

# 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.

# 22 Tiny Acts of Kindness You Can Do in the Middle of Your Day

When life gets overwhelming, when my Facebook feed is filled with negativity, or when someone does something that stings, I try to come back to simple kindnesses.

"How are you doing?"

"Good, good," I answered. "Nothing too new!"

It's my default response to a question we're asked all the time. My friend smiled and... paused. She didn't rush off, letting one of her kids pull her toward their car. She waited.

It probably lasted ONE second, and she may not even know she did it, but that heartbeat of comfortable silence made me realize that I wasn't altogether "good."

"Well, actually," I said. "It's been kind of a crazy week. Trenton broke his arm, my grandpa died, I found out I may or may not have Crohn's disease, and my husband is in China."

But this post isn't about how I was doing that day. It's about my friend's one-second pause, a simple, unplanned act of kindness that ended up being just what I needed.

When life gets overwhelming, when my Facebook feed is filled with negativity,



## *In this issue*

### **Air Pollution Puts Children at Higher Risk of Disease in Adulthood**

Exposure may cause higher rates of heart disease and other ailments in adulthood.

### **Double-Salt Fortification**

Iron deficiency remains one of the most important nutritional deficiencies in the world.

### **Opportunities to Green the Gray**

Expanding green spaces in urban areas can help protect local streams and rivers.

### **Simple Solutions to Make the Road Safer**

Some road designs lead drivers to take risks, but these problems have solutions.

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

KINDNESS continued on page 7

# Air Pollution Puts Children at Higher Risk of Disease in Adulthood



Children exposed to air pollution, such as wildfire smoke and car exhaust, for as little as one day may be doomed to higher rates of heart disease and other ailments in adulthood, according to a new Stanford-led study. The analysis, published in *Nature Scientific Reports*, is the first of its kind to investigate air pollution's effects at the single cell level and to simultaneously focus on both the cardiovascular and immune systems in children. It confirms previous research that bad air can alter gene regulation in a way that may impact long-term health -- a finding that could change the way medical experts and parents think about the air children breathe, and inform clinical interventions for those exposed to chronic elevated air pollution.

"I think this is compelling enough for a pediatrician to say that we have evidence air pollution causes changes in the immune and cardiovascular system associated not only with asthma and respiratory diseases, as has been shown before," said study lead author Mary Prunicki, director of air pollution and health research at Stanford's Sean N. Parker Center

for Allergy & Asthma Research. "It looks like even brief air pollution exposure can actually change the regulation and expression of children's genes and perhaps alter blood pressure, potentially laying the foundation for increased risk of disease later in life."

The researchers used a form of mass spectrometry to analyze immune system cells for the first time in a pollution study. The approach allowed for more sensitive measurements of up to 40 cell markers simultaneously, providing a more in-depth analysis of pollution exposure impacts than previously possible.

Among their findings: Exposure to fine particulate known as PM2.5, carbon monoxide and ozone over time is linked to increased methylation, an alteration of DNA molecules that can change their activity without changing their sequence. This change in gene expression may be passed down to future generations. The researchers also found that air pollution exposure correlates with an increase in monocytes, white blood cells that play a key role in the buildup of plaques in arteries, and could possibly predispose children to heart disease in adulthood. Future studies are needed to verify the long-term implications.

Hispanic children bear an unequal burden of health ailments, especially in California, where they are exposed to higher traffic-related pollution levels than non-Hispanic children. Among Hispanic adults, prevalence for uncontrolled hypertension is greater compared with other races and ethnicities in the U.S., making it all the more important to determine how air pollution will affect long-term health risks for Hispanic children.

Overall, respiratory diseases are killing more Americans each year, and rank as the second most common cause of deaths globally.

"This is everyone's problem," said study senior author Kari Nadeau, director of the Parker Center. "Nearly half of Americans and the vast majority of people around the world live in places with unhealthy air. Understanding and mitigating the impacts could save a lot of lives."

