

A Chain Reaction

And we think we don't make a difference...

A light blue car stalls in the carpool lane of a major highway. It's 6:45am on Monday. A back up immediately ensues.

Within ten minutes, the stalled car is pushed to the side of the highway.

Within those same ten minutes the back up has quickly progressed for over a mile down the highway with no end in sight.

Now cars coming in the other direction begin to slow down, rubber-necking their way past the anticipated obstruction.

It's not even 7am yet and traffic in both directions has basically come to a standstill.

The main roads feeding to-and-from the highway have now backed-up as well.



Bob, the CFO of a large company downtown, leaves his house in the suburbs and heads towards the highway. Running late already, he needs to make up time and believes taking the highway will help.

Within seconds Bob notices something is not right. Cars are bumper-to-bumper and he's still 3-miles away from the highway.

Angered, Bob curses his situation and pounds the dashboard. He's going to miss a very important meeting. He quickly picks up his cell phone.

Cheryl, Bob's secretary, wonders why Bob is being so rude on the phone. She shakes her head after the call, questioning why she puts up with his ranting.

Upon Bob's request, Cheryl has to drop everything she is doing to reschedule his meeting. Contacting seven people and coordinating seven schedules will take up much of her morning, causing her to fall way behind for the day.

Amy, Cheryl's co-worker and friend, is waiting at the restaurant for her birthday lunch with her best friend. It's 12:10pm and Cheryl is never late.

More time passes and no Cheryl. Amy, feeling like a loser sitting by herself on her birthday, calls Cheryl to find out where she is. Cheryl, flustered and overwhelmed with work, is short with Amy on the phone, completely forgetting that it's her birthday.

After the call, Amy feels distraught and embarrassed and decides to call-in sick for the remainder of the day. She can't stop thinking about why Cheryl stood her up on her birthday. What did she do to make her so upset?

Throughout the night Amy can't sleep, tossing and turning.

The next morning Amy is completely exhausted from being awake all night. She's a bit depressed as well.

The sun is bright that morning. As Amy floors the gas in order to merge onto the highway, she fails to notice the light blue car sitting on the side of the road, partially in her way.

Before she can react, Amy slides into the back left side of the car, causing her car to flip into oncoming traffic. The first car to hit her flips over as well, killing the mother driving the car and seriously injuring her 4-year old daughter in the back seat.

Eight more cars crash while trying to avoid the initial accident, causing a traffic jam that made the previous days delay seem like a walk in the park. In the end, there was one fatality and four seriously injured people, including the 4-year old daughter.



Fortunately, the 4-year old daughter eventually survives. However, she becomes traumatized over losing her mother and is impacted for the rest of her life.

Sometimes we think that what we do doesn't impact others. Truth is, everything we do impacts others in some way, shape or form.

-Greg "Geese" Giesen

