

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

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Does my life make a difference? Thoughtful people periodically ask themselves questions like this.

The following story illustrates well that even the simplest efforts can matter:

A man was vacationing on a beautiful coast. One morning, very early, he was walking along the beach. In the distance he saw a lone figure dancing. Fascinated by this celebration of dawn, he moved closer. It was then that he realized that the young woman he saw was not dancing, but was picking objects up from the beach and tossing them out into the sea in one graceful movement. As he approached her, he saw that she was throwing starfish.

"Why in the world are you throwing starfish into the water?" he asked.

"If the starfish are still on the beach when the tide goes out and the sun rises higher in the sky, they will die," replied the young woman as she continued tossing them out to sea.

"That's ridiculous! There are thousands of miles of beach and millions of starfish. You can't really believe that what you're doing could possibly make a difference," the observer countered.

The young woman picked up another starfish, paused thoughtfully, and remarked as she tossed it out into the waves,

"It makes a difference to this one."