

BUCKET FILL-OSOPHY 101™

Weekly words of wisdom to keep your bucket filled

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Making a Difference

Bags fill buckets

Mary Helen Gensch, of Pierceton, Indiana attended the Michigan Reading Conference where I spoke several months ago.

Since then she's shared *Have You Filled a Bucket Today?* with her family and the teachers at her school.

She's filled buckets with kind words and friendly notes and writes, "One particular bucketfilling activity has been rather fun," and explains that she began to take extra bags to her wholesale grocery where customers must bag or box their purchases.

When she notices someone looking for boxes for their groceries, she offers them her extra bags and is rewarded with surprised smiles.

Her 14-year-old son was with her when she noticed a family in line that needed more boxes and told her son to take their extra bags to them.

"He thought I was crazy, but did it," she said. The mother smiled and thanked him.

Spotting Mary Helen in the parking lot, the mother came over and thanked her for the bags and told her how much her family appreciated it.

Her teenager said, "I get it, Mom. I get why you wanted to give. It feels good to help someone else."

His mother told him it was a kind gesture that didn't cost a thing.

As Mary Helen fills buckets with bags she receives smiles, something she feels are far too rare these days, and when people thank her, they fill her bucket.

"Smiles sure do add sunshine to the day," she said in the email she took the time to send us.

She filled our buckets, too.

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Bucket Nuggets from Carol McCloud, The Bucket Lady

Wrist Action

I believe that the most difficult aspect of becoming a bucket filler is *remembering* to say or do something kind every day.

Regardless of age, we all need reminders.

When the Bucket Fillers give a presentation and say goodbye to enthusiastic children and teachers, what guarantees that there will be positive, permanent change? There are no guarantees in life, not even when it comes to filling buckets. There is, however, a wonderfully simple idea that I discovered in Will Bowen's powerful book—*A Complaint-Free World*.

Bowen, an author and minister, describes how he distributed purple wristbands to his church members and challenged them to stop complaining for 21 days.

"If you catch yourself complaining," he told his congregation, "take the bracelet and move it to your other wrist."

I loved this idea and immediately put my glow-in-the-dark green "I AM A BUCKET FILLER" wristband on my left wrist. When I filled a bucket later that day, I moved my wristband to my right wrist, indicating I had *done the right thing*.

It works! I now begin each day with my band on my left wrist and move it to my right wrist after I have filled a bucket. I find myself being more thoughtful of others and I have told others about this effective reminder to fill buckets.

Will Bowen's idea to move the wristband from wrist to wrist is so simple. Like a string tied around your finger, your band goes with you wherever you go, silently asking, "Have I filled a bucket today?" Should you find yourself dipping in someone's bucket with a complaint here, an unkind remark there, you will need to begin again by moving your band back to your left wrist.

Why not start now? Slip a rubber band on your left wrist to remind you to fill a bucket. After you've done this for a few weeks, take a moment to let us know whether this simple idea helps you to remember to fill buckets.

We would all like to live in a world of kindness, compassion and respect for others—a bucketfilling world populated with bucket filling schools, families and entire communities.

Perhaps something as simple as wearing a reminder will help us realize this goal.

Editor's note: If you would like to replace your rubber band with a bright green Bucket Fillers wristband, they are available on our web site, www.bucketfillers101.com for \$1 each plus 50¢ shipping, or send \$1.50 with your name and mailing address to PO Box 255, Brighton, MI 48116.

This week's winners

Congratulations!



Brenda Holmes, of Hooper, Utah is our Bucket Filler of the Week.

Congratulations, Brenda! You have a book coming your way.

Every bucket filler is a winner! Encourage your friends to get their buckets filled every week by signing on for our newsletter at

www.bucketfillers101.com.

Quote of the Week

"Every idea that does not become an ideal slays the power in you." —

Ancient proverb

