

Smile (and give/get the rewards)



A concept as old as the human mouth.

Spreading of the lips, exposing of the teeth, and raising of the cheeks causes the infamous Smile.

It is amazing the power behind such a simple tool that each of us are born with and can utilize at a moment's thought.

I sometimes think of myself as an old western gun slinger, walking bold leg'd down the dusty old street. A stranger is approaching in the

distance. Their gun on their hip, the nasty old frown staring me down and we approach. Just as I feel the tension rise and the person's eyes are close enough to see me, I reach for my smile and whip 'er out. *bang* Right in the kisser.

The gun slinging stranger becomes a non-stranger, they move their hand away from their hip and crack a smile back. We pass each other peacefully and now with a mini-bond that may come in handy someday.

This act plays out daily in my dealings with people on the street. No matter how tense, reserved, or walled off the other person seems as they pass me, I make that attempt to throw a smile back. True, many times they look down at their cell phone, look the other way (as though something interesting has just mysteriously happened) or just plain ignore me altogether. But, there are many other times where a frown becomes a smile, an unknown person becomes known, and those precious 1.5 seconds morph into a reward, for both of us.



Smiles come in other forms as well. Handing the homeless some of your stash, giving a compliment to the cashier in the checkout line, acknowledging a co-worker on the hard work they provide. In all these cases, a shot of pleasure shoots up your spine and the benefit is immediate. I can tell you that a frequent response I receive from recipients behind cash registers is "thank you, you broke up my day". i.e. they (for a short moment) felt as though they were being recognized as an important person, instead of them/us.

My heart beams each time I see smiles appear in our society. From seeing a post today about a dry cleaner doing outfits for free for people looking for jobs, to readers sharing their positive

quote/thoughts and allow others to bask in the light of knowledge/wisdom to handle the stresses of the day.

I remember reading one time about a famous photographer who said you need to only look at your view from different angles to change your perspective. He was in the middle of a war zone, carnage and depression everywhere, he found himself being pulled into the default mission of the media to focus/find the worst it had to offer. He forced himself to change his view and physically laid on the ground and put his face against it. It was then that he noticed (partially looking up) that the mini-flowers growing out of the grass (weeds?), looked beautiful when you looked up through their petals into the sunlight, how they glistened and shared the glow of life. Right in the middle of the 'bad things', there was a 'good thing' waiting to be found.



This is the approach I try to take each day, with each person in each moment. Though the circumstance may seem dreary and the person on the other end may seem unfriendly, coarse and grumpy, reaching out with your smile, piercing that veil of experience may yield you unexpected reward. The other person may also spread your gift to others and the world may change one pair of lips at a time.

Below are links to some of my doodles on this. Hope you enjoy.

And to YOU, I offer my virtual/text based smile. Please feel free to share it with others. *big smile to YOU*

8D...ave

Be Silly, Be Happy: <http://timeforyourmind.com/davesArt/tfymArtIndex-68.htm>

Smile: <http://timeforyourmind.com/davesArt/tfymArtIndex-578.htm>

Joy: <http://timeforyourmind.com/davesArt/tfymArtIndex-542.htm>