

# The Lesson of the Cell Phone

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Today the universe provided me with the opportunity to witness the kindness of others, and as it is with so many lessons in the life of a writer, presenter and teacher it came in a very unexpected way.



My son Duncan and I were heading to the airport in Bloomington, Minnesota, about a 70 minute drive, running right on schedule, when we hit one of the two seasons we have in Minnesota – road construction. (If you're wondering the other season is winter.) Because we wanted to let him sleep in as long as possible, we left St. Cloud with very little extra travel time. As I was asking him for the time, I sensed myself becoming a bit anxious about getting through security in time to catch my flight. When we pulled to the curb, I quickly unloaded my four bag (yes I said four, two to check, a small roller-board and a backpack), I hugged Duncan, thanked him, told him I loved him and would miss him and wished him safe travels.

When I got into the security line and was getting myself organized, BAM! it hit me. I didn't have my cell phone. I looked at the clock to see if I had time to catch my son and have him turn around to come back to give me my cell phone. I knew that I would depend on a complete stranger to give me permission to use their cell phone. When I asked the woman in front of me if she would do this for me, she lent me her phone so that I could call him. When I heard how far he had already driven with traffic and evaluated the pace of the security line, I knew that the timing was too close. I would risk missing my flight if I waited for him to return with my phone. I told him I would find a way to get on Facebook and send him an address where he could overnight my phone. I turned to my line mate thanked her. Then I quietly muttered "Thank you universe!"

As I waited to walk through the scanner, I started talking with the man in the line next to me. "I just wanted to let you know that my son saw you when he dropped me off and was impressed with your sleeve." He chortled and replied, "I assume you're not talking about my shirt sleeve." I laughed, he laughed and so did his traveling companion. His companion said "You should see the ink on his legs. We are traveling to Colorado for a tattoo convention, because we deal in an after care product that acts like a band-aid for fresh tats." "Wow, that's cool," I responded. She then said "I heard you say you left your cell phone in your son's car; when we get through security, I'll be glad to help you out so you can contact your son." I told her, "Thank you, that would be great!" In my mind I said "Thank you universe!"

Having now talked with Duncan, and having sent a text giving him an address where he could overnight my phone, I was a bit more relaxed. As I sat on my flight to Chicago I thought, "Oh well. I couldn't be using my cell on the planes today and tomorrow. Then tomorrow I'll be doing a session so I guess

everyone else can wait for me to phone them.” As I disembarked from my flight in Chicago and looked at the tote board, I realized my thinking had shifted and I was quickly creating my day in a new direction. My next flight departed from the gate right next to the one at which I had just arrived. As I waited in line for a famous Chicago Dog, I asked the man in front of me, if I could make a call on his phone as I had left mine in my son’s car in Minnesota, and I wanted to check to see if my son had made it safely home. I told him I would just give him the number to call so he’d know the call wasn’t out of the country. He smiled pleasantly and said, “No worries, I have an international plan, and I’m always willing to help someone.” As we waited for my son to answer he joked with me about what life was like before cell phones and how today we feel as if an appendage has been cut off if we don’t have ours every minute of every day. I laughed. “I guess the universe just wanted us to laugh today. A good thing to do on days when we have to travel.” He chuckled again and so did everyone else in line. I thanked him and said to no one in particular “Thank you universe!”

In talking to my son, I found out that in my hurry, and because I was using an unfamiliar phone I had missed a digit in the zip code the address to which the phone was to be sent. And then I received another unexpected surprise. My mistake resulted in just another opportunity for someone to give the gift of kindness. The postmaster at the Post Office where my son mailed the phone not only figured the correct zip code, she also packaged the phone and it was already on the way to me. I felt like people far and wide were involved in sharing kindness, all because I had been in a rush and left my phone in Duncan’s car. Once again, I thanked the universe!

As I write this on the last leg of my trip today, I want to tell each person who lent me their phone and shared words of encouragement, thank you! I attempted to multiply each kindness I received and pass it on to others. This has been a day filled with kindness, laughter and sharing, a day in which the generous spirit within each of us was exhibited. Although I know the individuals who helped me may never read this, I know that the universe will find a way to double my efforts to thank all the people who helped me. Know that if you have done a small kindness for others today, or perhaps received some, and if each of these events is multiplied, we can all share in the lesson of the forgotten cell phone.

Post Script: I had finished writing just in time to power down to prepare for landing. As our purser Jim gave the closing announcements to send us on our way, I delighted as he said, “As you leave today, I want you to remember, as soon as possible do these three important things: 1) Do something good just for yourself, 2) Be kind to a stranger and, 3) Tell someone you love them.” Thank you universe!