

## A PENNY FOR YOUR THOUGHTS

What is the value of a penny? Already you are thinking a penny is of little or no value.

What if you had a choice? Would you prefer a shiny new penny or an old, rusted one? I would choose the old, dirty one. I would show that penny my appreciation. Wow, I found a penny. Isn't that good luck? What is your value of your penny?

While walking along my street to catch public transport (at a cost of two hundred pennies), kicking away the discarded street rubbish and dog poo, I find a penny. I pick up the penny and wipe it on my jeans. I am curious. I examine it. Is this a British penny or a foreign coin of similar size and colour, which has perhaps travelled the world? Only to be missed, dropped, lost, forgotten, or discarded.

I hold my hand out to stop and board my bus. With my penny in hand, I look up at all the other passengers overflowing around me. A 10-minute journey taking us all to the same destination. At this moment, this is my world. We travel together like coins in a purse.

This is my purse. This is my bank. Not pennies but people. Some clean, shiny, and new and some old, dirty and rusting. Some are UK currency and some foreign.

I remind myself that we all have the same value. We are all worth more than just one penny. Together we amount to priceless.

As I look around, I consider what is a penny worth? What is a person worth? What is the value of humanity?

When my Autistic son was young, and not progressing well at school, I had a sort of penny problem. Do I keep him at his beautiful, shiny new school dedicated exclusively to children with Autism or do I send him to the old dull public school that offered special needs classes, which could enable him to slowly explore the neurotypical world of others.

I held two pennies in my hand. One shiny and the other dull. They were both good schools, but I saw their values differently. I chose the latter.

The true value of changing my son's school was worth more than a penny. It was priceless. Every student was valued equally. It encouraged and allowed my son to shine like a brand-new penny.

In our purses of life, we should save at being better. To better our awareness, discovery, curiosity, understanding, acceptance and to recognize that the reality is, be we shiny or dull, no matter who you are or where you are from, our value is the same.

Each worth more than a penny. Together, we are priceless.

