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Issue
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Just before I sat down to write this editorial, I came across a thoughtful tribute to the husband of one of my Facebook friends. It read,

“My husband is one of those unsung, necessary-to-the-community workers who doesn’t get noticed until he’s not there. He’s a commercial/industrial Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning (HVAC) technician, serving hospitals, businesses, schools, etc. On this very hot, 95°-Fahrenheit day, his 63-year-old self is on a broiling rooftop with 1/2 gallon of homemade electrolyte rehydration drink I concocted yesterday. Last night he paid an emergency visit to a boiler room where he estimated the temperature at 135 degrees. He’s been doing this for close to 40 years, often for companies who failed to heed his advice and plan for system maintenance and replacement during cooler weather, which here is about 75% of the year. So if today, or any other day, you are working somewhere in air-conditioned comfort (and warm comfort in winter, when my husband works outside in raw and wet weather), please spare a kind thought for the unseen people who make it possible.”

After reading this, you probably guessed it. This issue of *Motivated* is dedicated to heroes, both the famous and the unsung, everyday heroes that we so often take for granted, or fail to appreciate and recognize. As you read the articles and stories in this issue, you will find that there is always one thing that heroes have in common: They use their gifts, talents, and abilities to help others, and make the world a better place. That may put *you* into the hero category, too!

So here’s to all heroes, both known and unknown, recognized and unrecognized! Thank you for making our lives better in some way.

Christina Lane
For *Motivated*

Characteristics of a Hero

By Jeff Goin and www.moralheroes.org, adapted Web Reprints

Here are nine characteristics of a hero:

1. Heroes are unexpected. Most of us expect heroes to be charming, muscular, and confident, but that's not always the case. Often, the real heroes are hiding in obscurity, waiting for the time when their heroism is needed and comes to the fore.

2. Heroes are unknown. Real heroes often work quietly in the background somewhere. They aren't famous, but rather unknown. They may be dreaming of adventure, while slightly scared of the cost.

3. Heroes are ordinary. Some heroes may even seem like "losers" in the eyes of some. They may be mopping floors somewhere, complete with dorky suspenders and awkward social skills.

4. Heroes become heroes through adversity. A hero's skills are often untested, but conflict draws out their courage.

5. Heroes show up at the 11th hour. It's not until the last moment when all hope seems lost that a hero distinguishes himself from the rest of the pack. Heroes surprise us.

6. Heroes push through the fear. They live what we know as true—that courage isn't the absence of fear, but rather the facing of it. They acknowledge their feelings, but rise above them.

7. Heroes fight for others. Heroes emerge when the innocent are in peril. Heroes fight, not because they want to, but because those whom they love need their help. They may even feel reluctant, but when things get tough, they emerge ready to fight.

8. Heroes network. Heroes become leaders by sharing their ideas and dreams with others. United, they accomplish so much more than they would have if they tried alone. Strong communication and powerful friendships go a long way towards becoming a hero.

9. Heroes are prepared to sacrifice. Heroes often have to make a conscious effort to give up something so that others can be better off. They may have to risk losing their free time, social status, economic advantage or wealth, comfort or security, or even their life. They are willing to give up something personal to achieve something greater.

What happens when you read this list? Do you find yourself identifying with the prospect of being a hero? Do you get excited?

The reason that we love to hear stories about heroes is that they speak to something deep inside of us. They not only inspire, but also teach us that anyone can be a hero. ✨



By Waweru Kiundu, adapted

A normal day in Mitahato village, like any other village in Kenya, is routine, but this monotony was shattered in an occasion that would have turned presidential campaigners green with envy.

Indeed everyone was at the Mitahato Secondary School to honor one woman whose generosity in the 1970s changed the life of one of Mitahato's sons, and in

the process, continues to change the lives of many more villagers.

Hilde Back was there to celebrate her 90th birthday.

