

Care to make a Difference

10th April 2013

You might remember the story of the shooting that took place at the Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut, United States, on the 14 December 2012, when a 20-year old shot and killed 6 adult staff members and 20 children before committing suicide. How would we react, how would we feel if this happened in our community? I'm sure there are many emotions involved. I happened to come across a facebook page called "26 Acts of Kindness" which was started to encourage people to commit to 26 acts of kindness in honour of each life lost to this tragic event. This initiative took flame and is still growing. Some amazing stories have been shared from people in the community doing these kind acts. I made contact with one of the members of 26 Acts of Kindness, Jay Proto, and he wrote an inspiring letter for us. Thank you, Jay.

Take a look at the site: <http://usnews.nbcnews.com/news/2012/12/18/15999109-if-you-do-good-youll-feel-good-ann-curry-explains-origins-of-26acts-of-kindness?lite?>

Or facebook page: <http://www.facebook.com/26acts> (they have over a 100000 likes).

This week we start a new group project. It's a small but heart-felt gesture to show respect to people who are in grief.

You know, sometimes we hash up, we do unkind things or say unkind things and we may think we are just not good enough; But I just want to encourage you today that it's never too late to be kind. If we mess up, we just get up and try again. We are all just human after all.

Letter from Jay Proto

(26 Acts of Kindness):

#26Acts

"Imagine if everyone could commit to doing one act of kindness for each precious life lost. An act of kindness big or small. **Are you in?"**

- Ann Curry

Visit NBCNews.com/26Acts to learn more.



"Hi Michelle, I'm glad that you are doing what you are doing in the South Africa community. It's exactly what I was hoping for when I signed on to help with this movement. I didn't want to just focus on the tragedy that took place in CT and make it just a Sandy Hook benefit. While Sandy Hook residents and the families of the victims certainly do need support, they have plenty of it. They won't lose anything by this movement not focusing only on their situation. Instead what I wanted to do was to provide support to them by honouring the people affected by that tragedy, and also their community, by using their memory to mobilize people all over to act nicer to one another.

One of the questions I routinely pose to people that I speak to about this movement is this: Imagine if everyone in the world signed up to do at least one kind act for a random person every single day before this situation occurred. If on December 13, 2012 someone approached the person responsible for all this devastation in Sandy Hook and offered him a

compliment, or a smile, or helped him with his groceries, or bought him lunch just cuz' they had no reason not to....anything at all that comes from a completely selfless place, would I be typing this to you today? Would 26 families have to grieve every night and wish that they could turn the clock back and change things? No one can answer that for sure, but one can speculate that the likelihood would be significantly less likely.

One person, doing something small for someone else, and recognizing that they are important, can absolutely change the world for that person and the people they are involved with. We all have that level of power.



Far too often people accept the idea that they don't have to stand up and offer these acts of kindness and support for others, because they are only one person, and one person isn't powerful enough to make a noticeable difference. They think their contribution will simply not be enough to make it worth the effort. That thought is what holds us hostage and prevents us from making the positive changes that we so desperately need. The first step in changing the world is to change the way people see it and how they view their role in it. Each of us has a responsibility to stand up and be kind to one another.

I'd encourage your readers to visit the 26 acts of kindness page and get involved in the movement over there as well. The easiest way to spread kindness is to share your stories and inspire others to act. I'm going to provide a couple of small acts of kindness that come up often, but I'd also recommend you review the page to see if there are any more that your readers would enjoy.

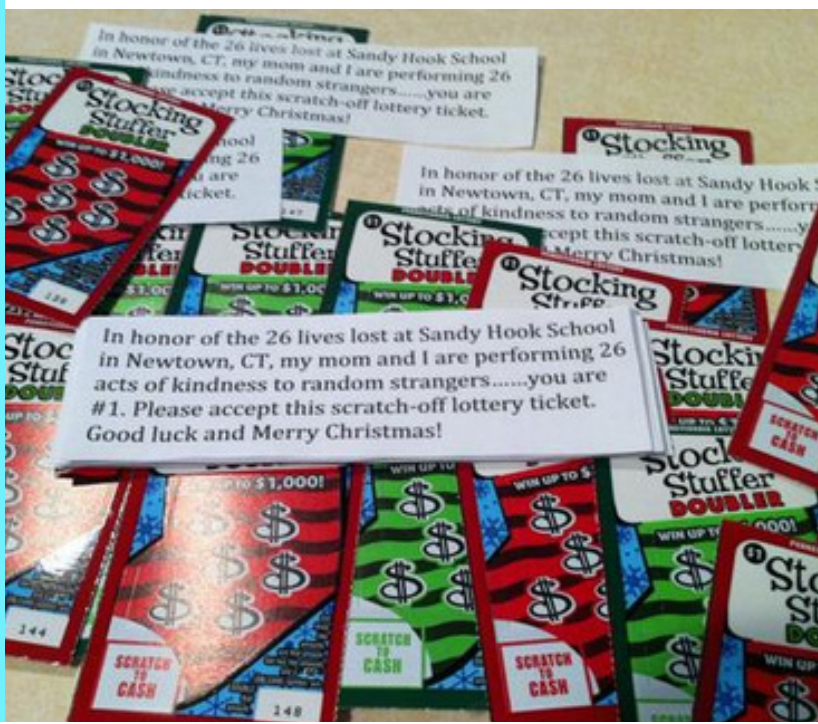
Feel free to share this letter in your newsletter, share a link to the page, you can put that the 26 Acts of Kindness community supports your newsletter and South Africa.

