanted to remain anonymous. I explained that it was never about recognition, It was about humanity. It was about honoring a truth we pretend does not exist: the truth that we always will be, and we always have been,

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CONNECTED! That has been the case long before smartphones and Facebook. Like it or not, we belong to each other.

PROOF of this connection can be felt even when we witness SOMEONE ELSE doing an act of kindness. It feels good. It feels right. It feels natural. It feels like something we were meant to be doing all along.

I am finally making this story public (4 years later) not for kudos or good feelings or any garbage like that. I want to help inspire people inspire act. Witnessing gives us energy and that energy transforms into action, and so on.

That one man started the ball rolling. I then did my part to keep it going until someone else could

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take over, and so on. It does not take huge contributions to make a difference... just a bunch of tiny ones tied to a common purpose.

All because one man publicly dropped a pebble in the pond and watched as ripples cover the whole pond.

So, my suggestion: Every so often, if you see something that breaks your heart, and if you can do something about it, go drop a tiny pebble! Then spread the word so we can share your joy and become energized enough to drop our own.

Who knows, the next person in need may be you, or me, or our children once we're gone.

It is so true that "all we need is love." — LC

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“MY HUSBAND WORKS FOR a large roadside assistance company and people often don't have the money to purchase a new battery or make repairs to their cars. He will get their car going and follow them home (which his co workers scoff at) to make sure they are okay. Lots of times they want to tip him or give him something and he tells them to do something nice to the next person who provides them a service. And many people on this list know he certainly isn't perfect. It took him a very long time to know what love really is.”

— EMM

“WHEN MY DAUGHTER JESSICAH was a sophomore in her first year of high school (back when 9th grade was still Junior High) she was voted to the Homecoming Court. All the girls asked popular boys to escort them (one or two may have asked her dads), but Jessica had gotten to know a profoundly handicapped young man who was turning 21 and in his last year of high school. She wanted him to experience something special before he left school, and she wanted the student body to see handicapped people for the abilities they do have.

She invited him to be her escort, and stood proudly on the court with him clinging to her arm and smiling up at her (the poor wrist corsage didn't

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hold up to the firm hold he had on his 'date')! It was an act of love to Tad and his family, and a gift of awareness to a student body of over 1200. What courage and heart from a fifteen year old!”

— ES

“I WAITED IN THE car today with my youngest two as 3 of my older ones went "on a mission" for me. I had the windows down and so did the truck next to us. I heard a girl say, "I'm sorry for waking your baby". I looked over and there were 2 teenagers in the truck. One of the girls repeated that she was sorry she had the music too loud and woke my baby. He wasn't awake, I didn't hear their music over my own, but how sweet is that?! Yeah for nice teenagers who recognize people around them!!”

— BT

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“WHEN MY PARENTS’ HOUSE burned down while I was in college, we were the recipients of so much kindness in the form of cash, household items, clothes, and even a place to stay while my parents built a new house. But most of all I remember a performance at the theater where I was house manager. That night they secretly took up a collection and donated it to me and my family. I know the story was on the local nightly news but I hadn’t thought that many people at school would’ve seen it let alone decided to do something to help us recover. I still feel overwhelmed and blessed by the kindness we received.”

— LI

“ONCE WHEN WE WERE very broke (lots of my stories start like this)... One of my amazing friends took my husband out and bought him new boots for his new job. Two pairs and socks and a laptop computer. (A computer?!?!)

Then, before she left she asked to use my bathroom. Where she proceed to hide a few hundred dollars. Knowing I would never accept anything more from her if she tried to hand it to me. She's a single mom and a war veteran who was injured in combat and I know that money did not come easy to her. One of the biggest heroes I know.”

— DK

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“ONE OF MY MOST favorite sharing stories.... One Christmas Eve my sister came to our house to celebrate Christmas. She was very upset. She told me her neighbors had no way to provide Christmas for their daughter. I called my dad, who was Santa every year for an organization that gives Christmas gifts to kids with cancer. I asked him to bring his Santa suit and sack with him to our house.

Meanwhile, my sister and I went out and bought the little girl a bunch of gifts. My dad took them to her dressed as Santa and my kids went along as elves. To this day they talk about how they learned the real meaning of Christmas that day. And I could not hope for them to receive a better gift.”

