

One Small Act

In today's fast-moving world, kindness feels like something we don't see as often anymore. People are always in a hurry, looking at their phones, and worrying about their busy schedules. Technology was made to help us stay connected, but sometimes it actually makes us feel more distant. At school, I see kids walk past each other without saying anything. On the streets, I see adults fighting over parking spots. It's like everyone is stuck in their own bubble, too busy to care about what's going on around them. When life gets like this, kindness starts to disappear.

But one small moment made me realize that kindness still matters. I was in fifth grade, visiting Korea with my mom. We had just come out of a store and were about to head home. That's when I noticed a man a few steps ahead of us. He looked stressed, talking on the phone and holding a bunch of bags and flower bouquets. He was trying to get into another store, so without really thinking, I held the door open for him. He looked at me with wide eyes, like he couldn't believe I was doing that. Since he was still on the phone, he couldn't say anything, but he gave me a small bow. Then he went inside, and I kept walking. Even though it only lasted a few seconds, I kept thinking about it. It made me wonder why something so simple felt so surprising.

We're taught from a young age that kindness is important. Teachers and parents always remind us that being kind matters and that even small actions can inspire others. For a long time, though, I wasn't sure if that was really true. Holding the door for someone felt like a polite habit, not something that could truly make a difference in someone's day. But after that one moment in

Korea, my thinking began to change. I started to realize that small acts of kindness do matter. They often mean more than we realize, especially when they happen at just the right time.

What surprised me most was how I felt afterward. For the rest of the day, I noticed that my mood had completely changed. I smiled more, spoke more kindly, and looked for other ways to help people around me. It felt like that single moment had opened something inside me. That was when I began to truly believe that kindness can spread. It works like a ripple in a pond. One small drop can create waves that reach much farther than we expect. A simple gesture, like holding a door, can lift someone's mood, and that person might carry that kindness forward to someone else. This is how peaceful and inclusive communities begin: not through big speeches or major changes, but through the small, thoughtful choices people make every day.

So why don't more people try to be kind? It could be because they forget how, or because life feels too overwhelming. People get tired, face challenges, and carry worries that are invisible to everyone else. Sometimes, when we're focused on our own problems, it's easy to stop noticing the people around us. Other times, people might believe that kindness doesn't really matter, or that their small actions won't make a difference. But I believe everyone still has kindness inside them. It may not always show, but that doesn't mean it's gone. Often, it gets buried under stress, fear, or sadness, but if more people paused and gave themselves the chance to act kindly, the world would slowly begin to feel more connected.

Kindness isn't something extra we do when we have time. It's something we need in order to build strong, peaceful communities. In a world where people come from many different cultures and experiences, kindness is one of the few things that everyone can understand. It allows people to feel accepted, valued, and safe. Without it, our communities would feel cold

and divided. But with it, we create places where people are not judged by how they look, what language they speak, or where they come from. When we take the time to show others that they matter, we create a world where no one is left out. And that kind of world begins with more than just good intentions. It begins with action, small, simple choices we make every day, to be more thoughtful, more understanding, and more kind.

One person being kind can lead to another person doing the same. Some people might not know how to be kind yet. Others might have forgotten. But one small act, like holding a door or giving a smile, can help someone remember. Over time, those moments build up. They help people feel like they belong. That's the kind of world I want to live in. A place where kindness is normal, and no one is left out. Who knows? Maybe it all begins with just one simple gesture.