

Emma Harner
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Dear Karen Hesse,

Around three months ago, before I read your book, I was not contemplating the true meaning of unconditional love. I was definitely not thinking as deeply as I do now about stereotyping. Through *A Time of Angels*, I learned that stereotyping is a powerful misconception, and that unconditional love can be a healer, more powerful than any medicine. These concepts affect people around the world every day.

As I traveled with Hannah Gold from the heart of Jewish Boston, all the way to Brattleboro, Vermont, I learned a lot about stereotypes and what they can lead us to do, think, and say. Hannah witnessed stereotyping while staying with Klaus Gerhard, a kind, elderly German-American. Many times, townspeople would shun Klaus and call him a "dirty German". They did this even though he had fought in the Civil War and lived in America since he was a small child. Klaus took Hannah, a complete stranger, into his home and cured her of the deadly 1918 Influenza with nothing but apple cider vinegar and unconditional love. Hannah soon realized that he was not at all "dirty". He was a wonderful human being.

Hannah, too, suffered from stereotyping. She was afraid to tell Klaus, or anyone else, that she was a Jew. Since both Klaus and Hannah had experienced stereotyping they began to understand and trust each other. Soon, the two began to peel each other's layers of fear and pain off like onions, and bit-by-bit, they reached their cores and found the purest type of unconditional love.

Hannah and Klaus's experiences with stereotyping impacted me because it challenged me to take off my rose-colored glasses and see what really goes on in the world. Once I took the time to look at stereotyping in my middle school, I decided that the best way to approach those who stereotype is to first try to

understand what they are thinking. Then we might be able to take off their dark-colored glasses of ignorance and fear.

Hannah Gold took me on her adventure through a society on the brink, a society struggling to hold on in the midst of a world war and a deadly flu epidemic. Her experiences helped me to understand what kind of a world I am living in today. She helped me to widen my microscopic view to a panorama. She also taught me that just because someone is a different race, culture, or religion, it does not mean that they should be treated differently. So many of us are enveloped entirely in hate for someone else, or their culture, when we really know nothing about them. Hannah taught me that we should learn to look at one another as valuable individuals and try to appreciate everyone, not based on how alike we are, but based upon our acceptance of who they are. If we could at least try this, our world would become something a lot more wonderful.

Sincerely,

Emma G. Hauer