

Kindness, fallacies in perception

Written by Tekeste Asghedom
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I am inherently kind, caring and considerate Mihret told her friend Meaza. I enjoy very much if I do something within my capacity to set out on helping fellow human beings. My tears simply roll down over my cheeks when I see people in difficulties. I enjoy whenever I extend a small part of what I am capable of, and see people regaining up their morale. I feel pathetic; however, when in some cases my kindness is interpreted as weakness. Observant as I am, I can sense when, at times, people's advances for help are simply deceitful. Nevertheless I can not stop in showing my kindness and would still not mind in helping them. Simply it is embedded in me. I would say to myself that is part of human nature.

Meaza was rather furious. I know Mihret you are so kind but how many of them that you have helped have gently reciprocated to your good deeds. I am sure none of them. Perhaps some strangers might have done something good for you. I am rather allergic to kindness said, Meaza, because people will merely look down upon you as someone weak. Kindness is virtue but over kindness is weakness, as they say. It was such a coincidence when John, their work mate, joined the discussion as both ladies offered him a seat. What is going on, he hastily asked them, you seem to be so much deep in some thoughts? You are right said Meaza. It happened that we are discussing about kindness. Everybody in our work places and all our friends know that Mihret is pitifully so kind and I am advising her to change her character to the contrary. Well as it happens in most cases, and as far as I am concerned, continued Meaza, if one is so kind many of them would take one as inferior.

I could not tolerate such misconception on me. So why would Mihret be so generous. I would love if she could make a 'U' turn and be tough. Mihret has to shed off her kindness and be seriously a changed person.

I would agree with you, Meaza, said John just starting off to offer his idea on the topic, when Ibrahim joined them around the table. I feel it is good to be serious and show one's authority. . Otherwise people would not realize your worth if you are so kind. I specially detest being kind to women. I believe they like a tough person. Isn't it Mihret? John asked.

Ibrahim was trying to catch up with the discussion and he opted to listen and wait patiently rather than interfering in alacrity. Meaza seemed to enjoy the standpoint of John when she said, "Yes a man has to be tough and serious especially as far as women are concerned. However, she continued women have also to be tough. We have to remember that we call tough women as tigresses. If a man is so kind women would simply call him "womanish".

I think we have to see things in different angle Mihret said. I believe to be tough and to be Kind are two different ideas. I would agree that on occasions one has to be tough especially if one is to discipline the young or someone who is rather irresponsible. On the other hand there are helpless people be it pathologically or because of some psychological or psychiatric problems. In principle people have to face the challenges of nature in its many aspects independently. Yet some seem to have relinquished their hopes and they will approach you for some assistance. I

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would not go beyond my limits, but I will do anything I can to extend my assistance. It gives me great pleasure when I see someone having a little change of morale because of my meager assistance. Some may be conditioned in becoming overly dependent on some body. However one of the noble tasks of someone who has understood their situation should try to help those who appear to be dependent, however, with the motive of making them eventually independent.

Ibrahim seemed to have enjoyed this interesting discourse and felt that it is his turn to put forward his modest idea.

This interesting brain storming is not an issue of who is right or wrong. Everyone's idea is inspirational as you view the issue in different dimension. Well as for me, said Ibrahim, I would try to express my idea in support of Mihret's argument. Being nice to people does not necessarily mean that one is weak. In fact it has a strong personality trait. It is a skill that can read people through and understand their psychological need.

It is easy to be rude and treat people with disrespect. It is easy to put walls of anger and judgment to protect yourself from being taken advantage of. Manifesting such behaviors, however, does not make one strong and successful as many believe to be so. People who are rude and arrogant are simply those who do not possess confidence on themselves. They have a tasteless appearance by being brash. Being rude is easy for it does not take any effort and is a sign of weakness and insecurity. Kindness shows great self-discipline and strong self esteem. Being kind is not always easy and takes effort and concentration. Kindness is a sign of a person who has done a lot of personal work and has come to a great self-understanding and wisdom. Kindness is a sign of strength. What we have to understand however is that in pure kindness one would not expect any kind reciprocation. There is the sweetness in giving than in receiving. It is a noble mission that satisfies one's own ego.

Some few Quotations will substantiate what I am talking about said, Ibrahim. Plato said *"Be kind, for everyone you meet is fighting a hard battle."*

"No act of kindness, no matter how small, is ever wasted." Expressed AESOP, in one of his

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fables

Tenderness and kindness are not signs of weakness and despair but manifestations of strength and resolution." Emphasized ~Kahlil Gibran

This Chinese proverb has a thoughtful message "Kindness is more binding than a loan". Therefore we have not to mistake Mihret's kindness and that of any other kind person, for that matter, as weakness but of great strength concluded Ibrahim

I would not acclaim kind people for they are simply meek. Instead I will have a high opinion on those who are assertive and tough, said John rather nervously. As we can observe there seems no respect for those who are kind. People will follow you when you show them serious face or even flex your muscles. So do me, rather roared Meaza. I feel sorry for my friend Mihret and any of her likes. I would keep on being strong instead of being portrayed as kind and lacking powers. How could I show my power unless I am harsh? Mihret radiated her modest smile and she said, having a gleam in her eyes, "I feel very much empowered by Ibrahim's comments. I believe there is more power in the compassionate and generous than in the heartless and the tightfisted. I will cherish my kindness as I feel it is a special gift nature has bestowed upon me and that of others too. Indeed added Ibrahim, it is only through kindness that one can change the world. Everyone has the liberty to pursue one's ideas. But I will always pay tribute to those who value the art of kindness. In any case this topic will remain not an issue of argument but a continuous thought of discussion.