"I am only one. But still, I am one. I cannot do everything, but still I can do something. And because I cannot do everything, I will not refuse to do the something that I can do."

— Edward Everett Hale

An Act of Kindness for a Broken Heart...

My husband, Hanoch, and I wrote a book Acts of Kindness: How to Create a Kindness Revolution, which has generated much interest across America. This story was shared with us by an anonymous caller during a radio talk show in Chicago.

"Hi, Mommy, what are you doing?" asked Susie.

"I'm making a casserole for Mrs. Smith next door," said her mother.

"Why?" asked Susie, who was only six years old.

"Because Mrs. Smith is very sad; she lost her daughter and she has a broken heart. We need to take care of her for a little while."

"Why, Mommy?"

"You see, Susie, when someone is very, very sad, they have trouble doing the little things like making dinner or other chores. Because we're part of a community and Mrs. Smith is our neighbor, we need to do some things to help her. Mrs. Smith won't ever be able to talk with her daughter or hug her or do all those wonderful things that mommies and daughters do together. You are a very smart girl, Susie; maybe you'll think of some way to help take care of Mrs. Smith."

Susie thought seriously about this challenge and how she could do her part in caring for Mrs. Smith. A few minutes later, Susie knocked on her door. After a few moments Mrs. Smith answered the knock with a "Hi, Susie."

Susie noticed that Mrs. Smith didn't have that familiar musical quality about her voice when she greeted someone.
Mrs. Smith also looked as though she might have been crying because her eyes were watery and swollen. "What can I do for you, Susie?" asked Mrs. Smith.

"My mommy says that you lost your daughter and you're very, very sad with a broken heart." Susie held her hand out shyly. In it was a Band-Aid. "This is for your broken heart." Mrs. Smith gasped, choking back her tears. She knelt down and hugged Susie. Through her tears she said, "Thank you, darling girl, this will help a lot."

Mrs. Smith accepted Susie's act of kindness and took it one step further. She purchased a small key ring with a plexiglass picture frame -- the ones designed to carry keys and proudly display a family portrait at the same time. Mrs. Smith placed Susie's Band-Aid in the frame to remind herself to heal a little every time she sees it. She wisely knows that healing takes time and support. It has become her symbol for healing, while not forgetting the joy and love she experienced with her daughter.

Meladee McCarty
A 2nd Helping of Chicken Soup for the Soul®

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