— DK

“I’VE WITNESSED RANDOM ACTS of kindness ever since I started retaining memories. Ever since I was teeny tiny, I knew that even though we didn’t have much, you should always share what you have with others. Strangers, friends, acquaintances... anybody.

So I’d like to dedicate this post to my mom, who not only has been delivering acts of kindness for as long as I can remember, but as a gift to me, taught me to do the same as well.

I remember clearly a day when she and I went to lunch at Thai Delight when I was five. There were two women in military uniforms eating their lunch, and my mom called the waitress over to ask her if she could pay for their lunch as a thank you

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for their service. When they received their check and saw that it was already paid for, they graciously thanked my mom and left.

Years later, my dad was at Publix, in his own Air Force uniform, pushing two shopping carts full of groceries, and an elderly lady offered to pay for his groceries as a thank you for *his* service.

Ever since then I've seen the beauty of the world, and the kindness that makes the world go 'round, and it's magnificent.”

— RC

“ONE OF THE MOST kindest things I have ever experienced was when my son, who is handicapped, was in Arnold Palmer for a month after several surgeries. One night I was on the phone talking to my husband about what we were going to about Christmas because after a month in the hospital we were out of money. The next morning, two days before Christmas, an administrator stopped by with an envelope with \$400 in it that someone had dropped off anonymously, with a simple Merry Christmas. Still gets me teary eyed ten years later.”

— NT

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“A FEW YEARS AGO, I had a heart scare and needed to go to the hospital for a cardiac catheterization. Afterwards, I had to lay on my back, completely immobilized, for six hours. My friend, Davina_not only brought me sushi (one of my favorites), she also fed me. (I wasn't supposed to move my head or move my arms too much.) I will never forget this kindness.”

— LT

“MY FAVORITE PLACE TO shop for groceries because of the daily acts of kindness is Aldi. People leave their quarters behind for others to use constantly, not to mention the people who pass their cart along and insist on not being compensated for their quarter. I know it is just a quarter but that simple thing makes a huge difference in many a person's day.”

— LI

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“I’VE BEEN THE LUCKY recipient of a few acts of kindness. I truly believe what you give out comes back to you. That being said, the most memorable moment occurred when I was 8 months pregnant with my second son. Our car was having lots of problems and money was tight. The car kept stalling and trying to save some money I tried to drive it to the mechanic rather than spent over a \$100 on towing it.

Unfortunately, it did not make it. The car broke down about a mile away at a stoplight. A man stopped behind me. To be honest, I was a bit afraid of this man. He was rough looking (tattoos and shaved head). He wore a leather vest and was driving a big pickup truck. The saying "never trust a

book by its cover" definitely rang true that day. Not only did this kind man call the garage for a tow (this was before I had a cell phone), he also waited with me.

When the car was loaded I thanked him and he handed me some money. I tried to refuse but he insisted. I thanked him again and again. He told me he would want someone to do this for his wife if she was ever stuck. When he left and I got in the tow truck I realized he had handed me enough money to pay for the tow truck. I'll never forget his name either. Thank you Mickey!"

— TFB

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“MET A FRIEND AT Subway a couple weeks ago. Haven't seen this friend since last May and time without my kids is such a rare occurrence so it's always short 'n sweet (I had my 7-month-old with me though). An older couple was there and the lady told me about her kids and family several times. It became obvious she must suffer from dementia or Alzheimer's because her story was always the same and every time she ran into me she forgot that I was the one she was just talking to.

She lit up talking with my baby and I let her kiss his toes and cheek (even though I'm a germ freak and over protective). After about an hour of listening to the same story 5x, she had a moment of clarity and she hugged me tight and thanked me for

allowing her to enjoy my baby. She told me I had no idea what I just did for her.

In all honesty, she's the one who helped me that day. It's easy to get caught up in checking off my to do list instead of enjoying sweet moments like that. I hope I run into her again and that when I'm old someone will give me the same chance to enjoy babies.”

