

# People Are Born To Shine!

A newsletter rooted in the Christian faith created to inspire and support all people, irrespective of nationality, race, and religion.



## ACTS OF KINDNESS

EXCERPTS REPRINTED WITH PERMISSION.

# Your Favorite Acts of Kindness

*Can small acts of kindness change the world? Beliefnet users share their stories.*

Like ripples circling outward in a pond, individual acts of kindness, taken together, can have world-changing effects.



In our moment of terror these kind people sat and prayed with me for my husband, for my children and for my unborn baby. I thank God for them...

## *Coming to the Rescue*

On Christmas evening 1996, we were on our way home from my cousin's house. I was pregnant with my youngest daughter and my two older daughters at the time were 9 and 4. The weather was terrible, the snow was coming down fast and thick...The cars in front of us were swerving out of control, my husband trying to avoid the cars pressed on the brakes and went out of control also. Someone coming out of the toll booth at a higher rate of speed broadsided into the driver side of the car. We spun out of control and crashed into the highway divider.

My husband was unconscious. My older daughter was just staring blindly ahead of her. My heart stopped thinking she may be dead. People stopped to help us. My husband was taken to the hospital separately from us. I didn't know what happened or where they were taking him. My daughter was in shock. I was hysterical.

A family of Middle Eastern descent stopped their car to help us, when I realized that my younger child wasn't with us. In the chaos someone else had

## *In this issue*

### Screen Time and Sleep for Kids

Media use in the hour preceding bedtime impacts how kids sleep.

### Healthy Eating as You Age

Making healthy food choices is a smart thing to do—no matter how old you are!

### Curbing Our Plastic Obsession

Plastic bottles are usually made up of petrochemicals which take about 450 years to naturally break down in the environment.

### Advanced Safety Features for Your Car

Cutting-edge technology can keep you and your family safe.

[www.najicherfanfoundation.org](http://www.najicherfanfoundation.org)

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It's Cool  
to Be Kind

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stopped and had picked up my daughter and walked off with her. I started to yell for my baby, and the people that stopped to help us ran to get her. They brought her to me safely and held our hands until another ambulance could come for us.

In our moment of terror these kind people sat and prayed with me for my husband, for my children and for my unborn baby. I thank God for them. I think about them often and wish I could see them again some day so that I could properly thank them.

--Estelle

### Going the Extra Mile

One Friday, a client of ours was tearful because the strap that secures her leg brace had broken off. Her big fear is falling and the brace was not secured enough to prevent a fall. I made several calls but was unable to get the brace repaired or replaced in time for the weekend. I consulted with another employee to see what we could do. This employee has been going through many personal and medical problems of her own and the week had been very stressful for her. But when I explained our client's dilemma, this employee developed a sense of calm and devised a plan to help our client. What I witnessed next was nothing short of beautiful.

This employee, who was born with only one hand, proceeded to prepare the sewing machine and within the next hour had fixed the brace with a strap that was very secure. To watch her threading the needles, cutting the materials and positioning the brace was truly a labor of love. This employee understands all too well what it is like to live with a handicap. She could have said we'll take care of it next week, but she forgot about her own troubles and ministered to this client.

I was a witness to a selfless act and true kindness. We all felt blessed that day and this client went home secure in the knowledge that she is not alone, but part of a family that cares for her.

--Joyce Bennett

### Listening to Each Others' Stories

The tolerance, love and kindness I have witnessed and received on a continual basis over the last six years of my life has come from the strangest place. I found this place when I was on the verge of suicide; I hated myself, my life and the whole human race. I thought there was no loving kindness to be found anywhere in the world. I entered a room full of strangers and listened to their stories. I am consistently amazed by the generosity I receive from people I have just met there. I found hope for a better life. These wonderful people loved me until I learned to love myself. A few of these strangers have become my closest friends.

I am not unique in my discovery. Everyday, in thousands upon thousands of locations world wide, people gather to help one another. There are lawyers, waitresses, doctors and janitors. There are Catholics, Baptists, Buddhists and agnostics. There are no dues or fees for membership. No political or religious affiliations. Every person is welcomed with open arms and hearts.