Forty years ago, Hilde, who lives in Sweden, sponsored a boy she didn't know for his primary education through a Swedish scholarship program, Ola Memorial Fund. Chris Mburu was born in Mitahato to a poor family and money for

Everyday Heroes

A small act that
became a **big deal**

Jeanne

Submitted by Kamryn to www.values.com, adapted

I do not know where to begin, or how to describe my hero with only 500 words. Calling Jeanne a hero is an understatement. I've always tried to convince her that she is indeed a hero, but she claims she's just an ordinary individual.

Jeanne is my former high school youth leader, whom I have known for five years. She has been a youth leader for over 25 years, and continues to be there for every single one of the young people that walk in, helping them each to grow into a better person. The amount of compassion she has for others is amazing! She does so much



school fees was hard to come by. Without Hilde's help, the bright pupil would have ended up working in the coffee farms, like most of his peers.

Mburu studied and joined the University of Nairobi where he got a degree in law and he later proceeded to the prestigious Harvard Law School for postgraduate studies. Afterwards, he got a job as a human rights lawyer with the United Nations.

As he trotted the globe on assignments in war ravaged countries, Mburu concluded that civil strife and wars were primarily a result of lack of education. "Education is a matter of life and death," Mburu says in one of the famous lines in the film, *A Small Act*, which documents his story.

Mburu wanted to do something for his fellow villagers. Someone had changed his life; he too wanted to change lives.

In 2001, Mburu, together with other professionals from Mitahato, decided to sponsor bright students from poor backgrounds. They started a foundation which Mburu named after his benefactor—Hilde Back Education Fund.

Although Hilde had changed his life, Mburu had never met her. He embarked on searching for her. With the help of the Swedish Embassy in Kenya, he found her quietly spending her retirement years as a schoolteacher, having long forgotten about the boy she helped.

Today, Hilde's small act has influenced the support of more than 350 children to get quality education. What better way to honor Hilde than to organize a special birthday for her. As she looked at the hundreds of villagers dancing and celebrating her big day, she remarked, "I have never been to such a big party in my life." ✦

and doesn't expect anything in return. Jeanne is truly someone who should be recognized.

She has traveled the world to help others in numerous ways. When the earthquake in Haiti hit in 2010, the first thing she did was find out how she could help. Jeanne stopped her life to head over to Haiti and become an on-site nurse, helping wherever she could, even though she knew the circumstances would not be easy. If that's not a hero, I do not know what is.

This is just one of the many heroic acts Jeanne has committed. She still has a family, a job, and a life, but continues to be there for 60 teenagers whenever they need her. She is the kind of person

everyone needs in their life.

In October 2012, her mother suddenly passed away from Parkinson's disease. Despite her mother's death, she continued to travel with the youth group. It truly baffles me how she was able to keep that up during such a difficult time. I don't know very many people who could do that, or better, I don't know anyone who could.

Jeanne has been all around the world doing humanitarian work for the homeless, the poor, and the sick. Her life is living proof that with faith, dedication, and hard work, anything is possible. I know that one day, I will travel the world to help those in need, and I will have her as my role model every step of the way. ✦



Helping your child find the hero within

By Christina Carlino, adapted excerpts from her blog

I watched as a parade of fairies, princesses, kitty cats, and other character-look-alikes pranced by my front window.—And then came my daughter. Dressed in camouflage fatigues and desert boots, a smudge of charcoal under each eye, my girl looked every bit the soldier. When she ran up to me and told me she wanted to protect me, I suddenly remembered the intention of her costume: My nine-year-old wanted to be a hero.

I had to laugh. As a child, I adored Superman, the Bionic Woman, Mother Teresa, Julie Andrews in “The Sound of Music”, and TV doctors. As different as these idols may seem to some, to me they were all profoundly connected. In my mind, all of these folks were heroes—people helping other people.

My daughter and I have had so many conversations about heroes. I tell her that I look up to those who teach me about courage, about standing up for the weak, about giving a voice to the

voiceless. A hero shows me a better way to live my own life, and inspires me to push myself beyond my boundaries, to open my heart to those who may be nothing like me, and to offer my help whenever I can.

