

PDF - Lancaster - April 23, 2023 Message: “Small Seeds, Big Trees” - Rev. Wil Darcangelo

It's easy to see examples of people making big changes in the world. People we see as being more powerful or influential than we are instigating change or instilling comfort. Most of us feel pretty ineffectual at accomplishing the act of making a difference.

But there are often ways to make a difference we don't typically think about. Smaller ways with enormous implications. They are in the daily interactions we have with other people. Don't scoff at it just because it feels too simple or because you imagine it would be ineffective. Never underestimate something as simple as a smile directed toward a stranger. That's the same as walking past thousands of pennies on the sidewalk because you're waiting for a twenty.

When we look back on the people who have changed our lives, or helped us define our sense of self, the origins of those changes are usually just moments, and usually very brief. Sometimes they're given by people we've known for years or someone we happened to be in line behind at the grocery store. A single compliment or just the right word of encouragement given at just the right time.

I could name five, probably more, incredibly brief moments of my life that continue to impact me in positive ways to this day. Thoughts that sit with me still to which I turn for comfort when I doubt myself. For the most part, unless I've had an opportunity to tell them so, the people who gave me those brief moments of encouragement likely have no idea the decades of positive impact they have made on my life.

It's good news here because planting seeds is a work-smarter-not-harder concept. Just ask Johnny Appleseed. We don't have to arm wrestle change into anybody, or the world. Our job is not to cultivate an entire field to the point of harvest. It's only to plant one seed. Assume that if you've planted it on fertile ground, and with lots of manure to assist it, all shall be well. And, let's face it, there's plenty of manure here to go around. Give it permission through your action to become an excellent garden.

I think part of the reason we're hesitant to get involved as changemakers is because we see the task as being too big, too daunting. We are only one person. What difference can

one person make? And even when we believe that yes, one person can make a difference, for we see examples of it nearly every day, we don't think we'd be that person.

I invite you to take the pressure off of yourself a bit. There are already visionaries out there doing the big work. Of course they could use more, but not everyone has to operate on that level in order to help nudge our world toward a more loving future. We can best support the visionaries by remembering that our own small actions can and do have huge effects.

For this I'll let you in on a little secret: No matter how badly someone feels about themselves, their inner light is listening. Beneath the heavy cloak of this human vessel, who we really are is paying very close attention for anything which resonates with it. Light always knows light when it sees it. Trust that process. Believe it to be at play.

But we get confused. We over-think things. We doubt our power to affect change. We definitely doubt that it can be done easily, so we tend not to bother at all. We get self-conscious, uncomfortable. We stand at the soil waiting for the seed to sprout. We get impatient. We conclude ourselves to be a failure, foolish for staring at the dirt for so long. We retreat.

We don't know where to begin, what action to take first. But, as an example, we know there is power in song. We know that there is a force in music. And music is easier. So when in doubt, when you think you have nothing at your immediate disposal to do, sing. Hum. Whistle. Ring a bell. It's like vibrational air freshener. Science has shown that when we sing together as a group our heartbeats align. We can conclude there is a gift in this. A gift we give other people around us. And even when we don't sing, we know our hearts can hear each other, in the literal sense.

If your heart is electromagnetically "chatting" with the heart of a person walking down the sidewalk passing you in the opposite direction, what is it saying? Probably whatever you happen to be thinking and feeling at the moment. What do you find yourself thinking and feeling as you pass people on the street? Are you judging them on their clothes? Their bodies? Their smell? Their hair? Their strange reaction when you say hello to

them? Whatever it is, that is what you're sending them. And a part of them, if not multiple parts, are hearing you.

So, if your heart is a transmitter which is always in communication with its surroundings, what are you doing with that fact?

If our hearts, and perhaps even our individual consciousnesses, are communicating with one another, what should we have them say? Making a difference can be as easy as thinking or wishing well for someone to whom you may never even speak. Your heart will literally be projecting that idea to another heart, which is also listening for it.

Amid global fears of water and food shortages, increased visibility of bigotry, racism and hatred, enhanced awareness of sexual assault, and of course, a hostile political landscape, there is good news which falls to the sidebars because bad news travels faster than good. But the truth is, extreme poverty has fallen from 35% in 1987 to only 9.4% in 2017. Hunger is falling, child labor is on the decline. In fact, child labor has fallen over 40% just since 2000. The cost of food has fallen. Life expectancy has risen, child mortality is down. Teen births in the US are down by more than half in only the past ten years alone. In 1955, 45% of Americans smoked. Now it's only 23%. Homicide rates have fallen dramatically, violent crime in the US is going down, the global supply of nuclear weapons has rapidly reduced, more people in the world live in a democracy than ever before, more people are going to school for longer, literacy is up, access to the internet has increased, solar energy is getting cheaper. People are even getting taller.

A difference has been made in this world because people are awakening to new perspectives about their power and value. They are recognizing their light and sharing it. They are seeing the light in other people and helping them to reveal it.

You are not alone in your desire to improve, even save, this world for a new age. The wind is at our backs, never doubt it. Don't believe all the news you hear. They have an agenda, no matter what side of the aisle they're on. But I have one too. I want you to feel better. I want you to recognize that the good in this world is definitely expanding. Wake up. "Get woke," as they say. You'll see that the heart in us all beats to the rhythm of this earth and all those who walk upon it.