This kindness, love, generosity is available to everyone who seeks it out. I found it through a Twelve Step program.

--Stephanie

Source: [beliefnet.com](http://beliefnet.com)

Confess your sins  
to each other  
And pray for  
each other  
So that you  
may be healed.  
The prayer of a  
righteous man  
Is powerful and  
effective.

~ James 5:16

Prayer Corner

# Bedtime Media Use Linked to Less Sleep in Children Who Struggle to Self-regulate Behavior

According to a study from the Arizona State University Department of Psychology, media use in the hour preceding bedtime impacts how kids sleep, especially children who struggle to self-regulate their behavior. Frequent media use before bed in these children predicted later bedtimes and less sleep.

Among kids who used the same amount of media in the hour before bed, the study found differences that were explained by a personality characteristic called effortful control. Kids who score low on measures of effortful control are the ones who struggle to wait to unwrap a present or are easily distracted. There was a strong association between media use in the hour before bed and when these kids went to sleep and how long they slept. Media use before bed was not associated with the sleep of kids who scored high on measures of effortful control.

The research team spent a week following 547 children, aged 7-9 years. The participant

group was socioeconomically diverse and lived in rural and urban areas. The parents kept daily diaries that tracked the children's media use and sleep patterns. They also completed a survey that asked about their children's temperament, including their ability to self-regulate behavior. For the entire week, the children wore specialized wrist watches called actigraphs that tracked their movement and also ambient light. The actigraph data gave the research team detailed information about when and how long the children slept.

The children slept an average of 8 hours a night and used media before bed for an average of 5 nights during the study week. Children who did not use media before bed during the study week slept 23 minutes more and went to bed 34 minutes earlier than children who used media most nights during the study week.

Media use was generally associated with a shorter sleep duration, but this effect was most pronounced in children with low effortful control. The impact of media on sleep was also an average affect, meaning that it reflects habitual media use rather than occasionally staying up late to watch a movie.

Children with low effortful control might struggle with switching

their attention from watching media before bed to calming down and falling asleep. But because effortful control is a personality characteristic, it is more difficult to change.

Instead of parents wondering how to help their child better regulate their behavior, they can try to focus on creating more consistent sleep and media use schedules.



For some children,  
screen time before bed  
translates to less sleep.

Source: [sciencedaily.com](http://sciencedaily.com)

## NUTRITION/HEALTHY LIVING

# Choosing Healthy Meals As You Get Older

Making healthy food choices is a smart thing to do—no matter how old you are! Your body changes through your 60s, 70s, 80s, and beyond. Food provides nutrients you need as you age. Use these tips to choose foods and beverages for better health at each stage of life.

## DRINK PLENTY OF LIQUIDS

With age, you may lose some of your sense of thirst. Drink water often. Low-fat or fat-free milk or 100% juice also helps you stay hydrated. Limit beverages that have lots of added sugars or salt.

## MAKE EATING A SOCIAL EVENT

Meals are more enjoyable when you eat with others. Invite a friend to join you or take part in a potluck at least twice a week. A senior center or place of worship may offer meals that are shared with others. There are many ways to make mealtimes pleasing.

## PLAN HEALTHY MEALS

Get advice on what to eat, how much to eat, and which foods to choose. Find sensible, flexible ways to choose and prepare tasty meals so you can eat foods you need.

## KNOW HOW MUCH TO EAT

Learn to recognize how much to eat so you can control portion size. When eating out, pack part of your meal to eat later. One restaurant dish might be enough for two meals or more.

## VARY YOUR VEGETABLES

Include a variety of different colored, flavored, and textured vegetables. Most vegetables are a low-calorie source of nutrients. Vegetables are also a good source of fiber.



## EAT FOR YOUR TEETH AND GUMS

Many people find that their teeth and gums change as they age. People with dental problems sometimes find it hard to chew fruits, vegetables, or meats. Don't miss out on needed nutrients! Eating softer foods can help.

## USE HERBS AND SPICES

Foods may seem to lose their flavor as you age. If favorite dishes taste different, it may not be the cook! Maybe your sense of smell, sense of taste, or both have changed. Medicines may also change how foods taste. Add flavor to your meals with herbs and spices.