— BT

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“BECKY, TAMMI AND EMMANUEL Lutheran Church & School brought us the most amazing food after my hip surgery, you have no idea how much we appreciated it. While I was in the hospital in Atlanta, Stephanie and her family fed our kitties and kept an eye on the house. Every one of them has been so loving and supportive! Hugs to you all!”

— JBD

“I WILL NEVER FORGET the generous kindness of friends and strangers over two years ago when my marriage ended. I was relocating with my kids from Orlando to Melbourne, and I was just a mess and needed help packing and moving an entire household. So many people helped us and some of our friends drove from hours away to lend a helping hand. I was so overwhelmed at the time, I had barely packed a thing and people told me to just sit down and not to worry. They packed up my entire household and moved every box and piece of furniture without one complaint. They fed my family, they hugged us and it is something that my children and I will never forget.”

— JB

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“KIMBERLY SEES THAT WE'RE overwhelmed with trying to get our house ready to sell and she comes over and helps me clean my bathroom (realizing I can't do it myself).”

— LT

“WHILE DRIVING TO WORK one morning, in a really bad mood, I saw an older lady walking down the street. I just wanted to get across the light to the Dunkin. She was walking with a rolling suitcase a large garbage bag full of clothes and another bag on top of the rolling case. As I passed her I could see that she was visibly upset. I turned around and pulled into the parking lot near where I had seen her walking. She was asking a lady something, I couldn't hear her. The other lady was waving her hands and shaking her head, 'no'. I asked the older lady if she needed help. She immediately smiled. She spoke NO English.

I called a Co-worker of mine that spoke Spanish and I asked her for help. She spoke to the lady and

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when I got back on the phone with her, my co-worker told me I was crazy and I should leave the lady there and come to work. I asked her to let my boss know I would be late.

I could understand a little bit of what she was saying to my co-worker. She was trying to get to a church. I could understand enough that it was on Oakland Park Blvd. I packed the ladies belongings into my car and drive to Oakland Park Blvd. She would point and I would drive. I drove her to the church on Oakland Park near Federal Hwy. When I found her, she was at University Drive and McNab. She would have had a very long walk. She was very thankful.”

— TM

REAL STORIES OF KINDNESS

“PROUD MOM—MY 14-year-old son is shaving his head for the third year in a row to raise money for children's cancer research. Look for a St Baldrick's event near you and join the cause.”

— PCL

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“I TRAVEL FOR A living and was just in Texas for a couple weeks. When I got home my daughter Amanda had cleaned my toilet in my master bath. I know it sounds funny, but six months ago or so, I had been gone on a business trip for 2 months and when I got home I was so excited to enjoy all of the comforts of my home like my bed, my bathroom...only to be horrified when I went to use my bathroom there was a huge Scorpion in my toilet staring up at me!!! Needless to say, I was hysterical!

Since then I always look at my commode to make sure there's nothing scary in there. Much to my surprise this time when I got home my toilet was sparkling clean with a note that said...A Clean

REAL STORIES OF KINDNESS

Thrown fit for a Queen! I love you Mom! Thank you for all you do! It's almost silly how much that random act of kindness meant to me, I truly felt loved!!!”

— DDG

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“LAST YEAR MY HUSBAND was driving my daughters to one of their favorite restaurants in our area. The weather was cold and there was a bit of freezing rain. During their travels they came upon an elderly woman who only dressed in a "house coat." She seemed to be confused and obviously cold.

They quickly turned around and he explained to our daughters how important it is to be aware of who or what be happening around you. The lady had a moment of clarity and told him where she lived. My husband opened her car door and delightfully walked her to her door.”

— KLD

REAL STORIES OF KINDNESS

“A FEW MONTHS AGO I stopped at a fast food restaurant to get breakfast for my co-workers, there was a homeless man waiting in line behind me so I bought him a gift card to the restaurant so I knew he would get enough food. I also gave him a huge hug.”

— JBD

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“MY ELDEST DAUGHTER, 14, was at a beachside playground with a bunch of other teens. A little boy with special needs was playing by himself. She started playing with him. They played until his parents had to go.

When the parents were leaving, with tears in their eyes, they thanked her for playing with their son. They said their son rarely makes new friends on the playground and her reaching out meant a lot to them.”

