

When I grow up...

“What do you want to be when you grow up?” asked the Mole.

“Kind.” said the Boy. *‘The Boy, the Mole, the Fox and the Horse’ by Charlie Mackesy*

Such is what most mothers and grandmothers wish for their children above all else. So too fathers and grandfathers, and of course Jesus Christ who was kindness beyond measure. Somehow, we don’t imagine Mary as the stereotypical ‘Jewish mother’ with celebrity aspirations for her son; instead we see her gentleness and fortitude in supporting him whatever the cost.

Do you remember what you wanted to be when you were little? Did it work out? What surprising events shaped your ‘grown-up’ life? Are you kind? Who was it who encouraged you to be ‘kind’?

Do you ever tell your own story to your children and grandchildren? Do they know how it was for you when you were very young? There is something very special and timeless about the family story handed down...no wonder ‘Who do you think you are’ is such a popular TV programme.

Perhaps you have a memory box? In which you keep small items associated with your growing up? An old story book? A well-worn toy? A favourite prayer? A photograph? An autograph book? If you haven’t yet afforded yourself that luxury – it’s never too late. A shoe box will do – you can decorate it how you like.



Opening the lid to see what’s inside opens the most delightful and interesting conversations – be it with children or with the staff in a care home. Each item brings to life a special place or event, or something thing you learned, or the people who helped to shape you. One item in my memory box is a coat-hanger... but you’ll have to ask me to find out why! What surprising items might you include?

Maybe this is something MU members could do – to share their stories at a branch meeting – or with local school children – to engage them and nurture them with real-life stories. It is such a gift of kindness to share your own growing up memories with those who will live on after you. Mary Sumner did!

The fruit of the Spirit is: kindness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.

Galatians. 5.22-23