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

# Double-Salt Fortification

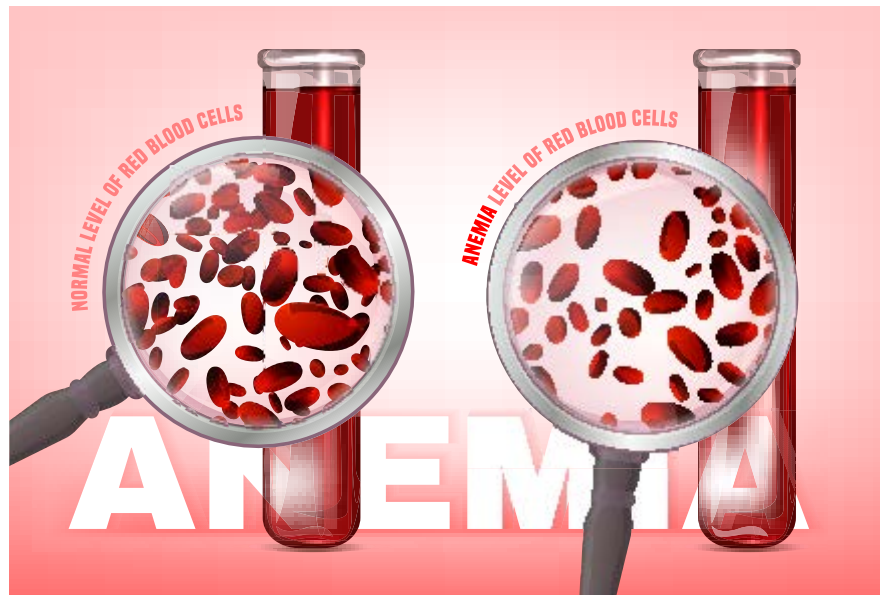
*Iron deficiency remains one of the most severe and important nutritional deficiencies in the world.*

The World Health Organization (WHO) has stated that “iron deficiency, and specifically iron deficiency anemia, remains one of the most severe and important nutritional deficiencies in the world today.” Among the negative health outcomes associated with iron deficiency and anemia are poor fetal and child brain development, poor child cognitive function, poor iodine utilization, poor pregnancy outcomes, and higher infant mortality. Women, children, and female adolescents in low- and middle-income countries, in particular, are at greatest risk for iron deficiency and resulting anemia.

**Could the additional fortification of iodized salt with iron be as effective in eradicating iron deficiency and iron deficiency anemia?**

Iodine fortified salt has been particularly successful because salt is universally consumed in predictable amounts by all population groups around the world. The question is could the additional fortification of iodized salt with iron be as effective in eradicating iron deficiency and iron deficiency anemia? Dr. Hurrell believes it “has the potential to be the universal global carrier for both iodine and iron provided that the technical challenges for the iron fortification of salt can be overcome.”

- ASN member Denish Moorthy et al.



assessed the challenges and opportunities that have been encountered by double-fortified salt programs in India, Argentina, Cote d'Ivoire, Kenya, Morocco, Nigeria, Philippines, and Sri Lanka. They concluded that double-fortified salt “offers a unique opportunity to leverage an almost universally consumed product.” Challenges, however, such as a lack of consumer acceptance and government backing, must be overcome.

- ASN member Richard Hurrell reviewed the potential of double-fortified salt to improve population iron status compared to fortified wheat flour, maize flour, rice, and milk. Because wheat flour fortification production and practices are the most advanced, he concluded that “in populations where there is adequate consumption of industrially milled wheat flour, wheat flour is technologically preferable for iron fortification.” In other populations, where milled flour is not regularly consumed, double-fortified salt has demonstrated potential for iron fortification
- ASN member Leila Larson et al. reviewed randomized efficacy studies as well as two effectiveness evaluations of double-fortified salt programs. Their findings demonstrate “the potential for double-fortified salts to improve iron status across several population groups.”
- Much work is needed for double-fortified salt to have a positive impact on global iron deficiency.

