ONE AT A TIME

A friend of mine was walking down a deserted beach at sunset. As he walked along, he began to see another man in the distance. As he grew nearer, he noticed that the man kept leaning down, picking something up and throwing it into the water. Time and time again, he kept hurling things out to sea.

As my friend approached even closer, he noticed that the man was picking up starfish that had been washed up on the beach and, one at a time, he was throwing them back into the water.

My friend was puzzled. He approached the man and said “Hello. I was wondering what you are doing”.

“I’m throwing these starfish back into the sea. You see it is low tide now and all these starfish have been washed upon the shore. If I don’t throw them into the sea, they’ll die up here from lack of oxygen”.

“I understand”, my friend replied, “but there are thousands of starfish on this beach. You can’t possibly get to all of them. There are simply too many. And don’t you realise this is probably happening on hundreds of beaches all up and down this coast. Can’t you see that you can’t possibly make a difference”?

The man smiled, bent down and picked up yet another starfish, and as he threw it back into the sea, he replied, “Made a difference to that one!”