Keep up what you're doing! It's having a big impact on the world.

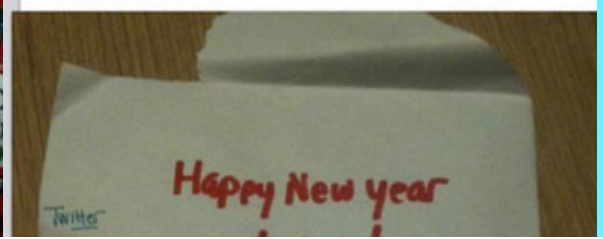
Thanks,
Jay Proto"

Stories:

"While my husband was filling up our car at the gas station, I ran in to the mini-mart to grab some drinks and snacks for our road trip; in front of me was an elderly gentlemen attempting to scrape together enough change to pay for a gallon or so of gas, when he was finished and walked away I asked the cashier for his pump number and handed her enough cash for what hopefully was a full tank. I told my husband what happened, and as we watched the man's pump go way beyond the amount he expected the look on his face reminded us of Christmas morning, and then we drove away."



I found this on my car when I left work today. First I was mad (that someone touched my car), then I was suspicious (who's leaving adverts on cars now?), then a bit worried (what creep?...). Then I opened it and found the note and Starbucks gift card. I sat in shock...and dismay- that I *still* am in utter distrust of people. Thank you Ana Marquez-Greene (no relation, btw) whomever and wherever you are. You restored my faith in humanity today. <3 Please share this...and if you have a Twitter account (I don't), please tweet it! :-)



"#13, in honor of Chase Kowalski's life: tucked a note and gift card into the case of an audio book before returning it to the library."

~*~

"While at work today, a lady asked me how much the persons order behind her was.. I told her, she handed her debit card back to me and paid for the "strangers" order. She asked me to just hand her a piece of paper.. It was for the 26 acts of kindness. The "stranger" was in tears. Made my day so thought I'd share."



April Group Project

This month we are signing two cards as a group project. These cards are going to be sent to two different families who have lost a loved one recently. We are going to try to make/buy a big enough card to stick all the notes in. The request came from readers who are friends of these families and asked if we can please do something for them, just to bring a little comfort to their hurting hearts.

If you would like to sign the cards, it's easy. All you have to do is e-mail me a short note. With this format:

Dear {...}

{your short note}

{your name}, {where you're from}

1. The first card is for the Van der Merwe family: Grant passed away due to a heart attack at home on the 22 March 2013, leaving his wife, Laura, and their two children, Gia (13) and Luca (7). This came as a shock as he was a healthy, young man. We would like to send our condolences to Laura, Gia and Luca Van der Merwe.
2. The second card is for Lynette Roberts and her family. Lynette lost her husband, Donald, on the 1 March 2013 due to a tragic car accident. This was a kind man who loved his family deeply. His wife is struggling to deal with the loss and is not doing well. The family are devastated. We would like to send our condolences to Lynette and her family.



E-mail me: michelle@intgo.net before the 1st May 2013,

if you want to sign their cards.

So that they can see that people from all over have thought of them and prayed for them

My birthday wish...

PLEASE HELP ME COLLECT 100 BEANIES BY APRIL 28TH TO
DONATE TO THOSE WITH CANCER
KNIT THEM, CROCHET THEM, BUY THEM... ALL SIZES,
COLOURS AND PATTERNS WELCOME.



If you would like to send a beanie to this lady for a good cause, please post it to: 3A van Rhee de Weg, Table View, Cape Town, South Africa, 7441.

I BELIEVE IN
GOOD PEOPLE

Random Act of Kindness

A random act of kindness idea for this week is:

Take a cooked meal to someone
who has just moved into a new home.

Please tell a friend about these newsletters. If you would like to be added to
the mailing list, e-mail me: michelle@intgo.net

Please share a story of hope, of kindness, or faith. Has someone made an
impact on your life?

Take care

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