



Acts of Kindness

The Higher Order Animal

Part of my 'maintenance' work for **my manifesto** is to interact with our Instagram account followers. Never having been an exponent of social media, this is a new and not altogether enjoyable activity for me. However, it has its moments...

Recently, while randomly sifting through the material in the feed, I encountered a visual post (my apologies, but I didn't register from whom it was posted, and it has disappeared now). It was of a turtle which had been overturned and was spinning on its shell within the water, hopelessly floundering and unable to right itself.

As I watched – feeling empathic and helpless in turn – it continued to flail its legs, propelling it into a never-ending circle. Then, little by little, into the frame appeared a group of turtles, which formed a ring around their hapless representative. Slowly, slowly they tightened their circle until their shells were touching and they were almost upon the upturned turtle.

As I continued to watch, the edge of a turtle's shell inched under the shell of their 'friend' in extremis and thereby created a solid platform from which it could flip itself upright. I must admit, I watched the whole process several times, absolutely captivated.

The caption contained words to this effect, 'If turtles are able to help each other in need, then why can't humans?' What a simple and quite beautifully affecting message. Why can't we indeed?

Remind me, who is the higher order animal?