In their preface to the supplement, the Steering Group noted, “it is the hope of the Steering Group that this supplement will provide a comprehensive evidence base that can help policy makers in countries considering initiating double-fortified salt, so that they may make informed decisions for their national nutrition strategy.”

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

# Opportunities to Green the Gray

Communities should look for and evaluate opportunities to “green the gray”, especially when infrastructure projects will involve stormwater management. Green infrastructure practices can be a viable option for managing stormwater in highly urbanized areas where development density is desired and off site mitigation of stormwater runoff is not a preferred alternative. Green infrastructure practices can be integrated into existing features of the built environment, including streets, parking lots, and public recreational areas such as parks and sports complexes. Expanding the quantity and quality of green spaces, such as green streets, in urban areas is an important tool in protecting and restoring the health of local streams and rivers. By increasing the green areas in urban environments, stormwater runoff and stream channel erosion can be reduced, thus reducing the volume of pollutants, such as sediment, nitrogen and phosphorus, entering our waterways.

Infrastructure upgrades are necessary to maintain the social, economic and environmental health of a community and present a unique opportunity to integrate green stormwater elements into the gray - “Greening the Gray”. Implementing projects in public spaces provides additional benefits and gives communities the opportunity to showcase the aesthetic appeal of green infrastructure practices and provide a visual demonstration of how they can function. This real-life context allows residents, businesses, and local governments to experience the multiple benefits and values of green infrastructure practices including more walkable streets, traffic calming, green public spaces, shade, and enhanced foot traffic in retail areas. Communities can then use the experience gained from the design, installation and maintenance of green infrastructure projects to help tailor regulations and incentive programs to make green infrastructure easier to implement in the future.

## *When to consider the use of green infrastructure:*

- Repairing, resurfacing or replacing roadways and parking lots
- Repairing or replacing damaged sidewalks and curbs
- Upgrading or replacing utilities in the public right-of-way (e.g., sanitary sewer systems, storm sewer systems, drinking water supply lines)
- Redeveloping vacant or abandoned properties

EPA published Green Infrastructure Opportunities that Arise During Municipal Operations to show how integrating green infrastructure practices can enhance



retrofits and maintenance projects while also providing multiple community benefits. This document highlights approaches local government officials and municipal program managers in small to mid-size communities can use to incorporate green infrastructure components into work they are doing in public spaces. The guide demonstrates ways in which projects can be modified relatively easily and at a low cost recognizing that municipal resources can be limited. Local governments are in a unique leadership position to further green infrastructure within their communities. EPA hopes that by using this guide localities can begin to institutionalize the use of green infrastructure in their municipal operations.

*Source: epa.gov*



# Simple Solutions to Make the Road Safer

Some road designs lead drivers to take risks, but these problems have solutions.

NHTSA estimates that more than 36,000 people died in car crashes in the U.S. in 2019; that's a death roughly every 15 minutes. The agency also attributes 94 percent of crashes to human error. Some experts believe bad road design may have something to do with that. We spoke with several traffic engineers to find out which common street designs force drivers to take risks that lead to accidents and ways to fix them.

## LIMITED VISIBILITY

**The problem:** A lightly trafficked street intersects with a busy two-lane. The former has stop signs, but the latter does not, and people have parked their cars close to the intersection at every corner. A driver looking to turn right onto the busy street inches into the intersection, but the parked cars block his view of an oncoming car, leading to an angled crash.

**The solution:** Restrict people from parking within 25 feet of the corner to improve driver visibility.

## STREET WIDTH

**The problem:** A suburban street is lined with single-family homes. The speed limit is 25 mph, but the roadway is wide, so drivers feel comfortable going 35 mph. A child runs out into the road to chase a ball, and a driver is going too fast to stop in time.

**The solution:** Drivers on wide lanes surrounded by empty sidewalks are inclined to go fast, regardless of the posted speed limit. Reduce the lane width so drivers naturally go slower.

## SLIP LANES

**The problem:** A vehicle on an urban arterial wants to turn right using a gentle slip lane. Meanwhile, a man is crossing the slip lane, where there is a crosswalk but no stop sign or crossing light. The driver, focused on oncoming traffic to her left, doesn't see the pedestrian on her right and hits him.