## KEEP FOOD SAFE

Don't take a chance with your health. A food-related illness can be life threatening for an older person. Throw out food that might not be safe. Avoid certain foods that are always risky for an older person, such as unpasteurized dairy foods.

## READ THE NUTRITION FACTS LABEL

Make the right choices when buying food. Pay attention to important nutrients to know as well as calories, fats, sodium, and the rest of the Nutrition Facts label.

## ASK YOUR DOCTOR ABOUT VITAMINS OR SUPPLEMENTS

Food is the best way to get nutrients you need. Should you take vitamins or other pills or powders with herbs and minerals? These are called dietary supplements. Your doctor will know if you need them.

Source: [nia.nih.gov](http://nia.nih.gov)

# Our Plastic Obsession (And How To Curb It)



Our society is chained and bound to plastic. Take a look around you right at this moment. There's probably a package containing your household cleaning product or a container used to store your food. No matter the product, we can't seem to escape the use of plastic. And let's face it, it will be around for a long, long time. Plastic bottles are usually made up of petrochemicals which take about 450 years to naturally break down in the environment. Our households can no longer withstand the magnitude, so the synthetic material has seeped into our oceans and ecosystems. Despite our best efforts, only 9 percent of materials destined for recycling make it while the remainder ends up in landfills. While it's true that some of those plastics end up being recycled, far more of it does not. In fact, the Great Pacific Garbage Patch, a floating conglomeration of microplastics, is one of many floating islands in the oceans of our planet.

But alas, we are not powerless. Many nations around the globe are taking measures to cut back on single-use plastic by implementing laws and adopting recycling systems that greatly benefit society as a whole. In 2016, France took a groundbreaking stance when it became the first country in the world to ban the use of plastic dinnerware. Compostable alternatives (some edible) will take its place. Norway adopted an incentive-based recycling system, whereby consumers pay a deposit on every plastic bottle purchased which can later be redeemed when returned to a recycling machine. The UK is said to also be flirting with the idea.

Awareness and alarming statistics have driven even those who are not of the green persuasion to search for alternatives to our addiction to plastic. Usher in biodegradable plastics. A modern take on our conventional plastic use, biodegradable plastics are produced as a way to break down in the environment more quickly. It's worth mentioning that biodegradable plastic does not necessarily mean it is constructed of bio material. Often, these types of plastics are produced using some amount of oil, much like conventional plastic. The major difference between the two is the breakdown process, for which microorganisms play a role. The environment and erosion are key components in the decomposition process of biodegradable materials and therefore seem a much more attractively green option.

## WHAT'S THE BEST SOLUTION?

Plastic, whether sent to landfills or burned, is horrible for the environment. The focus should be on using alternatives to conventional plastic. Biodegradable in its true form is the best solution. Creating awareness through proper recycling programs (ones that actually take biodegradable materials to their final resting place) is certainly a key component. Consumers also have a lot of buying power these days. Reaching out to brands they care about and making a passionate plea for such companies to rethink their green commitment could also make a major dent in curbing our dependence on plastic.

Source: [gogreen.org](http://gogreen.org)

## ROAD SAFETY

# Electronic Guardian Angels: Advanced Safety Features for Your Car



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Experts agree that your first and best line of defense when driving is to be alert and aware of your surroundings. But in the real world, where distractions and bad weather can conspire against you, it helps to have some backup.

Fortunately, automakers have been hard at work on cutting-edge technology that can keep you and your family safe. Some of these features can even intervene to keep you from driving off the road or into another vehicle. Think of them as an electronic guardian angel.

Here is a list of the most advanced safety features available on the road today.

Source: [beliefnet.com](http://beliefnet.com)

## LANE DEPARTURE WARNING & PREVENTION

Have you ever reached for something in the car only to find that you've veered from your lane once you look back up? Lane Departure Warning systems use a camera to look ahead and keep track of where your vehicle is in relation to lane markings. If you veer too close without using your turn signal or without deliberately turning the wheel, the system will alert you.

