

## Want Discount on Coffee? Say 'Please'

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**MyPaper**, 10 June 2014

FLASH a smile, say please and thank you, and you will get a discount on your cuppa.

This is how the Singapore Kindness Movement (SKM) is rewarding those who mind their p's and q's.

As part of the SKM's Kindness Day celebrations, a Kindness Cafe was set up at One Raffles Place yesterday to promote courteous behaviour.

Those who visited the mobile cafe were entitled to discounts if they said "please" or "thank you" to servers when ordering coffee. The more courteous the order, the more discounted the price of the coffee.

Customers who said "please", for example, got a dollar off their \$5 coffees. Those who went a step further to say "Good afternoon. One coffee, please. Thank you", got a \$3 discount.

The first 100 customers who demonstrated "extra graciousness" were each given a complimentary loaf of bread contributed by Gardenia, SKM's partner.

Recruiter Eileen Han, 25, who visited the cafe yesterday afternoon, questioned the need to teach people how to be sincere and courteous.

"Please and thank you should be something that people say voluntarily instead of forcing them to do it," said Ms Han.

William Wan, general secretary of SKM, told My Paper that the initiative was to remind Singaporeans to be more courteous to service staff, rather than to "buy kindness".

Dr Wan said that in fast-paced, crowded Raffles Place "even the most polite and gracious among us can neglect common courtesy and graciousness".

While sociologist Tan Ern Ser said that people may forget to be kind and courteous in a fast-paced society, he pointed out that courtesy is "not just what we say verbally, but also our non-verbal communication".

When asked how Singaporeans could be encouraged to be more gracious, he said: "Drum home the idea that courtesy reflects the kind of person you are and your upbringing, and that it can impact the people you meet in a positive way."

For Nikki Li, the concept was effective in reminding her to be polite towards service staff.

The 21-year-old, who interns in a bank in Raffles Place, said: "The discount is a good incentive...and a good reminder for us to be courteous nonetheless. Some days when I'm in a rush, (I place my order) without saying please or thank you."

The Kindness Cafe campaign was first launched last month at Republic Polytechnic.

The cafe will be at One Raffles Place until tomorrow before heading to the National Library in Victoria Street on Saturday.

The cafe campaign comes amid calls for Singaporeans to show more appreciation to front-line service staff.

In his annual May Day message, labour chief Lim Swee Say called for a nation of better customers.

“Good service begets good customers, and good customers beget good service,” said Mr Lim.

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