

## **Kindness with a new twist**

(Original)

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On my way to school a few weeks ago, I saw things I have never before witnessed in my life. There were lengthy queues outside gas stations and distributors of LP gas. Supermarkets were filled with customers piling up heaps of goods in their trolleys. I heard the word 'inflation' being used by my parents when passing by such scenes. There were protests in the center of the city by people wearing black clothes and carrying black flags. When I came to my class, there were fewer students and teachers. I got to know many of them were unable to come because the public transport in their areas was not functioning due to the unavailability of fuel. There was frustration and disappointment all around.

Observing these sad situations around me, I realized there is a lot I can do with the two values I strongly believe in. They are kindness and being mindful. I like to merge these two together and call it 'kindfulness', as in a book that I read recently. What I want through kindness and being mindful is to gather wisdom to resolve the problems in the society around me. Wisdom does not come when your mind is restless; it only happens when you are peaceful and calm.

How can 'kindfulness' come to the rescue? Let me share what I did over the past few days. I got together with my parents, made some snacks, bought some bottled drinks and distributed among those who were queueing outside gas stations and LP gas distributors. I came up with this idea because when I looked closely at those people, I realized how parched they looked by having to queue for so long in the hot sun. This might seem like a small act of kindness, but I know it will give these people the strength to uplift their spirits to get the task done.

Recently, I suggested to my parents to convert the queueing time outside gas stations into

family time. Given how busy my parents are and how much I am involved in school activities, we hardly get the time to spend with each other. What we do now is take some refreshments in our vehicle, sometimes even my guitar, sing songs and have a good time in the queue until it is our turn to pump petrol. I actually enjoy queueing outside gas stations now! My mother shared this experience in her WhatsApp status, and now, many of her friends seem to be doing the same as well.

Whenever any of my friends called and shared that they are unable to come to school because they do not have any method to travel, I got together with my parents and arranged for someone who is passing by that area to pick my friend up and bring him to school. To further solve the issue of traveling to school, after discussing with my classmates, we decided to car-pool. Not only was this something generous, we got to know later on during our Civics lesson in school that car-pooling is one way to overcome the energy crisis around the world because many passengers will be sharing one vehicle.

Every time we turn on the news these days, there seems to be war and conflicts happening everywhere around the world. This is because there is so much craving and desire in people's hearts. Craving comes from being restless and not accepting things as they are. I hope the day is not too far, that all of us are content with whatever we get. For this to be achieved, I strongly recommend my two core values of kindness and mindfulness, or rather 'kindfulness'. As you can see from the experiences that I shared, it is amazing as to how something which seems so negative can be transformed into something positive by mindfully seeing it as an opportunity to be kind to ourselves and to others.