When my daughter and I talk together about those we think of as heroes, I notice that her lovely brown eyes begin to shine. She revels in the idea of helping people or caring for animals. Her learning about heroes has made that her aspiration. If she sees a wounded bird, she wants to nurse it back to health. Whenever an elderly friend of ours comes to visit our house, my daughter always walks her back to her car and makes sure she is safely buckled up.

I have seen first-hand how vital heroes are to our children’s lives. For my little girl, they encourage her to dream about the person that she hopes to be someday, and they remind me of the compassionate, loving hero she already is right now.

Here's how you can inspire your child to find the hero within:

1. Talk about your heroes. The people I have always looked up to are those willing to put themselves out on the line to help others. Talking about your icons of courage with your children is a way of sharing your dreams and giving them insight into who you were when growing up. It's also a lovely way to communicate to your kids that they can have big dreams about who they want to be, too.

2. Don't judge who they choose as heroes.

So maybe we'd prefer our daughter to admire a national hero over a celebrity. But try not to show your disappointment and celebrate the positive aspects of her choice instead. For example, you can point out that the celebrity certainly worked hard to become

such a successful star—that kind of commitment is what it took to reach her level of accomplishment.

3. Show that heroes are human. Even those who act in courageous ways don't always do everything perfectly. Sometimes they fail, and sometimes they make poorly informed decisions. This is something that's essential for kids to understand.

4. Praise your child when he acts heroically.

If he stands up for his friend against a playground bully, tell him you're proud of the courage he showed and the example he set for all his friends. You can also connect his positive actions to a hero you admire. By aligning your child with heroes we all admire, you give him the vision and support to become the greatest person he can be—and to find the hero within. ✦

Why I Love Superman

By Brad Meltzer, Author
Adapted blog excerpts

How could you not love him? He fights for the little guy. He's got the best hair. And he never lies. I'm not ashamed. I'm not embarrassed. And I'll tell anyone who'll listen. I love Superman.

I don't remember the exact moment I first met him. In fact, I actually liked Batman first (as evidenced by the fact that I'm wearing a Batman cape in every photo of me from when I was six years old, until I was about, say, twenty-seven). But I'll never forget that night in 1978, when I was eight, and my parents took me to the movies to see him. Back then, it was Christopher Reeve in the costume. And as the lights went down and *Superman: The Movie* began to roll, I craned



my neck up at the screen and lowered my hand into the huge tub of buttered popcorn that was sitting in my lap.

Two hours later, the lights came up. How mesmerized was I? I didn't even realize that my hand was still sitting in that tub of buttered popcorn. I hadn't moved my now-prune-fingered hand for two hours, shriveled from soaking in the butter.

And right there, my addiction was born.

Back then, we didn't have a ton of money, but my father always would magically find the extra cash to surprise me with the newest comics of the guy with the big red S who wore his underwear on the outside of his pants (having superpowers doesn't mean you automatically get fashion sense).

And so, the years went... I never grew out of it, or away from it. My love for Superman took me through junior high and high school, through college and law school (where I was now the only one still wearing my Superman T-shirt). I lived through good movies (yes, Superman II is good), and many bad ones (in a letter written during high school, I told my girlfriend (now wife): "Just saw Superman IV. I hung my head in shame.").

But for me, my most personal Superman moment came when my wife was pregnant with our first child. We're superstitious people, so we wouldn't buy the toys or clothes or anything until the baby was born. But there we were,

checking out cribs in the baby store, when my wife spotted it: a Batman cape. Just like the one I used to wear so long ago.

"No," I said, shaking my head. "Can't do it. Not until he's born."

"C'mon," my wife pleaded. "Look at it. It's perfect!"

"I see it!" I told her.

"No," she said. "I don't think you do."

And with a flick of her wrist, she flipped the Batman cape around and revealed the bright red material with the big S on the other side. The cape was two-sided—with Superman on the other side.

Sold!

