The Old Wise Man
(Myanmar)

One day, while an old man was planting small saplings of mango plants along the fence of his house, a prince happened by. The old man offered mango fruits to the prince.

“Your Highness, may I present a ripe mango to you?” asked the old man.

“Thank you, Grand Pa,” said the prince. “This is delicious; thank you so much.”

“May I ask you a question, Grand Pa?” asked the prince. “How old are you?”

“I am eighty years old,” replied the old man.

“I saw you planting the sapling of mango plants when I got here. But I thought you will never get to enjoy the fruit of those mango trees you are planting today. Why are you bothering to do all the work?” asked the prince.

The old man paused for a moment and then recited his reply.

“Those delicious mangoes that you have eaten came from the trees that my grandfather planted for my father and for me. Now I am planting the sapling of the mango plants, the fruits of which will be enjoyed by my son and grandsons long after I’m gone.”
After the prince heard the answer, he thanked the old man and gave him a ruby ring in return for his invaluable lesson.

“Thank you very much, Grand Pa, for the wisdom I learned from you today. I clearly understand what you are doing,” said the prince.

From that day on, the prince always cared for other people, especially his subjects. He did everything in his power to make others happy and he was well-loved by his people until the end of his days.
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