Generating Happiness Through Compassionate Acts

By: SimplyWishes

“Not all of us can do great things. But, we can do small things with great love.” (Mother Teresa)

Throughout her life, [Mother Teresa](http://www.goodreads.com/quotes/6946-not-all-of-us-can-do-great-things-but-we) was guided by compassion which she embodied through serving “the poorest of the poor.” While not all of us are saints, a single word or even a hug can embody compassion towards another. It’s the small acts that make a difference in the everyday lives of people.

One summer, my mom was flying over from abroad to visit me. She had a layover in Los Angeles and got stuck in customs, missed her flight to San José and had no idea what to do. It was her first time in the US, and she didn’t speak English, either. Granting all this, she met a couple who offered her their phone, which she promptly used to call me, eventually arriving safely to us.

Small acts of compassion often start a chain reaction. When children see their parents or others being compassionate, they may be inspired to do the same. According to [a study from the University of British Columbia and the University of California Riverside](http://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371%2Fjournal.pone.0051380), when the children participated in acts of kindness, they experienced feelings of tenderness, happiness and affection; benefited developmentally; showed positivity; bullied less; and established more positive relationships with their peers.

Aside from the science, compassionate acts generate social well-being by connecting to people and freeing us from hate, discrimination and indifference. Recently, [the story of an Ingles Markets grocery store worker helping an elderly woman to her car went viral](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/photo-of-grocery-store-worker-helping-elderly-woman-goes-viral_us_5762c01ee4b05e4be8610520). Bo Graf, who posted the incident on social media, wrote: “I went and spoke to the young man, Brandon Rollins, and told him what he did meant a lot more than just helping a little old lady today. It touched my life as well as I hope touches all of your lives.”

If it’s true that a compassionate lifestyle brings happiness, then let’s use all the tools we have to generate compassion and kindness and bring about happiness and positive change in the world.