



The Abbey

KINDNESS



When action follows heart

Ana, Upper IV (Year 9)



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KINDNESS
MATTERS





Kindness: what is it? Is it an action, is it a thought, or is it just an emotion? Is kindness all of this or maybe even more? Is it that all of us have learnt to be kind, or is it a natural instinct? How do we classify if someone is kind or not? Do we measure it like cm or grams? Surely everyone has made a mistake which did not lead to the kindest outcome - does that make them a bad person? We may all associate kindness with the words “please” or “thank you.” Perhaps an “I’m sorry” too. All of our words and actions have an impact on the lives of others and, most importantly, on our own. Kindness is not always about the happiest outcome at a certain point. Kindness is mostly a choice. This can be as simple as choosing to smile and wish someone a great day or as complex as working to create a medicine that will change the opportunities for many people. Is knowledge important to the aspect of kindness?

Intelligence stands behind many inventions. Unfortunately, intelligence does not always bring kindness. In other words, kindness might enrich someone’s life more than intelligence can. Some technologies do not benefit humans in the best way: they may disrupt living things, endanger their health, or worsen the effects of global warming on the planet we inhabit. It is always a choice of how intelligence is used. Some may create something absolutely life-changing. It may all start as a thought until eventually there is a spark leading to a great invention. Take a hearing aid for instance. It is not the easiest task to make something so complex. It is difficult to pinpoint the precise time or person who invented hearing aids. Even before the development of electrical hearing aids, humans used hearing aid horns to direct sounds into the ear and correct hearing loss. Hearing aids are now digital devices. Technological advances have sparked the creation of increasingly creative solutions to hearing loss. This and many other inventions are kindnesses because they affect so many lives. I can relate to this specific topic because my grandma has a minor hearing loss, which made understanding and answering speech particularly difficult. With this kind and helpful thought that sprouted into much more, life was made so much simpler! But are the kindest acts always the ones you think about?

Natural kindness is almost like being on autopilot in human brains. These are the actions you do without thinking almost like an automatic response to whatever is happening. This can be as simple as saying ‘good night’ to your family or reminding yourself to pack a small snack for a busy day. It also may be the simplest traits of patience or forgiveness. These random acts of kindness—given without expectation of thanks or reciprocity—feel good in the moment and help connect people to their community. But then if you don’t necessarily think about kindness, is it truly kind? Nobody scientifically understands as everyone has a different mind set! We have been lucky enough to be taught how we should treat others. This could relate to a saying you are surely all familiar with: ‘treat people how you would wish to be treated yourself’.

Does kindness matter? Yes: kindness matters. Kindness is so strong that it can unite so many people in such a wholesome way. Take an incident from World War I for instance. On one Christmas day some English and German troops didn’t want to fight so they united while playing a game of football. This small example of kindness on both sides was a glimpse of hope that is important in the history of human nations. Is there a bad side to kindness? Perhaps some people think of kindness as about being liked in society. And perhaps some people think they are being kind but are actually behaving in an unequal way, for example we may treat individuals more kindly if they have more power, wealth, and a better lifestyle. In my opinion, this is when “kindness” is more of an expectation than a value. Will kindness change in the future? Development of new technologies could lessen kindness throughout communities. We are all witnessing the promotion of technology including phones and laptops. In the future there may be less interaction between people as they sort out daily life without physical interaction, meaning kindness with personal speech can diminish. But this does not have to be the case. The world is aware of this possibility and it is very important that kindness is never forgotten. Kindness is always right when you follow your heart. This way can kindness can never be lost!





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