

Science-Backed Benefits of Kindness

Kindness is simple, actionable, and transformative. Research and real-world programs show that small, regular acts of generosity and connection strengthen our mental and physical wellbeing, deepen relationships, and rebuild trust across communities.

Practicing kindness:

- Lowers stress
- Boosts mood and resilience
- Increases feelings of belonging
- Creates positive feedback loops that encourage more compassionate behavior

Use this checklist to build a daily kindness habit that benefits you and everyone around you.

Everyday Kindness Activity Checklist

Check items off as you complete them and add your own. Extend kindness to your community, co-workers, family, friends, neighborhood, school – and yourself.

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Acknowledge success in another | <input type="checkbox"/> Leave a kind note in a library book |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ask an older person to reminisce about the good old days | <input type="checkbox"/> Leave a thank you or treat for your letter carrier or delivery person |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ask for a nonprofit donation rather than a birthday gift | <input type="checkbox"/> Let someone check out in front of you |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Be courteous to service workers (waitstaff, cashiers) | <input type="checkbox"/> Limit your paper use and footprint |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Say encouraging words | <input type="checkbox"/> Make a fresh pot of coffee |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bring a welcome gift or treat to a new neighbor | <input type="checkbox"/> Meditate |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Call someone just to see how they're doing | <input type="checkbox"/> Mow someone's lawn |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Carpool when you can | <input type="checkbox"/> Offer to babysit for free |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Offer to collect mail while someone's away |

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- Celebrate birthdays at work
 - Clean up shared spaces
 - Complete someone's chores
 - Donate hair to an organization like Locks of Love
 - Donate old clothes
 - Donate to a local nonprofit
 - Drink water
 - Eat healthy
 - Enjoy nature
 - Exercise
 - Forgive someone
 - Get to know a new co-worker, classmate, or neighbor
 - Give a compliment
 - Give recognition at school, in a meeting, or in a post
 - Greet people with a smile at school, work, and in public
 - Help someone struggling in a subject you know well
 - Bring healthy treats to share at school or work
 - Bring treats to a firehouse or police station
 - Help without being asked
 - Hold the door or elevator
 - Hold virtual check-ins or coffee chats
 - Offer to grocery shop for someone in need
 - Return a grocery cart for someone
 - Offer to take a photo when someone can't be in the picture
 - Rake leaves for someone
 - Offer to watch a pet while someone travels
 - Share and take turns
 - Shop locally
 - Organize a charity drive at work
 - Organize a family reunion
 - Shovel or sweep a driveway or walkway for someone
 - Show a new student around school and introduce them to others
 - Sign up for a class
 - Smile at people as you pass
 - Walk or bike instead of driving
 - Organize a meal for someone sick
 - Organize a neighborhood block party or holiday celebration
 - Organize a co-worker activity
 - Stand up to bullying
 - Start a new hobby
 - Stop comparing yourself to others
 - Pay for someone's meal or coffee
 - Pick up trash

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- Incorporate fun into projects
 - Invite someone to sit with you
 - Journal your gratitude
 - Leave a generous tip
 - Leave a kind note for a family member to find
 - Plan personal connection time during virtual meetings
 - Take someone to lunch
 - Say please and thank you
 - Send a card telling someone why they're special
 - Leave a kind note in surprise
 - Send letters, cards, or packages to military personnel
 - Send someone flowers
 - Serve breakfast in bed
 - Rest
 - Set goals
 - Read
 - Reduce, reuse, and recycle
 - Plant a tree
 - Put your phone away and listen with intent and eye contact
 - Take a bubble bath
 - Take a meal to someone
 - Tape money to a parking meter or vending machine for the next person
 - Teach someone a new skill
 - Tell a co-worker's boss about their success
 - Praise good service to a manager or supervisor
 - Thank co-workers for their contribution
 - Thank teachers and school staff
 - Use positive self-talk
 - Use reusable mugs, bottles, or bags
 - Visit a nursing home or write letters to residents
 - Visit an older person
 - Volunteer locally
 - Vote
 - Walk or run a 5K for a cause
 - Write a fun chalk note on the sidewalk
 - Write a letter to someone who influenced you

Additional Ideas to Expand Your Impact

- Host a "friends and family kindness swap" where people exchange simple services (e.g. lawn mowing for tutoring)

- Start a workplace “gratitude minute” at the end of meetings
- Run a skill-share series where neighbors teach practical skills to the community
- Launch a “pay-it-forward” coffee or snack chain at your local café
- Coordinate a neighborhood safety check for seniors during extreme weather
- Offer micro-mentoring sessions for students or recent graduates
- Leave encouraging sticky notes in public bathrooms, libraries, or elevators
- Partner with a local shelter or food bank for recurring volunteer shifts
- Decorate “kindness rocks” and leave them at parks, in your neighborhood, and around the office

Everyday Evidence-Based Tips

- **Make kindness matter:** targeted praise or help has a stronger effect than general praise
- **Keep actions brief and repeatable:** micro-actions are easiest to sustain
- **Track habits visually:** checking boxes or using a simple calendar reinforces consistency and enhances the activation of our brain reward center
- **Share impact publicly:** telling another person about your act of kindness increases follow-through and activates a ripple effect
- **Combine self-kindness with outward kindness:** caring for yourself supports sustained generosity. We can only love others as much as we love ourselves

Share Your Wins and Multiply the Ripple

We want to hear what worked for you. Submit your stories, photos, and new ideas to inspire others into action. Visit the Kindness Community to share and connect:

<https://www.EsteemAcademy.Life/community>

Every small action helps to make big changes. Thank you for joining the Kindness Culture Movement and making kindness part of your daily life.