**The solution:** Convert the slip lane into a traditional 90-degree right-hand turn or give the slip lane a tighter angle so drivers have to decelerate to use it.

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

LIKE OUR FACEBOOK

CLICK to join us for daily news and inspirational messages!



# Snow Muse

*He says to the snow, “Fall on the earth,”  
and to the rain shower, “Be a mighty  
downpour.” — Job 37:6*

Named for a tough blue-collar neighborhood in Cincinnati, Ohio, the grassroots musical group Over the Rhine sings about a transformation that took place each year in the city. “Whenever we’d get our first real snowfall of the year, it felt like something sacred was happening,” explains band co-founder Linford Detweiler. “Like a little bit of a fresh start. The city would slow down and grow quiet.”

If you’ve experienced a heavy snowfall, you understand how it can inspire a song. A magical quietness drapes the world as snow conceals grime and grayness. For a few moments, winter’s bleakness brightens, inviting our reflection and delight.

Elihu, the one friend of Job who may have had a helpful view of God, noted how creation commands our attention. “God’s voice thunders in marvelous ways,” he said (Job 37:5). “He says to the snow, ‘Fall on the earth,’ and to the rain shower, ‘Be a mighty downpour.’” Such splendor can interrupt our lives, demanding a sacred pause. “So that everyone he has made may know his work, he stops all people from their labor,” Elihu observed (vv. 6–7).

Nature sometimes seizes our attention in ways we don’t like. Regardless of what happens to us or what we observe around us, each moment—magnificent, menacing, or mundane—can inspire our worship. The poet’s heart within us craves the holy hush.

—Tim Gustafson

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



## REFLECT & PRAY

*What events or things motivate you to ponder God’s greatness and creativity? How can you experience His wonder in your ordinary moments today?*

*Father, help me to see Your hand in everything today. Give me a heart to appreciate Your amazing works.*

## 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!

“The greatest glory in living lies not in never falling, but in rising every time we fall.”

—Nelson Mandela

**KINDNESS continued from page 1**

or when someone does something that stings, I try to come back to simple kindnesses like the one my friend offered me.

I really believe that what we put out into the world comes back to us, perhaps because of some karma force that I can't explain, but also maybe just because when you DO good, you NOTICE good.

So if, by chance, you could use a boost, do some good. Do the kind of good that doesn't require research or planning, the kind that may take no more than 30 seconds out of your day. My guess is that in doing it, you'll find there's more kindness in the world than you thought.

## 22 Tiny Acts of Kindness

1. Reply to the person who sent a group email. So often group emails go unanswered because everyone assumes someone else has replied to the sender. Send a quick reply of thanks.
2. Hold the door for someone.
3. Let a parent with young kids in their cart go in front of you in the grocery line.
4. Say thank you to someone who made your life a bit better today. A group fitness instructor, your child or spouse, the neighbor who dropped a misdirected piece of mail off on your doorstep...
5. Send a thinking-of-you text.
6. Make eye contact with anyone who serves you. Cashiers, dry cleaners, baristas, receptionists, medical personnel, house cleaners, car washers, etc.
7. If you see one person taking a photo of someone else, offer to use their camera and take a photo of them together. (I love to do this when we're out exploring. It's such an easy gesture that people always appreciate.)
8. "Like" every photo in your Instagram feed. If you have an extra few minutes, leave sincere comments.
9. Bring in your neighbor's trash cans or newspaper. Or if you're cleaning out your cans, clean out theirs too.
10. Offer to hold a friend's baby.
11. Pay for the person behind you in a drive-through, or put extra coins in metered parking when you pull out.
12. When on the road, make a habit of giving other cars the right of way.
13. Leave a generous tip, or leave your change in a tip jar.
14. Send more photo texts to your parents. They like to see what you're up to.
15. Ask your friend an engaging question about herself. {16 conversation-promoting questions}
16. In the back page of a journal or in an app on your phone, make a list of things your friends and family members love. Does one of your closest friend always take Hot Tamales on a road trip? (Oops, that's me.) Does your sister love when the salted caramel hot chocolate comes back at Starbucks? (Oops, also me. ) File these observations away for future reference.
17. Pick up litter when you notice it and throw it away.
18. Read a book to your child.
19. For an act of kindness with a bit of whimsy, carry a stack of post-it notes in your purse and leave motivational love-notes in public places. "You are the kindest person I know. (Yes you.)" "You are beautiful inside and out."
20. Write a positive review for a book, product, or restaurant you enjoyed. It benefits the author or owner, and it benefits other consumers. #winwin
21. Use people's names when you talk to them. It feels good to be noticed and known.
22. Pause for an extra second in your exchanges with people. So often when you stay put just a moment longer than usual, you'll find people share something they needed to. (I owe my friend Melanie for teaching me this lesson.)

