

Say please and thanks for discount

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SAY "please" and "thank you" when you place your order and you will get a discount on your cup of coffee.

This is the concept of a Singapore Kindness Movement pop-up cafe which was set up outside One Raffles Place yesterday.

It was inspired by La Petite Syrah cafe in southern France, Nice, where as a joke, its owners introduced higher coffee prices for rude customers.

At the Kindness Cafe here, those who do not mind their Ps and Qs will pay \$5 for a cup of long black or latte. Those who say “please” will pay \$4 and those who say, “Good afternoon! One coffee, please. Thank you” will pay \$2. The first hundred customers to compliment the cafe staff will even get a free loaf of Gardenia wholemeal bread.

The Singapore Kindness Movement first opened the pop-up cafe in Republic Polytechnic for two days in late May to mark Kindness Day in the same month. For three hours per day, they sold 250 cups of coffee there. The Raffles Place cafe, which opens from 11.30am to 2.30pm, has its beverages sponsored by Jewel Coffee in Shenton Way. It will close after tomorrow and move to its final stop at the National Library Board Atrium this weekend.

A 31-year-old banker was among a steady stream of customers yesterday. “I tried to get a bigger discount by adding ‘super please’ but it did not work,” he joked. “It is good human conditioning. I usually do say ‘please’ to service staff but if they are rude to me, I do not say ‘thank you’.” Another customer, recruitment consultant Melissa Kiew, 25, said: “The staff were also very cheerful and it helped build on the idea of kindness.”

Mr Cheng Shin Hao, 37, the Jewel Coffee operations manager and roaster who is working at the pop-up, said: “As a service provider, it always seems like the onus is on me to be polite and courteous, but when you meet a customer who is chirpy and friendly, it really makes the day a lot easier.”

Being polite and courteous has always been a focus of the Singapore Kindness Movement. Last April, labour chief Lim Swee Say highlighted the need for a nation of better customers as those who are overly demanding could cause even more of a strain on labour.

Ms Michelle Tay, 28, the Singapore Kindness Movement’s associate general secretary, said: “Good service is a two-way street. The cafe is a friendly reminder that the customer can play a part in determining if the service ends on a good or bad note.”

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