— JN

REAL STORIES OF KINDNESS

“A FEW WEEKS AGO I went to Subway for Lunch and this guy sitting out front of the store asked me to buy him a drink (guess he had no money, although he did not look homeless) while I was in there. I was annoyed that he asked me. As I stood in line I couldn't help thinking about it and wondering what his situation might be, so I ended up buying him his drink AND a small sub. He seemed very grateful.”

— TMM

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“MY 5 Y/O SON always opens and holds the door
for me and says, "Here you go my gentle lady."
Makes my heart melt.”

— MF

REAL STORIES OF KINDNESS

“MY SUBWAY TRADITION IS to buy a service man or woman or police officers lunch while I'm in there and that's quite often since it's fast and fairly healthy they all try to say no but once I insist they are always so pleased and appreciative.”

— CTM

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“THE LAST TIME WE went to North Carolina, we stopped at our usual exit in GA for gas and Starbucks. Sydney nagged the pants off of me to get her some Doritos too. Relentlessly. I finally gave in after 10 minutes. As we left, I fumbled with holding the door for a worker with a cart. She walked out and saw a homeless man sitting on the curb with his dog. Without hesitation she strode over to him and handed him her hard won Doritos, telling him to have a nice day. We left without said Doritos but with something much, much better. I love that kid.”

— CCP

REAL STORIES OF KINDNESS

“MY SON AND I were coming out of a restaurant, the door closed behind us. He saw an elderly couple coming towards the door, and went back and opened the door for them.”

— KCL

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“I WAS INFORMED THAT Fiona needed to go to the store. Why? To buy candy. Why? For her friends. Why? Because she lost a bet. A lot of "whys" later, it turns out 2 of her friends are struggling in science & she bet them a bag of Jolly Ranchers (their favorite candy) that they couldn't get higher than an 85% on their next test. It was a brilliant way to motivate them to study—and a bet she was happy to lose!”

— TFR

“I AM REMINDED OF this story my Pop asked me to post on his behalf in September 2010... it was so important to him that a special wish be granted (his act of loving kindness). I hope it was.

As you know, I look like Santa Claus, and I am often approached by folk of all ages and wished “Merry Christmas.” Wednesday, as I sat in a restaurant over a cup of coffee, a couple passed me on the way to the register.

“Merry Christmas” said the wife. “Are you being a good girl”, I replied, “and being good to your mother?” Standard Santa Response! “See you on the 24th.” Seated at the table next to me, another couple looked over and smiled. When he got up to go to the checkout, and hesitantly and carefully

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passed, I noted how fragile he was, much as I had been the last few years with my neurological problems.

His wife stepped over to my table and spoke: “I knew when that woman talked to you that I had to do this”, she said as she put a piece of paper in my hand, “My husband is very ill, has had three serious surgeries and is about to have another. If you can grant me one Christmas wish, it is to have him with me for Christmas.”

I drove home reflectively, with the radio turned off. As I told this story to Sandi, she said I must post this on Facebook. She knew that the power to grant this must come from all of us, covens, circles, congregations, and individuals saying evening

prayers...all of us. So I ask you all, each in her or his own way, send your healing wishes to Steve. Let this woman who thinks so much of her loving husband that she approached this Santa over his coffee have her wish granted.”

— MB

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“WHILE AT A PANERA Bread over the weekend I witnessed a man ask a homeless man if he was hungry. When he replied yes the man bought him a lunch. I wish I could say it was me that did that but unfortunately he beat me to it!”

— CMF

“MY HUSBAND JOHN, IS a big guy. Very outgoing and the talker in the family. He does not meet a stranger. When he sees a disabled car by the side of road, he will always help. Just last week he helped an old lady change a tire. This was on the way home after a long day at work. He still helped. One time, we stopped and it was a lady who owned a resort in Myrtle Beach. She gave us a free weekend stay! His reason for helping... he thinks if it was me and the kids... he would want someone to help.”

— SFW

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“LOVE EXTENDS TO OUR animal friends... we have neutered/spayed 24 cats who have come and found a home on our farm and kept an abused hound that showed up only to have 8 puppies! We have her and three of her pups, found homes for the other 5. They are all fixed too!!! All are fed and happy.”

