

“In a world where you can be anything, be kind”



Image from The Boy, The Mole, The Fox and the Horse by Charlie Mackesy

Kindness is one of the most valued character strengths in Western society. We like kind people, so being kind can help us be liked. Beyond that, being kind has been shown to boost not only others' well-being but also our own well-being.

Given that kindness helps us build healthy relationships with others—others who may be able to protect and support us—evolutionary psychologists believe that kindness makes us happy because it helps us survive and thrive. This may be especially true when we help family, friends, or our community members.

5 Interesting Facts about Kindness

1) Quiet kindness improves emotional intelligence. Silent or quiet kindness is when no one knows who did the kind act. Childhood studies have suggested that unrewarded acts of kindness reflect advanced emotional intelligence. This is because there is no expectation for praise or a reward for being kind. The act becomes completely about the other person.

2) Kindness is linked to actual health benefits. Good deeds produce a chemical in the body called oxytocin, commonly called the love hormone. oxytocin serves as an antioxidant, which reduces inflammation throughout the body. Studies show that oxytocin also speeds healing, elevates the mood and may even slow the aging process.

3) Kindness can help you live longer. Random acts of kindness produce endorphins, the brain's natural painkiller. Kind people have 23% less cortisol (the stress hormone) and age two times slower than the average population.

4) Kindness can relieve anxiety. In a recent study, a group of highly anxious individuals were tasked with performing a set number of kindness acts. Only 1 month in, participants reported significant increase in positive moods and a decrease in social anxiety.

5) Kind acts cause a domino effect. When we treat others with kindness, it is actually contagious. A single kind act typically creates a ripple effect, which will spread to others in the community.

Random acts of kindness for children and teenagers

- Hold the door open for someone.
- Give up your seat on public transport for someone who needs it.
- Give a complement for no reason.
- If you see someone sitting alone eating lunch, go and join them.
- Take the time to phone or FaceTime a grandparent or relative you don't see regularly.
- Say thank you to an adult who has helped you (parent, teacher etc.)
- Pick up litter and place it in the bin if you spot something while walking.
- Ask a friend how they're doing, and really listen to the answer.
- Do a chore around the house without being asked.
- Send a positive message in a group chat.



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