As an October baby, my son was barely two weeks old at his first costume party. It was too cold to take him outside, but that didn't stop me and my wife from dressing in overalls and swaddling him in that Superman cape. The costume was perfect. Today, my daughter is the one who wears the cape (always with the SuperGIRL side out).

Thirty years later, after five novels, I finally realized what made me love the character so much. Without question, the best part of the story has never been the Superman part. It's the Clark Kent part: the idea that all of us are so plain, so ordinary, but we know what it's like to want to rip open our shirts and do something better for this world.

My wife just had our third child. I gotta go buy another cape. ✦

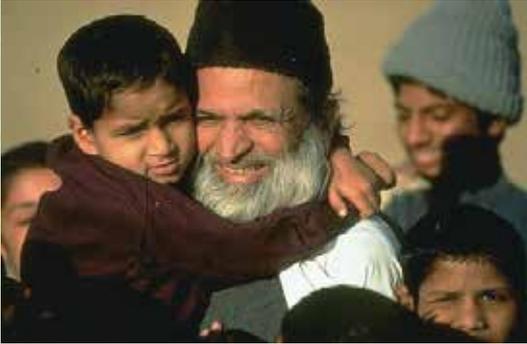
Fun Fact

Superman celebrated his 75th Birthday in 2013.
The Man of Steel's very first comic was published in June of 1938.

HEROIC EXAMPLES

Adapted from www.moralheroes.org

Abdul Sattar Edhi



Abdul Sattar Edhi began taking care of his ailing mother and then others in his city. Now he takes care of millions of men, women, and children across Pakistan.

Born January 1, 1928 in British India, Edhi grew up taking care of his mother, who suffered from paralysis and diabetes.

Now Edhi is one of the most active philanthropists in Pakistan; a premiere example of a life of compassion, perseverance, and patience.

His mother taught him a daily lesson by giving him two paisas; one to spend on himself, and one on someone less fortunate. In a region that had faced great turmoil after the dismantling of the British Empire, where millions of Hindus and Muslims were uprooted and became refugees, it wasn't hard to find someone less fortunate.

This simple lesson shaped him into the great man that he is today.

Around the age of 20, Edhi and his family migrated to Karachi, Pakistan. Here the conditions were not any better: infants were discarded on roadsides

and adult corpses baked in the sun. Edhi began to realize the dire need for medicine and saved up his money to open a charitable clinic. Despite not having a formal education, he applied himself to learn basic medical care from a friend who was a doctor. He was a simple man with a simple philosophy, and he would sleep on the concrete outside the clinic so that he was available to anyone who needed help anytime.

In 1957, there was a major flu epidemic in the city of Karachi. He quickly began setting up tents on the outskirts of the city and distributed free immunizations. Due to his efforts and the public outpouring of financial support, he was able to purchase the entire building that housed his tiny clinic. He then established the Edhi Foundation, which continues today, and is run completely by public support. Donations from the public sector, religious institutions, and political sources are always returned so the organization can remain independent and react to any social needs as they arise.

Over the years, public funding grew and Edhi was able to expand his humanitarian reach. He bought an ambulance that he drove himself. Then he set up a free maternity center and a nursing school. He expanded the number of clinics, and began mental health institutions, and homes for the physically challenged. Always aware

of the needs around him, Edhi set up orphanages, adoption centers, blood banks, maternity centers, soup kitchens, and shelters for children and women who suffered from physical abuse.

His extraordinary social welfare network continues to grow today.

The Edhi Foundation is now the largest in Pakistan. It runs over 300 clinics and 2000 ambulances across the country, 8 hospitals in Karachi alone, a cancer hospital, mobile clinics, a legal aid department with free services, and doctor visits for prison inmates. Over 20,000 abandoned babies have been saved through the Edhi Foundation. The Edhi orphanages have also served over 50,000 orphans, and their nursing

schools have educated and trained more than 40,000 nurses.

Even now, Abdul Sattar Edhi spends many sleepless nights and days attending to the needs of his fellow Pakistanis, traveling with the ambulances to calls for help, personally bathing the handicapped and spending time playing with and educating the orphaned street children he comes across. Each evening, Edhi spends his dinner dining with the hundreds of poor at the “Langar” (free community meals) his organization provides.