*The world is a kinder place when you are kind.*

Source: [ericalayne.co](http://ericalayne.co)

*Hail, Guardian of the Redeemer,  
Spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary.  
To you God entrusted  
his only Son;  
in you Mary placed her trust;  
with you Christ became man.  
Blessed Joseph, to us too,  
show yourself a father  
and guide us in the path of life.  
Obtain for us grace, mercy, and  
courage,  
and defend us from every evil.  
Amen.  
— POPE FRANCIS*

*Prayer Corner*

# How I Remember Naji...

Excerpt from *Virtual Patience*

Page 33: **Some of the hardest things:**

1. If it is really hard for me to be walking on the street and then trying to open a door, someone else will just open it for me. That is very nice of them, but then I feel and say to myself, sometimes out loud, What???? I speak six languages and you think I can't open the door. I have finally come to understand that people see only what they want to see.
2. Many times I even measured myself according to the evaluation of others. By trying to meet the expectations of others, I would always begin from zero. Letting too many people evaluate me and going to all these different centers was the hardest thing I experienced. By always seeking a shortcut to recovery, I cheated myself. I felt that someone, somewhere would provide me with the instant gratification key. Patience was my best bet. It sounds like it's so easy to say. Ok, it is easy, but I learned that anything at first should be done slowly and carefully.
3. I've also come to realize what I'm here for. We're not brought into this earth and then we just leave. No!! This accident showed me that I survived in order to tell others about my experience. Each one of us suffers differently, in order to learn about life and people. This is growth and evolution of the soul. Meeting the needs of others is something that this experience has made me think about.
4. A continuous drop of water can pierce a hole in a rock. This inspired me to keep on trying and never give up.
5. Getting too attached to something needs detachment.
6. Our conception of normal is relevant to the individual. Normal is however the individual defines it.



## People Are Born To Shine!

People are Born To Shine is a bi-monthly, 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, Dalia 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.

This issue is available in Arabic, English, Greek, Dutch, French, Spanish and Portuguese. The NCF management and staff are very grateful for the efforts of the chief editors who are volunteering to translate and edit the newsletter into several languages, namely: Isabelle Boghossian for the Greek language, Inês Pedregal for the Portuguese language, Myriam Salibi and Rita Abou Jaoudé for the French language, Professor Lydia and Ambassador Alejandro Diaz for the Spanish language, Roly Lakeman for the Dutch language, Lina Rizkallah and Rita Abou Jaoude for the Arabic language.

For FREE subscriptions, please sign up through our website: [www.najicherfanfoundation.org](http://www.najicherfanfoundation.org) or call +961 (0)4 522 221. ALL material on our website is downloadable at no cost.

Publisher: CCM Group; Editorial Consultants: George and Sana Cherfan and Kelley Nemitz; Reviewer: Sana Cherfan; Editor of the English Language: Kelley Nemitz, Layout: Art Department, CCM International, Greece and Rita Abou Jaoudé, Lebanon.

© 2021 by The Naji Cherfan Foundation. All rights including publication and distribution are reserved.