

The Additional Use of Your Life

Do you know a typical household item that has never gotten much recognition? A hair dryer. Yes, the typical hair dryer. Let's think about this...

Well, obviously, we purchase a hair dryer to blow dry our hair but once in the house we use it for so many things. Some of us use it to dry nail polish, remove stickers and price tags, unfreeze car doors, custom fit glasses, take candle wax off of tables, add gloss to cake frosting, dry spots on clothing, remove dust in tight spaces, remove crayon marks from walls, calm a fussy baby, warm the sheets before bed time on a cold night, and de-wrinkle plastic shower curtains. Now, I could go on but you get my point. The hair dryer was made for one use but can do even more than that. The air dryer can go beyond its daily use and extend good works to accomplish more.

You and I often live our "normal life." We come and go throughout a day doing what we have always done. We have not taken the time to think outside the routine. However, we could be extending our good to accomplish so much more. All we have to do is look around us and we will find we were made for other purposes. Just like a hair dryer, it may take additional time and/or energy (electricity), but it does not cost us that much. So what are some other things for which we could be used?

Just look around. I see visitor after visitor in an assisted living residence, using their visits to lift the spirits of the elderly while visiting their own family members. At Publix, a woman let me in line before her because she had more groceries than I did. A coworker went out of her way to help me with the financial reporting on a project when she did not have to. A friend's husband helped me locate the right landscaper. Something an acquaintance said on Facebook brightened my week. I ran into a nurse that took care of my father in the last several years of his life. She wept when we saw each other. She talked about the impact my father and family had on the health care center in which he lived. Well, after all, she never saw a family come daily to see their loved one. She recounted the times we brought the whole Thanksgiving (or whatever holiday) dinner and decorations to my father's room including the candelabra! My mother and I relived my father's glorious life in a few seconds when seeing Kim. I was in an accident which left me recuperating for months, a good friend came daily to help me bathe and dress.

These are just a few things that I have experienced. But I often think, most importantly, about whether I give to others. Does my life extend to others with goodwill and service? Sure, I work and take care of family like my life was meant to be lived. But do I have other purposes for which I am not living? What little energy this would take to touch another

person. The gift of time to mentor. The gift of energy to console someone who is grieving. The gift of money to buy food for the homeless. The gift of love to someone who may not have friends.

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe said, "Treat people as if they were what they ought to be and you help them to become what they are capable of being." Two key words: treat and help. The quote is written with the "subject" being you. You treat. You help.

So, what about you? Have people touched your life? Are you willing to live further than your life extends? Like the hair dryer, can you blow love, time, or energy towards someone who might need you? If only, you would respond, what might happen? How many lives could you touch?

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