



Power of Blessing, by Rachel Naomi Remen

We bless the life around us far more than we realize. Many simple, ordinary things that we do can affect those around us in profound ways: the unexpected phone call, the brief touch, the willingness to listen generously, the warm smile or wink of recognition. We can even bless total strangers and be blessed by them. Big messages come in small packages. All it may take to restore someone's trust in life may be returning a lost earring or a dropped glove. A woman once told me that she did not feel the need to reach out to those around her because she prayed every day. Surely, this was enough. But a prayer is about our relationship to God; a blessing is about our relationship to the spark of God in one another. God may not need our attention as badly as the person next to us on the bus or behind us on line in the supermarket. Everyone in the world matters, and so do their blessings. When we bless others, we offer them refuge from an indifferent world. The capacity to bless life is in everybody. The power of our blessing is not diminished by illness or age. On the contrary, our blessings become even more powerful as we grow older. They have survived the buffeting of our experience. We may have traveled a long, hard road to the place where we can remember once again who we are. That we have traveled and remembered gives hope to those we bless. Perhaps in time they too can remember this place beyond competition and struggle, this place where we belong to one another... I first learned to do this from people who were dying, people who had moved into a more authentic relationship with those around them because only that which is genuine still had meaning for them. These people had let go of the ways in which they had changed themselves to win approval, and so they made it safe for others to remove their masks as well. --Rachel Naomi Remen