

Dear Young People,

The problem that most people have in their “search for happiness” is the focus on happiness being the final goal. The correct place to focus should be on the search. It is only through continual motion and growth, or “searching,” that happiness can be achieved, because joy is a process and not an end result. – James LeVoy Sorenson in “Finding the Better Way”

When we first “held hands” as teenagers, we had no idea of what lay in store for us so many years later. We were each given “gifts” – different gifts that helped mold each of us in a positive way. Now after being side by side for almost 50 years, with 42 of those years married, we can look back and count our blessings.

Twenty-seven years ago, Operation Smile began with an unforgettable trip to the Philippines to help children with cleft lips and cleft palates. On that initial trip about 40 kids needed surgery. That was impressive. However what was unforgettable was the vivid memory of over 250 children and their families that were turned away. No one was there to treat them and there were no plans for anyone to return.

As tears rolled down the cheek of the rejected children and their parents, we saw no option but to find a way to return. There was just no justice in what we were leaving behind. Our job was not done.

Reason leads to conclusion – it is emotion that leads to action.

Today through the faces of close to 150,000 children we have learned about the beauty of our world and its citizens. Our lives, the lives of our 5 children and their spouses and now our 11 grandchildren with two more on the way have been blessings and changed by that two week trip in 1982.

Just a few of these will resonate with you today and if not today then hopefully in the years to come –

- *In life there are no ordinary moments. Most of us never really recognize the most significant moments when they are happening – Dan Millman in “Way of the Peaceful Warrior”*
- *Love by definition is self-sacrifice. Love is a decision to make someone else’s problem your problem.*
- *The world is filled with good people – don’t believe what you see and hear on the “nightly news”*
- *Children are the only language that we all have in common. Medicine is a powerful vehicle; their transformation has the ability to unite nations and people*
- *Joy is what we uniquely feel when we know that what we did – we did without asking for anything in return.*

Enjoy the journey,



Kathy & Bill Magee
Co-founders