



USE WITH:

n/a



GRADE LEVEL:

Upper elementary, middle school, or high school



CONTEXT:

Remote friendly

EDUCATOR PRACTICE

Practice Random Acts of Kindness

Feel happier by doing small things for others.

Created by [Greater Good Science Center at UC Berkeley](#)

Description:

This exercise asks you to perform five acts of kindness in one day to cultivate connection to others and happiness in yourself.

Est. time to complete:

15 minutes

Steps:

1. One day this week, perform five acts of kindness—all five in one day. It doesn't matter if the acts are big or small, but it is more powerful if you perform a variety of acts.
2. The acts do not need to be for the same person—the person doesn't even have to be aware of them. Examples include feeding a stranger's parking meter, picking up litter, helping a friend with a chore, or providing a meal to a person in need.
3. The acts can be small, and the person you help does not have to know you did them. The acts can be in-person or virtual and do not need to cost money. Examples include calling a friend to check in, sending a text telling someone why they are important to you, volunteering for a chat line, or leaving an encouraging note in another teacher's inbox.
4. After each act, write down what you did in at least one or two sentences; for more of a happiness boost, also write down how it made you feel.

Tips for Educators:

- By doing this practice, we get in the habit of doing nice things regularly, as well as noticing them more easily, which can be helpful in working with youth. Doing a variety of kind acts should help to sustain the positive feelings that come from kindness.
- If trying this with students, you might start by telling them that research has found that doing things for others makes us happy. Then, pose the activity as an opportunity to test these findings. Do they find that being kind to others does indeed make us happier? Feel free to try this with your classes, after first exploring it yourself.

Inspired by:

1. Lyubomirsky, S., Sheldon, K., & Schkade, D. (2005). Pursuing happiness: The architecture of sustainable change. *Review of General Psychology*, 9(2), 111-131. <https://doi.org/10.1037/1089-2680.9.2.111>