

Nelson Mandela: in Memorium

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Images of Good Will

Hard to see, touch, taste or feel, good will cannot be taken to the bank; or can it? Hundreds of children from the Netherlands have made cards and sent messages to the Syrian wounded in Ziv Hospital. Children write "we are thinking of you", "we hope you are better soon", "we wonder how it must be for you to be alone in a strange country".

Nelson Mandela said "No one is born hating another person because of the colour of his skin, or his background, or his religion. People must learn to hate, and if they can learn to hate, they can be taught to love, for love comes more naturally to the human heart than its opposite."

We have a room full of donations. It seems that people have thought of everything, we have clothes, shoes, underwear, books, balloons, toys.....we even have teddy bears. Some of these are brand new and we gratefully pass these on to the children on the ward. Some of them, however, are not new, they are worn, discoloured, a little dirty, perhaps even damaged. These teddies have been cuddled. They have probably been everywhere: in bed, in the bath, in the garden, to the dentist. What love must be in your heart for a stranger for you to send them your own teddy?

Innocent children love. They can teach us to love. It does come more naturally. It fuels giving, improves standards in healthcare, stimulates us to learn more so that we can do more, and use what we have to improve the lives of others. Arguably, in healthcare, we are closer to our patients than any professional is to another human being. If a child can give up their most precious possession so that it can be of comfort to another child, as adults we can find the resources we need to really care for each other - because, it does, indeed, come more naturally.