— RM

“OCCASIONALLY, WHEN AT THE drive thru at a fast food restaurant, my wife and I will pay for the people behind us. We live in such a digitized world that it's easy to forget we humans have been connected long before smartphones.

Paying for the people behind us reminds us of that connection...and it just feels right!

Show love, babe! Show love... it's all you need.”

— LC

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“SLOWED AND LET NOT one but two different drivers in front of me today at different times on US 1 while flashing lights at them. One was appreciative. I know how much I appreciate it, and how rare it seems to be - BUT IT DOES HAPPEN! What's the term for the OPPOSITE or Road Rage? Does it not exist? Let's create it, then... Suggestions? "Road Code?" "Road Flow?" "Good Roads?"

— RT

REAL STORIES OF KINDNESS

“A WENDY’S EMPLOYEE REMOVES the umbrella from a table outside to walk an elderly man to his car in the rain. What an awesome guy.”

— AM

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“OUR WAITRESS THIS MORNING at The Marsh Landing (Jennifer) was awesome. We had a nice family breakfast and left her a \$10 tip.”

— RT

Closing Thoughts

THIS PROJECT HAS helped me through my days to see people less as competitors and more as potential friends (which is why I did it, frankly), and to be more alert to the good around me and opportunities to do good stuff, big or small.

Yesterday I had a coupon for a free Happy Meal and gave it to a guy by the drink station at McDonald's. I thought he was going to break down and cry or hug me (both successfully avoided) but what struck me was how little it sometimes takes to produce so much. Is it that kindness is so rare?

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Later I went by Bass Pro Shops determined to give my "\$5 off \$50" coupon to the biggest, meanest dude I could find and see what happens... A body-builder type and a quasi-giant were at the checkout line and I gave it to the bigger of the two. He looked at it confused for a moment, then gave me a reluctant nod. Was I just some weirdo or did he feel entitled to it? I did notice a lightness in his step, though, as he showed it with suppressed excitement to his buddy. Who knows what the ripple effects were? Did he spend more time with his kids that day? Hug his wife? It's nice to see immediate gratification but that can't be the only reason to commit kind acts.

I wonder how many pay it forward.

REAL STORIES OF KINDNESS

But I do know this: it works the other way, too. A middle finger in traffic, a person ignored, these have ripple effects or at best sit in the receiver like a hot coal for a while, eliminating his or her ability to commit kind acts.

I guess creating good Ju-Ju or good karma is a choice, after all.

If an act of kindness received impels us to pass it on, and if passing it on feels so good, imagine if we reached out to more people and encouraged them to do the same! YOUR STORIES ARE AWESOME! People are reading them and laughing, crying, smiling!

Here are some stories of my own:

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A driver slowed and let me in, believe it or not!
That still happens around here, which is really nice.

Back at a time when I was FLAT BROKE my friend, as close as a brother, drove two hours out of his way and paid all the costs for us just to hang out around Palm Bay, get a drink, talk about life, laugh, try a burger at Mulligans... THANK YOU, Lloyd!

~

Improve the world one act of kindness at a time:
Spread acts of kindness with descriptions or photos, big or small, planned or random, committed by you or those you observe. By devoting attention to them they just might survive, grow, and spread, a little or maybe a lot. When you affect just 3% of a

population you've achieved a "microtrend." When you affect more...

But the place to start is normally our own homes and neighborhoods. Most of all, enjoy! Invite friends! Post profound quotes about kindness and the effects of compassion. Splurge!

They can be the tiniest things:

I held the door for a young couple entering Chipotle;

I watched Charlie retrieve his laundry from a hotel laundry room and clear the lint from the filter for the next guy;

I'm so proud of my daughter's sense of compassion. One night when she was very little she

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made VERY sure we would pay for her friend's dinner.

That's all it takes. Kindness multiplies and spreads *if it achieves a critical mass*. Revisit these stories when you're feeling down or when you feel like there is just too much negativity in the world.

Get in touch with us and share your stories. We'd sure love to make a Volume Two. And Three. And Four.

And most of all, try to spread kindness where the opportunity presents itself, and where it doesn't, too. You'll feel *great*.

The Facebook Group

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/278267825665204/>

Or search for “All You Need is Love.”