

In “**Twelve Steps to a Compassionate Life**”, Karen Armstrong writes that “*one small act of kindness can turn a life around.*” Jack London explains why in “**White Fang**”, a story about a wolf-dog, published in 1906. He writes that “*Human kindness*” is the “*sun shining*”, which helps us flourish “*like a flower planted in good soil.*”

Naomi Shihab Nye observes, in the poem “Kindness” (one of the poems in in “**Words Under the Words: Selected Poems**”) that “*it is only kindness that makes sense anymore....*”

In the commencement address to the 2013 graduating class of Syracuse University’s College of Arts and Sciences , the writer George Saunders tells his audience:

*It’s a little facile, maybe, and certainly hard to implement, but I’d say, as a goal in life, you could do worse than: Try to be kinder.*



Sunset, Coimbatore — photograph by the Bibliophile

Guy Stagg narrates, in **“The Crossway”**, his pilgrimage-walk from Canterbury (the UK) to Jerusalem — a walk (probably about 5000 kms) he set off on trying to recover from a nervous breakdown when he was about 23 years young. Towards the end, we read what is probably the main illumination from his pilgrimage : *“In the end, the kindness was all that mattered.”*

In his 1865 novel, **“Our Mutual Friend”**, we read Charles Dickens on the spirit of kindness — it is having *“a heart that never hardens, and a temper that never tires, and a touch that never hurts....”*

Peace ☐

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