## BLIND SPOT DETECTION & PREVENTION

You can't avoid what you can't see. Blind Spot Detection systems use radar sensors to detect cars that are either in your blind spot or that are approaching very quickly. Alerts generally include some kind of warning light on or near the side-view mirrors.

## COLLISION MITIGATION

Collision Mitigation systems use a combination of cameras, lasers, and radar to watch out for obstacles ahead. If a collision is imminent, the system will alert the driver. And if the driver fails to react to the warning, some systems can even apply the brakes to either avoid the accident entirely or to at least minimize the severity of the hit. Collision Mitigation systems are not foolproof, though. It takes a moment or two for the sensors to detect new obstacles and sometimes rain or snow can confuse the sensors and temporarily cause the system to turn off.

## DROWSINESS ALERT

Some of the most deadly accidents are caused by drivers who fall asleep at the wheel. If a car leaves the pavement at high speeds, it's at much higher risk for a dangerous rollover. If you're feeling drowsy, the best thing to do is pull over and get the rest that your body needs. To help you know when enough is enough, some automakers have developed systems that watch out for drowsiness and then alert the driver.

## ELECTRONIC STABILITY CONTROL (ESC)

ESC systems use a variety of sensors to compare where the driver wants the vehicle to go and where the vehicle is actually going. If the vehicle is starting to skid out of control, the ESC system steps in and carefully activates one or more brakes to halt the skid and keep the vehicle in control.

## NIGHT VISION

If you've ever driven down a deserted road at night, you know that surprises just beyond the reach of your headlights can appear when you least expect them. Some cars feature Night Vision systems, similar to what the military uses for nighttime combat missions. These devices use an infrared camera to look far down the road and display large objects with great clarity. Many of these systems can even detect and highlight human forms, helping you to avoid that jogger or bicyclist exercising alongside the road.

## MYKEY

It's intended to keep teen drivers safe and lets you assign separate keys for each driver in your household. Each key can be coded to enforce specific driving restrictions. If you want to keep your teen from driving too fast or from getting distracted, you can set a maximum speed for the car and a maximum volume for the audio system.

## AUTO HIGH BEAM

Most people say that they forget to switch on their brights or that they're afraid that they may blind other drivers. Whatever the case may be; relying on your low beams in some situations can be dangerous because you won't have enough time to see and react to obstacles. A new safety system can automatically switch on your high beams when conditions allow. It uses a special camera to watch out for the headlights and brake lights of other vehicles, ensuring that you've got the best possible visibility without having to worry about blinding other motorists.

## PEDESTRIAN DETECTION

Pedestrians have traditionally been very difficult to detect by radar or laser, so the latest technology uses a camera to look around for people much like a human driver would. The system uses special software to identify pedestrians based on their shape and movements and then keep track of them until the car passes.

# The Favorite

*As I have loved you, so you must love one another.*

**John 13:34**

My husband's brother lives about 1,200 miles away in the mountains of Colorado. Despite the distance, Gerrits has always been a beloved family member because of his great sense of humor and kind heart. As long as I can remember, however, his siblings have good-naturedly joked about his favored status in their mother's eyes. Several years ago, they even presented him with a T-shirt sporting the words, "I'm Mom's Favorite." While we all enjoyed the silliness of our siblings, true favoritism is no joking matter.

In Genesis 37, we read about Jacob who gave his son Joseph an ornate coat—an indication to his other children that Joseph was special (v. 3). Without a hint of subtlety, the coat's message shouted: "Joseph is my favorite son."

Displaying favoritism can be crippling in a family. Jacob's mother, Rebekah, had favored him over her son Esau, leading to conflict between the two brothers (25:28). The dysfunction was perpetuated when Jacob favored his wife Rachel (Joseph's mother) over his wife Leah, creating discord and heartache (29:30–31). No doubt this pattern was the unhealthy basis for Joseph's brothers to despise their younger brother, even plotting his murder (37:18).

When it comes to our relationships, we may sometimes find it tricky to be objective. But our goal must be to treat everyone without favoritism and to love every person in our life as our Father loves us (John 13:34).

