

Assignment 5- Pay It Forward

PSYC 304

Emma K. Rawls, 01125800

Department of Psychology, Old Dominion University

Professor Jennifer Muth

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### **Assignment Five: Pay it forward**

This week I was tasked with completing five good deeds for strangers. The first deed that I did was on Saturday, March 27<sup>th</sup> while I was at the automotive shop getting my car fixed. As I was entering the shop, I saw through the glass window that there was a man that was going to enter after me and my mom. I decided to hold the door open for him, so the door wouldn't close on him. Every time that I enter a store and there is a man in front of me, he always holds to door for me. I felt it would be rude of me to not hold the door for someone that I was aware was coming in right behind me.

This was not the first time, nor will it be the last, that I hold the door for someone who walks in to a store behind me. I usually hold the door open because it makes me feel better about myself to know that I helped someone else's day be even a little better. I know how upset I get when people don't hold the door for me, so I wouldn't want to inflict that on someone else, especially on purpose. The man I held the door for was grateful and thanked me as he walked into the store. This also elated my mood, as when someone thanks me I feel like I really have made an impact on their day, even if I did not in actuality.

The second good deed that I completed was on Monday, March 29<sup>th</sup> while I was at work. I work as a tutor at a middle school and in the middle of class one of my students dropped her pencil case and all of her writing utensils scattered all over the floor. I could tell she was getting upset, which I understood because I've done the same thing several times in my past. I decided it would be a good idea to help her pick up all of her items as well as reassure her that everything was okay and there was no need to be upset.

Picking up the students' pencils for them made me feel good about myself, as I felt like I had made the students' day better. If I were to have not helped, she probably would have been

extremely embarrassed that her peers were making fun of her. Once we got all of her items put away, I reassured her that this happens to everyone, me especially, so there's no need to get upset over being a little clumsy. The student thanked me and I could tell by the way their mood changed that I really had helped them feel better in that moment.

The third good deed that I completed this week was on Tuesday, March 30<sup>th</sup>. After I finished a zoom call, I received a text from my friend Brooke. She said that she had to drive from Virginia, where we live, to North Carolina and did not want to go alone. She had to take her friend who came to visit, that I didn't know, home to North Carolina. I assumed it would be, a maximum, a four hour trip there and back and because I had no other plans I agreed. I also personally know how scary and boring it is to drive for a really long time, so I knew it would make them feel better if there was another person to talk to.

Once I got in the car, I realized that we were going to be driving four hours there and four hours back, not four hours in total. This upset me a little bit at first, but I did not have anything else to do anyway. On the way there, Brooke's friend expressed how grateful he was that we were taking him home. I felt like I had really made a difference, because if I didn't come Brooke might not have taken him home. On the way home Brooke told me several times how grateful she was that I came with her because if I had not she might have fallen asleep at the wheel. I had to go on a three hour road trip before completely by myself and I did just that, so I am really glad that I was able to be there to keep Brooke focused and alert. When I got home I was exhausted, but I felt like I had done a really good deed.

The fourth good deed that I did this week was on Wednesday, March 31<sup>st</sup>. After I finished up some lectures and assignments, I got a call from my friend, Sam. Sam told me she needed my help and that she was coming to get me. I never mind helping out my friends when they need me,

so I decided to go with her. Once I got in the car, she let me know that we were going to Portsmouth to help her roommate's sister move her belongings from a huge moving truck into a storage unit.

At first, I was quite caught off guard because I didn't think I'd have to go out to Portsmouth. However, I was already in the car so I went to help out. Once Sam and I got there, we were able to help her roommate and her roommate's sister move their belongings within an hour. Sam's roommate was so thrilled because she said her and her sister had been working on unloading the truck all day. This made me feel very useful, as if I didn't come they may have taken until midnight to unload that truck. The long drive didn't seem to matter once I realized how grateful they were that Sam and I came to help.

Finally, the last good deed that I did was on Friday, April 2<sup>nd</sup>. I was walking into Walmart when I saw there was someone at the door taking donations. At first, I didn't think I had any cash so I was going to keep walking. When the person asked me for a donation directly, I looked into my wallet and saw I had two dollar bills. I decided, of course, to donate the cash that I found.

I do not usually donate when I see people outside of stores because I don't ever have cash on me. When I donated this time, it made me feel really good about myself, despite the fact that I was originally planning on walking right by. I felt like my two dollars would really make a difference in someone's day. It is odd because even though I didn't receive an immense amount of gratitude from the donation collector, I felt better about myself completing this deed than I did all the other deeds. This made me contemplate donating more when I have the opportunity to.

If I were to continue this challenge and make this a repertoire of behavior for myself, my life would definitely be different. Not all of these deeds, but some of these deeds took a lot of

time out of my day. Luckily for me I have a flexible schedule right now, but what if I were to go on that road trip when I had eight assignments due the next weekend? Doing good deeds for people usually leads to spending more time than you may have planned helping that person. While doing good deeds for people every day would make me feel better about myself, it may make it more difficult for me to effectively do my work and complete my assignments on time. I am willing, however, to do little deeds for someone every day. It also seems to me like helping out strangers makes you feel better about yourself than does helping out people you know very well.