

Olivia Luciano  
Grade Five, Second Place  
Lynn Johnson, Teacher

**H**ave you ever wondered what traits you need to have to be a good, contributing member of your community? I think you need to be kind, courteous, and helpful. Being a good community member both in the community as well as school is not hard and will reward your classmates, neighbors, friends, and yourself as well!

One of the first traits you need to be a good member of a community is to be kind to others. Being kind includes saying nice things to others, sharing, and making people laugh and be happy. Like Maya Angelou said, “Try to be a rainbow in someone’s cloud.” This means that it takes so little to brighten somebody else’s day. What you think is a small action can leave someone else feeling happy for a moment, an hour, a day, or give them a happy memory for life. I like to encourage my friends when we play basketball together. I also notice when people need help and say, “Can I help you with anything?”

The second trait you need to be a good community member is to be courteous to others. Courteous means to act in a polite, respectful, or considerate manner. For example, you should give your full attention to who you are talking with. Not interrupting people is another good habit. I try to always hold the door for people when we are in school or in stores. I also say “bless you” when someone sneezes. It’s little things like that that can make a big difference in someone’s day. We could also thank the firefighters and police for keeping our community safe. They put their lives on the line for us every day.

The third trait you need to be a good community member is to be helpful. Being helpful has many examples. For instance, you could donate food to someone who doesn’t have any or give your outgrown clothing to a clothing drive. Like Zig Ziglar said, “Be helpful. When you see a person without a smile, give them yours.” This means that when you see someone who is sad, try to help brighten their day. You could lend a hand to those in need, or give them your time to help them with work. It could be a little act like just saying hello and smiling or something bigger like helping them with their groceries or helping them rake their leaves off their lawn.

Well, now you know how to be a good, contributing member of your community. From sharing food, to holding doors, to sharing a smile, remember the traits to make your community a happier, better place. Hillary Clinton is known for her phrase, “It takes a village.” Well, maybe we could change it to, “It takes a community.” Remember, being good is contagious; you can help others be kind and courteous by being a good example of a community member.