—Cindy Hess Kasper

Source: [odb.org](http://odb.org)



## REFLECT & PRAY

*When have you experienced  
When have you struggled with  
showing favoritism? How is God  
helping you to treat everyone  
equally?*

*Loving God, as I interact with others  
help me to avoid showing unhealthy  
preferences. Help me to see others  
as You do and to treat everyone fairly  
and without favoritism.*

## Will You Further NCF's Work?

The Naji Cherfan Foundation was founded after the passing of the beloved Naji Cherfan. Our main goal is to praise the Lord through community work.

The foundation works to improve the quality of life of the poorest of the poor of all ages, both those who are healthy and those with health problems, and those with brain injury of any kind, resulting from accident, stroke, etc, while promoting Christian values.

If you like the work NCF is doing and wish to participate, we invite you to become a member of our Board. The goal is to share our inspiration and activities in your country. Please contact us for more information at +961 (0)4 522221.

[info@najicherfanfoundation.org](mailto:info@najicherfanfoundation.org)

## Quotable!

“Grace is a power that comes in and transforms a moment to something better.”

—Caroline Myss

# How I Remember Naji...

Excerpt from *Virtual Patience*



## Chapter III (1999-2006)

### Virtual Notes

1. Denial. I was living and am still partly living in denial. I have finally come to realize that I needed to accept some facts in life. Nobody is perfect. This is a fact that I didn't accept. Maybe I am just realizing how deep and painful it was, getting over my accident. Would I have been able to be the person I am without it? Time. The time for me has come to put aside denial and start adapting to my life.
2. I learned to build correct principles and go by them and that if you believe in something, you must know why you believe.
3. Strong will and faith guided me throughout my recovery.
4. I need to protect myself from some of my thoughts. When I was a kid, I used an analogy on getting a positive by multiplying two negatives. Now I understand that if I respond positively to something negative, I will create positive energy.
5. Only those who have had a traumatic experience similar to mine can understand what I'm going through.
6. A problem I face after nine years of therapy and hard work is letting my obsessive thoughts control me. Although I have accomplished so much, I need to understand that there's much more to achieve. Each experience gives me a key to open a different door to all areas of my life. These keys are to be used carefully, not abused. We all have the potential to go forward with love. I was encouraged to have high self

esteem and I learned that maturity comes through experience.

7. We make such a big deal out of ourselves and the things we have. It's not always a bright sunny day. Sometimes we need to imitate nature. No one is perfect.
8. We'll always have misunderstandings. I have a positive attitude and look at the bright side of life by loving, working and playing.
9. In this life, we are born with nothing and when we die, we leave with nothing. We manage our own space and how we decide to live this life.
10. People come into your life for a reason. If people are meant to be together, true love unites them and God blesses them.
11. Fear not. Close the door to the current of fear and put it behind you.

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[www.facebook.com/najicherfanfoundation](http://www.facebook.com/najicherfanfoundation)

## People Are Born To Shine!

*People are Born To Shine* is an electronic newsletter owned by The Naji Cherfan Foundation focusing on spirituality and health. The objective of *People are Born To Shine* is to raise awareness among our readers on health challenges and disease prevention, while inspiring them to live a fuller, more abundant life guided by Christian values. This newsletter is dedicated to people of all ages, those who are healthy and those with health problems, and those with brain injury of any kind resulting from accident, stroke, etc.

The content has been carefully selected from internet sources considered reliable and accurate to bring you good news of health and spiritual well being. However The Naji Cherfan Foundation assumes no responsibility for inaccurate information. The NCF would like to recognize the devoted work of its volunteers, mainly Marianne Debs, Me. Kamal Rahal, Me. Harold Alvarez, Zeina Costantine, Joyce Abou Jaoude, Rita Kassis, Marleine Nassrany, Diala Ghostine Nassrany, Dima Rbeiz, Father Joseph Abdel Sater, Father Joseph Soueid, Reine Kassis, Nabil Khoury, Roland Khoury, Father Elia Chalhoub, Valéria de Proença, Athena and Christina Georgotas, Violette Nakhle, and all the field volunteers who are supporting NCF in spreading the words of Jesus through their institutions, churches, hospitals, establishments, etc.

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