

2019 International Essay Contest for Young People

[Children's Category – Honorable Mention]

## **Kindness**

(Original)

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When I think about kindness, I think about being pleasant, peaceful, and positive. Although my parents have taught me to never talk to strangers, it is understood that I am able to say a pleasant word as I walk past someone. I have found that sometimes, someone may be having a terrible day, and your one kind word to them may be the only kind thing that they have heard all day. Your one smile may be the only smile that they have seen in a while. I remember just doing a simple gesture such as holding open a door for an elderly lady. The lady was using a walker, so I knew that she would need help opening the door once she approached the fabric store. Although she was not yet close to the door, and still in the parking lot, slowly approaching the door, I held it open and gave her a smile. I could see her trying to hurry to get to the door to relieve me from my duty, but I assured her that she didn't need to rush; I didn't mind holding the door for her. Once she made it through the first door, she realized that my sister was holding the second door (behind the first door) open for her. She told us that that was the nicest thing anyone had done for her all day. It made me feel good that just by being patient, holding open a door, and greeting a woman could have such an impact on her. It made me want to continue to do kind things for people.

I also believe that being peaceful promotes kindness. If someone wrongs you or hurts your feelings, you have several options; two of which I believe to be the peaceful ways from which to choose: you can talk to the person, hoping that they will understand that what they did was wrong or hurtful, and will not do it again; or you can let it go, and give that person grace for what they did. I have been taught that we have to choose our battles, and that everything that hurts your feelings does not need to be addressed with the offender. If the behavior continues to happen, then you can either address it, or realize that the person who continues to offend you isn't healthy for you and you can become distant from that person, so that you will reduce conflict. When the news is on television in the morning or in

the evening, I hear so many horrible things happening in my city. It sounds like people are really angry, angry inside and angry with the world. I realize that when I am in a bad mood, I make worse decisions than when I am in a good mood. When I am really sick, for example, I am short tempered. There is sometimes a direct correlation between feeling good on the inside and how you treat other people. But I know that if we make a conscious effort to try to feel peaceful on the inside, and when we absolutely cannot feel peaceful on the inside because we are in so much pain, we have to try to exhibit peace on the outside, to our neighbors, friends, and family. Feeling peaceful on the inside helps us to love our neighbors as we love ourselves, therefore enabling us to demonstrating peaceful and kind behavior.

Finally, you must be positive. I am in advanced math classes in my school, and I enjoy learning and teaching math. So I teach elementary school students above-grade-level math after school. I have done with my sister and mom for several years. What we realized that was just by doing one very easy thing, the kids began to get better and better at math within short periods of time. The one thing we did was continue to be positive. When we praised the students for their efforts, told them that we believed in them, and that they were brilliant, they tried harder, and out-performed their classmates who were not in the program. By being positive, you are being kind, and you can change a person's life.