Random Acts of Kindness Week

Kindness is more than buying a stranger a cup of coffee. Learning how to be kind to ourselves will help us be authentic and kind to others.

Why Dedicate a Week to Kindness?

Science finds that positive effects of kindness are experienced in the brain of those who receive or witness an act of kindness. Experiencing kindness improves mood and makes people significantly more likely to “pay it forward.”

Participate in the 7 Day Kindness Challenge, Starting February 16, 2020

Take part in our 7 days of science-based strategies to boost kindness, happiness, and social connection. The challenge will encourage you to step out of your comfort zone and do some things that maybe you haven’t done before or have wanted to do but weren’t sure how to get started. Each day’s practice offers a new science-based practice to help give your kindness a supercharge.

Challenge Themes

Random Acts of Kindness  Gratitude
Courage
Assertiveness  Focusing on the Good
Strengths and Perseverance  Self-Compassion

Start Your Kindness Journey
unh.edu/health/kind

Reflect and Share

After you have completed the 7 day kindness challenge, visit unh.edu/health/kind to tell us how it went for an opportunity to win a free 50 minute massage therapy session at Health & Wellness.
Kindness Challenge

Because gratitude is so darn good, here’s another gratitude practice. Today’s act of kindness focuses on reflecting on the goodness in our daily lives to grow a GRATITUDE MINDSET. #BeKindUNH

Gratitude

In our day-to-day lives, it’s easy to get caught up in the things that go wrong and forget the things that are going well. As a result, we often overlook everyday goodness—a smile from a classmate, a professor giving you positive feedback, or the warmth of our jacket on a cold winter day. We often miss opportunities for happiness and social connection.

Today’s challenge guards against those tendencies. By remembering and listing three positive things that happened in your day—and considering what caused them—you tune into the sources of goodness in your life. It’s a habit that can change the emotional tone of your life, replacing feelings of disappointment or entitlement with those of gratitude.

How to Do It

Write down three things that went well for you today, and provide an explanation for why they went well. It is important to create a physical record of your items by writing them down; it is not enough to simply do this exercise in your head. The items can be relatively small in importance (e.g., “my classmate let me borrow a pen”) or relatively large (e.g., “I got an interview for the internship I want.”) To make the exercise part of your daily routine, you may find it helpful to write your list before going to bed.

As you write, follow these instructions:

- Give the event a title (e.g., I caught myself worrying about the future and redirected my attention to the present moment).
- Write down exactly what happened in as much detail as possible, including what you did or said and, if others were involved, what did they do or say?
- Include how this event made you feel at the time and how this event made you feel later (including now, as you remember it.)
- Explain what you think caused the event. This reflection may help you feel sources of goodness in your life and foster a mindset of gratitude.
- Don’t worry about grammar or spelling. Write for yourself, not an audience. Use as much detail as you’d like.
- If you find yourself focusing on negative feelings, refocus your mind on the good event and the positive feelings that came with it. This can take effort but gets easier with practice and can make a real difference in how you feel.
- To get the most benefit of this practice, try it for one whole week.

Why It Works

By giving yourself space to focus on the positive, this practice teaches you to notice, remember, and savor the better things in life. It may prompt you to pay closer attention to positive events down the road and engage in them more fully—both in the moment and later on, when you can reminisce and share those experiences with others.

Learn More at unh.edu/health/kind

Source: Greater Good Science Center at UC Berkeley