Meaningless Words Essay, Research Paper

The Insignificance of Words

A man walks down a dimly lit street; the bright red lights above the hospital s exit are now just a faint glow behind him. As he staggers along the city blocks back to his quiet row home, he ponders the tragic news he has just received regarding his mother s failing health. A couple blocks from the refuge of his home, he runs into some of the neighborhood locals. Some he knows most he doesn t, but greets them all the same. How s it goin ? he says, in a voice that is less then enthusiastic. Good they reply, How s it goin with you? The man responds Good, thanks for asking , again not showing much interest in the conversation he just finished, he trudges toward home. After passing the locals, the man is amused at the simple truth that he is not doing good and that he does not really care if those people are. He ponders the stupidity of the conversation he just had and laughs for the first time all day.

As he enters his doorway and hangs up his jacket, he slowly glances around the living room and finds his way to the olive colored sofa. As he searches the coffee table for the remote control, he begins to think of his ailing mother and her impact on his life. His search ends as he finds the clicker and turns on the television. Not paying any attention to the infomercial on the screen, he is just glad that the silence of his home is broken. As Chuck Norris is explaining why the Ab Slide is the newest, safest and most effective method for getting in shape in the comfort of your own home. He reflects back on the conversation that he had walking home from the hospital. He quickly laughs again and thinks what was the point of even talking to them. . The simple nonchalant nature of not caring what is goin on, reflects one of the reasons why individuals in America are becoming less community oriented.

Do they even care how I am? Do they even know who I am? Should I trouble them with the predicament that I am in? Would it be proper to stop and explain to these people how my mother is dying and how much pain I am in. Unsure if the man was rude to his neighbors with his dismissive attitude towards their conversation he reflected back on his life. During the course of this reflection he realized the silliness of these types of conversations. He realized that he had had these conversations everyday of his adult life and never realized it. Just words to fill in the presence of silence and a simple acknowledgement of a person, the words uttered had no meaning or feeling they just took the place of the simple hello. Although the words were originally meant to be more personal then a hello or a wave, they really were more dismissive. The question of how s it goin ? or what s up? actually seems like more of a slap in the face, because of the lack of emotion or a quest for an answer to the question.

Wondering if the people could notice his non-interest in the conversation, the man quickly thought of how many times he had been greeted in the same manner. The man quickly realized the insignificance of these thoughts and realized that many Americans in place of a hello commonly accept the words he uttered to the locals. It is not the words that were important, just the acknowledgement that these were his neighbors and should not be ignored, treated like street bums. It is with these thoughts that he drifts off to sleep on his comfortable sofa.

In the morning, the man wakes up and goes back outside to start his walk back to the hospital and his mother s bedside. With a new outlook on the day and the hopes for a better tomorrow, the man hits the sidewalk and heads north. A couple houses down, a woman emerges from her door to retrieve the morning paper. The woman looks towards the man and in a polite, quiet voice says, How are you doing? The man responds Hello and continues on his course, steadily walking towards the hospital s entrance just barely coming into view.