

# *'The Enormousness of Small Kindnesses'*

Reflection for Week of June 22, 2020

In the midst of the pain and anguish of these times, we pause to remember the powerful impact of gestures of love.

Suggested Music: [Loving and Forgiving – Scott Soper \(click here\)](#)

## *In Praise of Small Kindnesses*

Today's is a soft meditation  
in praise of the enormousness  
of small kindnesses.

Like the café worker who waved enthusiastically  
to my father as he walked in the door of the coffee shop  
like she was expecting him,  
like he was a regular in this hipster enclave  
instead of a septuagenarian  
in khaki shorts and white tennis shoes.

He met me here on my workday  
so I could help him format a document —  
something he couldn't figure out how to do at home  
no matter how many buttons he tried,  
something my mother always did for him  
in the decades after he gave up his trusty typewriter.  
So he arrived at the coffee shop  
vulnerable and exasperated in that way  
that only technology can make us feel:  
like slow, dependent children — and  
sorely missing my mother.

Like the barista who didn't blink  
when he ordered his coffee the wrong way,  
when he said *la-TAY* instead of *LAH-tey*,

who took his order from our table  
as if we were in a sit-down restaurant  
and she was our waiter,  
who smiled the whole time  
like a halo of warm light,  
softening the space everywhere,  
who made him feel like he belonged.

You cannot know  
how those small gestures matter,  
unless you are him,  
unless you are me, watching,  
unless you see his shoulders relax,  
in that way that we can do only  
when we feel safe and seen enough  
to let go,

and his eyes dampen,  
the tiny liquid pools held in at the rims,  
barely noticeable, as he smiles and says,  
*She always knew how to do this for me.*  
*For years she did this.*  
*She would have been 69 today. How I miss her.*

-- [Siri Liv Myhrom](#)

*B*e kind to one another, tenderhearted  
-- Ephesians 4:32



Recall a moment when you were the recipient of an unexpected gesture of kindness. What did the experience evoke in you?

How might you be more attentive in your daily life to how you can be an instrument of kindness, love, compassion? What might prevent you from seeing these opportunities?

## *Concluding Prayer*

May we carry into this day the mantra, "Be kind to one another, tenderhearted." Amen.