It is amazing how great of an impact one dedicated and determined individual can have on the world around him. ✦

Muhammad Yunus



What could happen if you gave the poor the power to help themselves? In the way of “teaching a man to fish,” Muhammad Yunus has spent much of his life tackling the problem of poverty with socially focused economics. Yunus is a hero of creativity, innovation, and economic good will.

Yunus was born in East Bengal (now Bangladesh) on June 28, 1940. As a youth, he was able to travel to Pakistan, India, and Canada with Boy Scouts. This increased his interest in cultural activities and spurred him to attend Chittagong College for Drama. Soon after, Yunus switched his focus to economics and earned his MA in economics by 1961. After an

early entrepreneurial success with a packaging factory, he was awarded a Fulbright scholarship to earn his Ph.D. in Economic Development at Vanderbilt University in the United States.

In 1974, a famine caused great suffering and starvation across the land. “We tried to ignore it,” Yunus said. “But then skeleton-like people began showing up in the capital, Dhaka. Soon the trickle became a flood. Hungry people were everywhere. Often they sat so still that one could not be sure whether they were alive or dead.”

Unable to connect the theories and methods of standard economics he had learned in school, Yunus stepped out of the academic world and into the suffering. He began researching the famine and became involved in poverty reduction efforts. He worked with the government to establish village councils as a form of independent aid. Yunus also noticed that the poor had almost no access to usable cash. Traditional banks avoided the high-risk loans altogether and moneylenders saddled the poor with high interest rates. This meant the majority of the poor’s profits went back to the lenders.

Yunus decided to lend \$27.00 (USD) of his own money to 42 women in one of the poorest villages. He believed that given the chance and adequate support, the poor would be able to repay if they didn’t face high interest rates. All of the women were able to make a profit and repay their loans.

This experience led Muhammad Yunus and his colleague Dr. Akhtar Hameed Khan (founder of the Bangladesh Academy for Rural Development) to pioneer the development of microcredit and microloans in the surrounding communities.

Yunus named his organization the Grameen Bank (Village Bank) and worked to secure loans from much larger banks. In less than 6 years, Yunus was able to hand out thousands of micro loans and support the self-advancement of over 28,000 villagers.

Though no economic model is without its faults and limitations, Yunus’ experiment-turned-program has been received as a success. The programs and organizations of the Bank have expanded to include educational, energy and community development programs. The bank also provides interest-free loans to beggars with extended repayment schedules.

Muhammad Yunus is recognized as a moral hero for stepping out of the academic safety zone into the famine and impoverished world around him. His pioneering vision of microcredit and innovative economic effort on behalf of the poor has improved the conditions of countless villagers and families throughout the region. ✨

Visit www.moralheroes.org for more inspiration for the hero in you!

“The fact that the poor are alive is clear proof of their ability.”

—Muhammad Yunus

Heroism

Heroes are made by the paths they choose, not the powers they are graced with.—Brodi Ashton

A hero is no braver than an ordinary man, but he is brave five minutes longer. —Ralph Waldo Emerson

A hero is an ordinary individual who finds the strength to persevere and endure in spite of overwhelming obstacles.
—Christopher Reeve

Hard times don't create heroes. It is during the hard times when the hero within us is revealed.—Bob Riley

A hero is somebody who is selfless, who is generous in spirit, who just tries to give back as much as possible and help people. A hero to me is someone who saves people and who really deeply cares.—Debi Mazar

The ordinary man is involved in action, the hero acts.
—An immense difference.—Henry Miller

I think that we all do heroic things, but hero is not a noun, it's a verb. —Robert Downey, Jr.

A hero is one who knows how to hang on one minute longer.
—Novalis

A hero is a man who does what he can.
—Romain Rolland

A hero is someone who has given his or her life to something bigger than oneself. —Joseph Campbell

How important it is for us to recognize and celebrate our heroes and she-roes! —Maya Angelou

