

Kindness-the Most Important Talent of All

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Kylie Cran stared at her blank paper which was covered in erased doodles, starts of words, sentence fragments and eraser shavings. Her teacher, Mrs. Garcia had asked them to write three things about themselves: what they loved about themselves, what they wanted to change about themselves and why they mattered. Kylie had first put that she mattered because she excelled at math and science, but that didn't change the world very much. Then, she had put that she was an amazing cello player, but then she remembered Mom was making her retake the intermediate class. Finally, she'd put because she was silly, but she was not so sure about that anymore. She knew what she wanted to change about herself-she was trying to get better at always being honest, she also knew that she admired herself being a gifted photographer, but she just couldn't figure out why she truly mattered to the world. Just then it hit her- *dance!*

"I'm an awesome dancer," Kylie thought, *"I've only been taking for two years and I'm already on pointe!"*

But before she had the chance to scribble this down, the bell rang, and the half school day was over.

"Thank you, Mrs. Garcia! Have a great day!" Kylie called as she walked out the door

“You’re so welcome Kylie, thanks for saying thank you!”

Kylie grinned as she walked towards her house-she thought she’d made Mrs. Garcia pretty happy, and Kylie always strived to brighten someone’s day, even just a little bit, and make the world just a slightly kinder place.

“Love you Mom, thanks for driving me!” Kylie exclaimed as she jumped out of the car

“You’re welcome, Kylie, have a great time!”

Kylie sprinted towards the door to her dance teacher’s home, dawned her light pink mask, sanitized her hands and walked inside.

“Hello, Kylie! How are you?” Asked Kylie’s playful dance teacher

“Doing great, how are you, Mrs. Ashley?”

“Great, are you ready for dance? I think everyone’s here, so we can learn more of our routine today.” Mrs. Ashley replied

Kylie nodded and headed downstairs towards the dance studio.

“Hi Ella, hi Macey. What’s up?”

Macey just glared at her and walked away.

“Well, I tried. Kylie thought, Maybe I can talk to her next time, but I can still talk to Ella!”

“Well, I just got a new fish named Mr. Sam, and he eats like, I don’t know, five servings of fish food a day!” Ella laughed

Kylie smiled, “Fun, do you have any plans for fall break?”

“Um... yes! So, we’re going to visit North Dakota because we have a condo down there.” Ella said, hopping up and down

“Cool! My family and I are going camping in Midway.” Kylie added, “Oh, and by the way, I *love* your hair. It’s so pretty.”

Ella lit up, “Thanks! I just got a new haircut, from my Mom.”

Kylie nodded and found a place to stand at the bar, next to Laynie, her best friend.

“Nice job on your essay today,” Kylie told her.

“Thanks, I’m glad you’re here-and we’re friends. You just made my day.” Laynie relayed

Kylie was extremely glad to hear this. She loved to hear a verbal reply that she had been able to lift someone’s spirits.

The room quieted as Mrs. Ashley entered the room.

“Dancers, we’re going to move through our warmups very fast so we can practice our spins and then learn some more of our dance routine, okay?”

Everyone nodded.

When Mrs. Ashley had said they would do their warmups fast, she wasn’t kidding. Within ten minutes, they had done all five of their practices at the bar and Mrs. Ashley put them into groups to do Fouettés.

“Alright-I want you to do eight turns in a row and make your eighth a double-don't let your passe leg touch the ground, okay?”

Kylie’s face fell-she could barely do six Fouettés, let alone the double.

Mrs. Ashley started the music and Kylie started her Fouetté. She got to five spins before she lost her balance and had to start over.

By the end of dance Kylie felt terrible. She had messed up her Fouettés, mixed up the counts in her dance and done her tour jetes the wrong way.

She walked over to Laynie as they exited the dance studio.

“Hey Kylie.”

“What did you do for the Three Things About You project?” Kylie asked

“Well, I love that I’m really caring to my siblings, I want to become more outgoing and I matter because I’m really patient and I am a peacemaker. What about you?”

“I can’t figure out why I matter. I was going to put dance, but after today I’m not so sure it’s my crowning feature.”

“Kylie!” Laynie gave her a playful slap, “That’s so obvious! You matter because you're always talking to new people and giving compliments and being really kind to everyone-you matter because your mission in life is to be kind to everyone!”

This was perfect. Her kindness, service and compassion *were* the most important thing about Kylie, and in her opinion, it was one of most important things ever. No matter how things went at school, or cello, at dance or even with photography, Kylie *could* make sure she did her best to be *extra* kind to everyone, and that was a skill she would always choose to be great at.

Kylie smiled, “Thanks Laynie! That’s exactly what I needed.”

“You’re welcome but even still-you are an AMAZING dancer! Just keep trying, and remember, me, everyone else and even Mrs. Ashley slip up sometimes, and we can *all* be glad we’re not defined by our Fouettés!” Laynie laughed

The next day Kylie was busy finishing her Three Things assignment. She wrote:

1. I love that I am a gifted photographer because I can capture the beauty and gifts of the world around me, so people can feel joy when they remember it’s goodness.
2. I hope to become better at telling the truth because it is an important value in a good person.
3. I matter because I am kind and compassionate to everyone I meet and my literal life’s mission is to make the world a better place and brighten someone’s day, because we all matter, just because we are human beings, so we are all entitled to kind treatment and love.