

Editorial Comment

THE POWER OF CHOICE: Reflections on the Bryant-Sheppard Tragedy

STEPHEN D'AMICO

When criminal charges were recently dropped against former Attorney General Michael Bryant, many of us paused to reflect again on that fateful night when bicycle courier Darcy Allan Sheppard prematurely lost his life.

One thing this unfortunate sequence of events did was remind us of just how powerfully our choices can affect the outcome of even the most difficult situations. We've all entertained "what if" thoughts regarding both Bryant's and Sheppard's actions, knowing that somewhere during those 28 seconds, the slightest change in either person's behaviour could have drastically altered the outcome.

There is an even subtler

dimension of meaning we can draw upon from our shared experience and understanding of the power of choice. This dimension includes all the subtle and normally unseen interactions between energy, intention, thoughts, and feelings, and how all these particular factors of human consciousness can, and often do, have a real influence on how our experience of reality unfolds.

To see this for ourselves, we need only recall those days when we are in a bad mood, feeling negative and full of judgment, pointing out how other people could be more present and kind. Things don't go well. People get in our way. Cut us off. And on and on it goes. At the same time, we can also recall enjoying

much better days, when we're in such a good mood that the same encounters with people become heart-warming opportunities to express our positivity through acts of kindness.

The difference, of course, is being in a positive and receptive frame of mind, as well as having an open heart. When we are in this state of being, we are actually coming from the best place within us, and what flows out of us are good vibrations and positive actions. These positive vibrations literally ripple out into reality, magically transforming the ongoing flow of our experiences, sometimes right before our eyes, although we are often unaware of this subtle effect.

In either case, everything

seems to fall into place, and even if it doesn't, we use these opportunities to be kind. We gladly hold the door open for the person coming up behind us, or we stop in our tracks to help a new mother with a stroller get on the bus. Or, we wait patiently for that cyclist or driver who, in the moment, has lost that essential flow that gives life its magical ease.

Deep down we all know this is the way things really work, at least in part. When things aren't going well, we also know how to turn it around. It is one of the oldest tricks in the book. Stop. Take a deep breath to relax. And try to go with the flow. Sure enough, everything starts unfolding more smoothly again.

If there is one final piece

of wisdom we can all take away from this tragedy, whether we're motorists, cyclists, or pedestrians, it is that when we're operating from the best part of ourselves, engaging the world with a positive overall attitude and openly attuned to whatever is unfolding in the moment, life is filled with magic, wonder, and charm. And that *is* Good News!



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Good News Toronto Presents: The Kindness Campaign

Most of us have heard about random acts of kindness. The Kindness Campaign is based on the same principle, except that your random act may be published in *Good News Toronto!* To participate, all you have to do is commit to performing one random act of kindness. Use the Kindness Card below when you do. Then email us a brief description of your feel-good deed. That's it!

Each month we will highlight random acts of kindness submitted by you. If you prefer to remain anonymous, we will use your initials only. Or you can use a fictitious name.

If your story is printed in our paper, you will receive a **FREE Good News Toronto T-Shirt** as a reminder of your random act of kindness!

Want to do something kind, but can't think of what to do?

You're in luck! This month's suggestion is to buy a small bouquet of flowers, or even a single flower, like a lily, daffodil, or daisy, and place it on someone's car or bike as a secret gift from the universe.

Be sure to include the Kindness Card with your

gift, so your recipient can pay it forward. This is just one suggestion to start spreading kindness. Use your imagination — and keep an eye out for opportunities that present themselves.

Remember, helping others makes your soul smile!

And it always feels better and lasts longer when you help a person you don't know.

So, let's make some good news together! Start spreading those positive vibes via random acts of kindness TODAY!



photo by Jason Prupas

KINDNESS CARD

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