

Making a Difference—“The Starfish Story”

For the most part, the memories people share with me about their mothers don't involve riches, monumental accomplishments or gestures. Rather it is more common for them to recall the small acts of kindness and caring that endeared their mothers to them and made the biggest difference in their lives.



The story below has been told many times to illustrate how small acts of kindness can make a difference in this life.

Once upon a time, there was a wise man who used to go to the ocean to do his writing. He had a habit of walking on the beach before he began his work. One day, as he was walking along the shore, he looked down the beach and saw a human figure moving like a dancer. He smiled to himself at the thought of someone who would dance to the day, and so, he walked faster to catch up. As he got closer, he noticed that the figure was that of a young man, and that what he was doing was not dancing at all. The young man was reaching down to the shore, picking up small objects, and throwing them into the ocean.

He came closer still and called out “Good morning! May I ask what it is that you are doing?” The young man paused, looked up, and replied “Throwing starfish into the ocean.” “I must ask, then, why are you throwing starfish into the ocean?” asked the somewhat startled wise man. To this, the young man replied, “The sun is up and the tide is going out. If I don't throw them in, they'll die.” *continued on the next page....*

