The Ripple Effect

(Original)

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"If you are kind, people may accuse you of selfish, ulterior motives, be kind anyway. Incorporate the smallest acts of kindness into your everyday life and notice the ripple effects" – Mother Therese.

When I was a kid, I was told that I was too generous and that people are always going to hurt me because of my kind nature. As a teenager I restrained from generosity and become more eager to receive than to give.

Gradually, I noticed that I was no longer the happy and expressive person I used to be. Something was missing, but I wasn't sure what it was.

One morning, on my way to the bank, a pregnant woman mistakenly hit the head lamp of the taxi I was in, breaking it into pieces. The woman screamed at the taxi driver "What a reckless driver you are!" Everyone around the scene told the man to collect some money from the woman for repairs, but the man quietly came out of his car and assessed the damaged headlamp. Then he looked at the heavily pregnant woman with compassion, returned into his car and drove off. The woman stood there astonished.

At the bank, I was on a long queue; there was a power outage for over two hours. Customers were tired of the delay and began shouting at the cashiers, except a woman- the same person who had hit the taxi. She said "No, you guys shouldn't judge them based on your opinions. These are the same people who attend to us every day when things are going fine. Let's treat them the same way we want others to treat us."

At that moment I became startled, I thought, "What would have been this woman's response if the taxi man had insisted that she should pay for the head lamp? What a ripple effect!" From that moment on, my definition of kindness changed. Kindness means treating other people the way we want to be treated and leaving people better than we meet them knowing that just like a ripple effect, that kindness will be transferred to another person directly or indirectly.

As I came out of the bank that day, a friend of mine told me about the Goi Peace

Foundation Essay Competition, and I was amazed when I saw the theme – "Creating a Society Full of Kindness." When I started my research, I came across Mother Therese's quote "Let no one ever come to you without leaving better and happier. Be the living expression of God's Kindness: Kindness in your face, Kindness in your eyes, and Kindness in your smile." Eureka! I have become more intentional about smiling everywhere I go, and continue to research more ways I can be kind. I have visited the hospital, encouraged the sick and given them more reasons why they should live. My friends and family have noticed the change in me. They have joined me in the movement. I formed a group of 20 people called "The Kinder Circle" in my community. We agreed that we would smile to at least 5 people every day , including strangers, we would make at least 5 people smile by giving them a genuine compliment, and lastly we would encourage and give a listening ear to at least 2 people every day. It has produced such a ripple effect. In less than three months, we are already a group of 100. I'm currently writing a book "A Kinder World". I'm going to release it to the public in August 2019. I want to reach out to more people whom are not in our Country. I believe that with this movement we all can create a kinder world.

I have recently noticed that the feeling of joy I lost when I was growing up is fully back, and I have learnt that giving money and gifts are not the only ways to be kind. I am just like a ripple effect. I'm changing the world around me with the act of kindness. Everybody can do it. It does not cost a penny.