

## **Friends....**

One day, when I was a freshman in high school,  
I saw a kid from my class was walking home from school.  
His name was Kyle.  
It looked like he was carrying all of his books.  
I thought to myself, "Why would anyone bring home all his books on a Friday?  
He must really be a nerd."

I had quite a weekend planned (parties and a football game with my friend's tomorrow afternoon), so I shrugged my shoulders and went on.  
As I was walking, I saw a bunch of kids running toward him.  
They ran at him, knocking all his books out of his arms and tripping him so he landed in the dirt.  
His glasses went flying, and I saw them land in the grass about ten feet from him.  
He looked up and I saw this terrible sadness in his eyes

My heart went out to him. So, I jogged over to him as he crawled around looking for his glasses, and I saw a tear in his eye.  
As I handed him his glasses, I said, "Those guys are jerks. They really should get lives."  
He looked at me and said, "Hey thanks!"  
There was a big smile on his face.  
It was one of those smiles that showed real gratitude.  
I helped him pick up his books, and asked him where he lived.

As it turned out, he lived near me, so I asked him why I had never seen him before.  
He said he had gone to private school before now.  
I would have never hung out with a private school kid before.  
We talked all the way home, and I carried some of his books.  
He turned out to be a pretty cool kid.

I asked him if he wanted to play a little football with my friends  
He said yes.  
We hung out all weekend and the more I got to know Kyle, the more I liked him, and my friends thought the same of him.  
Monday morning came, and there was Kyle with the huge stack of books again.

I stopped him and said, "Boy, you are gonna really build some serious muscles with this pile of books everyday!"  
He just laughed and handed me half the books.

Over the next four years, Kyle and I became best friends..  
When we were seniors we began to think about college.  
Kyle decided on Georgetown and I was going to Duke.  
I knew that we would always be friends, that the miles would never be a problem.

He was going to be a doctor and I was going for business on a football scholarship.

Kyle was valedictorian of our class.

I teased him all the time about being a nerd.

He had to prepare a speech for graduation.

I was so glad it wasn't me having to get up there and speak

Graduation day, I saw Kyle.

He looked great.

He was one of those guys that really found himself during high school.

He filled out and actually looked good in glasses.

He had more dates than I had and all the girls loved him.

Boy, sometimes I was jealous! Today was one of those days.

I could see that he was nervous about his speech.

So, I smacked him on the back and said, "Hey, big guy, you'll be great!"

He looked at me with one of those looks (the really grateful one) and smiled.

" Thanks," he said.

As he started his speech, he cleared his throat, and began "Graduation is a time to thank those who helped you make it through those tough years. Your parents, your teachers, your siblings, maybe a coach...but mostly your friends...I am here to tell all of you that being a friend to someone is the best gift you can give them. I am going to tell you a story."

I just looked at my friend with disbelief as he told the story of the first day we met.

He had planned to kill himself over the weekend.

He talked of how he had cleaned out his locker so his Mom wouldn't have to do it later and was carrying his stuff home.

He looked hard at me and gave me a little smile.

"Thankfully, I was saved. My friend saved me from doing the unspeakable."

I heard the gasp go through the crowd as this handsome, popular boy told us all about his weakest moment.

I saw his Mom and dad looking at me and smiling that same grateful smile.

Not until that moment did I realize its depth.

Never underestimate the power of your actions.

With one small gesture you can change a person's life.

For better, or for worse!

God puts us all in each others lives to impact one another in some way.

Look for God in others.

"Friends are angels who lift us to our feet when our wings have trouble remembering how to fly."

There is no beginning or end.. Yesterday is history.

Tomorrow is a mystery.  
Today is a gift.

2,740 people everyday lose hope, give up, and take their own lives!  
Maybe, just one smile, a hello, can I help you, one simple little act of kindness each day,  
and we would put an end to the need for providing post-suicide family support.

How can you help ISP?

1. Money! Without the public's support, ISP can not continue to provide awareness, prevention and support to those that are in need now.
2. Tell others! Get the word out about the facts on suicide. When you know someone that might be suicidal, it is you that will make the difference between going to their next birthday party, or their funeral.
3. Support ISP! When we hold events it is very important that you show up to show your support for what we do. Suicidal thoughts are a community issue and by participating you are telling others you care if they live, or die!

<http://www.supportisp.org>