

COMPASSION

An essay by Shaya

"we can improve the well-being of the human race by practicing compassion"

Blue and yellow streaks paint the canvas of the early morning sky. I was up at dawn looking forward to a very different day of school. I skip downstairs with excitement, the sweet aroma of the breakfast blueberry muffins my mum made beckoning me. I sit down at the dining table dreaming of all the fun things I would do with my friend today.

Large steel gates greet me at the front entrance of the school. The metal had rusted and the paint had cracked but as I walked through, it gave me a warm embrace. It was the only thing that seemed welcoming and friendly here. The incessant chatter of other students entering, filled the crisp air. Anxiously, I began to look around for a glimpse of her. My eyes locked as I felt the whole world stop moving. There she was. I ran towards her and hugged her tightly as she was back in school after 6 months.

Ding! Ding! The recess bell finally reverberated across the playground. I immediately jumped from my seat and rushed out of class. Unfortunately, my friend and I weren't in the same class, so I began anxiously looking for her all over the playground. Among a crowd of people who flocked together like birds, I noticed someone in the corner. She was secluded from the rest of us and held her head in her lap. Tears fell from her eyes and splatted on the ground. I could hear a muffled sobbing coming from her. As I peered more intently, I could see a beautiful, multi-coloured headband that she wore. It was at that moment, I recognised that this was my friend. I was instantly overcome with sadness.

As I rushed towards her to ask her what was wrong, one of my other friends stopped me in my tracks. "She's a freak," my friend whispered in my ear, "Why would you play with her? Come with us."

I froze for a few moments. I knew this wasn't true. My friend had been suffering from cancer and had lost her hair due to treatment, but to me this didn't make her different.

We live in a world lacking compassion. This lack of compassion deprived my friend of a normal happy school life. I want everyone to understand what compassion and kindness means and how we can improve the well-being of the human race by practicing compassion.

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Compassion is imperative to humanity. Without compassion, the mere existence of the human race is threatened. Due to a lack of compassion, we are seeing war and chaos among humans. As the spiritual leader the Dalai Lama said: "Love and compassion are necessities, not luxuries. Without them, humanity cannot survive."

Today the world has lost compassion. When I watch the news or read the paper, I often see people stricken with suffering, not only in my country but in all parts of the world. Everyone can show kindness by donating to charities, giving away their old clothes to the needy, or showing empathy towards people suffering from illnesses. Compassion is not a sign of weakness, but of strength.

The famous philanthropist Mahatma Gandhi showed great compassion to those suffering from the illness of leprosy. Throughout his life, he practiced kindness and became a symbol of compassion for many. He once said, "The simplest acts of kindness are by far more powerful than a thousand heads bowing in prayer." Mother Teresa changed the world by spreading compassion and kindness. She set up orphanages, educated the poor and fed the homeless.

Based on my personal experiences and what my friend went through, I believe that compassion is essential. It helps us, as well as others, to face tough times with resilience, strengthens our connections, and helps us form relationships. We should strive to demonstrate compassion and empathy towards whomever we come across, with no expectation of reward, as someday, one might do the same for you.

It is vital that children are educated at a young age both at home and in schools about the importance of compassion and why it matters. Everyone must be taught to treat others the way you would like to be treated. If the significance of compassion is cultivated at a young age, we will see a kinder and happier society

Putting yourself in "someone else's shoes" is how you can understand what they are going through. We should all exemplify compassion towards others at every opportunity we are presented with. It may not be this very minute, but a time will always come!

Now more than ever, we need to create a world where compassion is a central value in society. Compassion is truly important to me. To prevent the decline of the human race, we need to deter the rise of cruelty, unkindness, and violence. This can only be done through compassion.

We may not be able to heal the world today, but we can begin with a voice of kindness, a heart of love, and an act of compassion.