

There is a special word that explains how we connect to each other. The word describes the love and care we have for our friends and families; all the relationships that make up our lives. It links us to others like a raindrop, to a stream, to a river, to a sea.

The word is kinship.

Sometimes we get sick. When we have a bad tummy or a sore head, our families or friends look after us. They make us hot drinks and soup, tuck us into bed with fresh warm blankets. Sometimes they give us medicine and hugs, making us laugh so we feel better. We would do the same for them.

This is kinship.

Sometimes many people get sick. Like now. We change our lives to protect each other. We stay at home, wash our hands and social distance. We work together to keep each other safe.

This is kinship.

When many people become sick with the same illness over the world it is called a pandemic. Pandemics have happened in history; sailing overseas to and from our country. Throughout time we always fight them with the same thing. We work together to keep each other safe.

We show kinship.

In 1832, in Liverpool, there was a woman called Kitty Wilkinson. She lived in a very poor part of the city. A cholera pandemic happened. People didn't have access to a place to wash their clothes and sheets. Germs thrive in dirt and people were very sick. Kitty was the only person in the neighbourhood that had a boiler to wash clothes. She opened her home for all who needed it; providing clean sheets, food and kindness. Women would wash their clothes and share information. Women would tell stories while others would listen; sharing knowledge and advice, even jokes too! Women would chat, support and help each other. They worked together to keep each other safe.

They formed a kinship.

Connections and community make our lives special. They fill us up in a way that makes us sparkle from within. I want you to think of the last time someone did something nice for you. Right this second if it's safe to do so. Close your eyes if you need to.

How did that feel? Good, right?

Now, think of a time you did something nice for someone else. Bet that feels even better! Kitty's home became a place of kinship in her community and saved many lives. In Liverpool, on Grasmere street, a launderette stands named after her. A place for working class women and their families to wash their clothes and be a part of their communities. To worked together to keep each other safe.

We link to others like a raindrop, to a stream, to a river, to a sea.

So my question to you is this; How do you show kinship?

KINSHIP: KITTY WILKINSON

