

Life Giving # 19

Bucking the Crowd

People riding the California city buses are pretty predictable.

Every evening there are tired moms with tired kids who are in an intense competition to see who will come completely unglued first.

There are the Tweeters who are compulsively cultivating their carpal tunnel catastrophe.

Then the 20 somethings passionately expound on the aberrations in their personal lives with utter disregard for everyone around them who is disgusted with their phone conversation.

But mostly there is the mass of people with the unresponsive wooden faces that you see on all the urban sardines from Shanghai to Kampala.

It is hard to be life giving in a genuine way when you are exposed to a constant stream of strangers. Most flight attendants, cashiers and tellers go plastic with their smiles, early on.

But one bus driver this week looked at each new rider and greeted them with genuine interest, calmly ignoring the fact that her Hijab offended some.

And today, a lady yelled a heartfelt "Thank you" to the unresponsive driver when she got off the bus.

I found myself wondering why it is so hard to buck collective indifference. I wish I had been the one who had done it. How hard could it be, really? I'll find out tomorrow.

