# Little Things Count Big Time

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If you've always thought that it's the small courtesies, considerations and kindnesses we show one another that make life bearable, you're not alone. I feel that way too.

What's more, recently I read about results from a study that suggests we're right on target with our thoughts. The research is about rudeness. Among other insights into human behavior, the findings show that when people encounter rude behavior—whether directed at them or others—they, in turn, often behave rudely.

Think about the calculated meanness of toxic co-workers who take out their anger and dissatisfaction with life on you. Recall each and every sarcastic remark, pointed insult, careless comment, thought-less action or effort to exclude you perpetrated by your boss or your colleagues. Do those actions make you want to reciprocate in kind? If so, now you can become a participant in this experiment that's ongoing each day of our lives.

Do you believe these discourtesies can tear down our self-esteem, wound us deeply and shatter our spirits? I do.

What's more, add to rude behavior the little big thing known as microaggressions. Study findings show that these overt or covert, intentional or unintentional, brief, and commonplace verbal and behavioral acts of hostility can cause a number of mental and physical health issues, such as depression, pain or fatigue.

Microaggressions are usually linked with racism and bias. But these assaults on our humanity can also harm our psyche and damage our physical, mental and emotional well-being, especially if these actions regularly happen in places and spaces where we live, work and play.

If you think of rudeness as an infectious disease, then it's easy to understand how quickly this behavior can spread to epidemic proportions. Interestingly, one way people cope with this contagion is to become desensitized to it. But once that happens, the disease strengthens by seemingly feeding on each abusive act and negative behavior.

The findings from this study were dismal, and the prognosis for recovery was just as discouraging. Once we are exposed to rudeness, the behavior remains internalized for a fairly lengthy period of time, according to the researchers.

Are rudeness and microaggression connected? I think so, especially because both behaviors have similar negative effects on mental health and the quality of our lives.

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