

Kindness & Gratitude

This week is Mental Health Awareness week hosted by The [Mental Health Foundation](#): the theme is Kindness.

One minute introduction video: [Kindness Matters](#)



As we are entering the eighth week since lockdown began, it's a good time to reflect and think about all the kindness and gratitude we have witnessed so far.

We have seen first-hand our everyday heroes in the shape of key workers, and the country uniting to thank them for their continuous hard work. We have seen children putting rainbows in their window, demonstrating solidarity. We have seen people offering support to those who can't leave the house to get their essentials and purely selfless acts from the likes of Captain Tom raising money for the NHS. Whilst we can't, and won't forget the sadness which Covid-19 has brought to many of our lives, we hope that when we look back at the unprecedented time we found ourselves in, we will remember the kindness that shone through and feel that sense of gratitude.

Random Acts of Kindness during Covid-19

Right now, there are many things which we can't control. However, one thing we can control is the kindness we show to other people.

Whilst random acts of kindness have always played a pivotal part in expressing gratitude and forming relationships, they're now more important than ever. Whilst it was much easier to show random acts of kindness without social distancing restrictions in place, there are still so many innovative ways we can demonstrate kindness and gratitude.

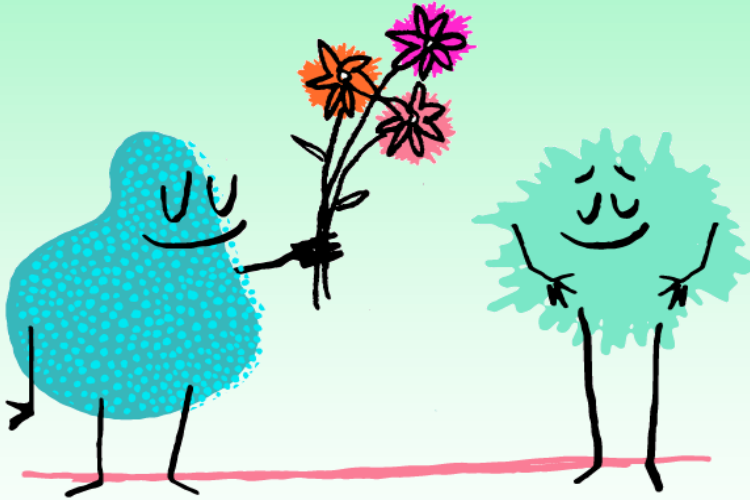
Below are some ideas from the Mental Health Foundation – why don't you try some and see how you feel? Remember, kindness is a powerful tool, so use it!

- ♥ Call a friend or family member that you haven't spoken to for a while
- ♥ Tell a family member how much you love and appreciate them (you could take the time to write this in a letter!)
- ♥ Arrange to have a cup of tea and a virtual catch up with someone that you know
- ♥ Tell someone you know that you are proud of them and why you are.
- ♥ Send a motivational text to someone that is struggling
- ♥ Send an inspirational quote to someone
- ♥ Lend your ear – call a colleague and ask how they're finding the change in routine.
- ♥ Offer to skill share with a friend via video call



Random Acts of Kindness during Covid-19

There are also some great resources on the [Random Acts of Kindness website:](#)



Take a look and do something that suits you and your interests.

Whilst it's great to show kindness to others, it has an added benefit that it improves our own emotional wellbeing and helps to reduce stress: something that is much needed during these challenging times.

BBC Bitesize has designed a kindness challenge for the week. Giving children a few ideas will help them try out acts of kindness and see how it makes both themselves and the recipient feel.

Mental Health Awareness Week				
The 7 Day KINDNESS Challenge!	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	
	Make a cup of tea for someone in your family	Send someone you haven't seen in ages a letter or a postcard	Donate food or clothes to people in need	
	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
	Bake a cake or some biscuits to cheer someone up	Ask your parents for a chore that would really help them out	Video call someone you know is feeling a bit lonely	Be kind to yourself and spend some time on YOU!

Even very young children can learn about kindness with this [CBeebies Podcast](#) where Lily and Felix explain all the different ways to be kind.

Gratitude: Then, Now & Going Forwards

"It's not the joy that makes us grateful: it's gratitude that makes us joyful!"

Being grateful is the key to happiness in life. Whilst we are experiencing challenging and difficult times, it is easy to forget all the amazing things that we are appreciative for. When we talk about 'Gratitude', this doesn't mean that we must see the greatness in everything – with some things, it's particularly difficult to see any greatness at all. However, gratitude is about being aware of the positives in life, even when they are small, acknowledging them and appreciating them.

Being grateful will move us away from looking through a lens which focusses on what we are lacking to a lens which looks at what we have. Due to the current restorations, it is likely that many of us will be looking towards what we are missing in our lives, such as a hug from a loved one, the choice to nip over to a friends for a cuppa or even the buzz of the staffroom and the jokes from our pupils. It's completely understandable that we are missing these things and it's a normal response to do so. However, focussing on what we are missing can negatively impact on our emotional wellbeing so it's important that we take some time each day to look at what we do have.



Gratitude: Then, Now & Going Forwards

How to Practice Gratitude:

Practicing gratitude isn't something you do one day and not the next, it is important to incorporate it into your daily routine so it becomes habitual.

You could start with some self-reflection. At the end of each day, think of three things that you are grateful for. They don't need to be big things, even just your partner making you a brew, a nice biscuit, being sunny for your daily exercise or your children going to bed without complaining.

The more we practice gratitude, the happier and more engaged we are. If you are living with others, you could share what you're grateful for with them and ask them to share their own. Maybe try asking your family '*what are you grateful for today?*' whilst sat together in an evening. Alternatively, you might want to share this with a friend or family member over Zoom.

Sharing our gratitude can help us to feel more resilient and optimistic.





Resources



If you want to know more about the benefits of explicitly practicing kindness and gratitude, or for ideas of how to practice them within your family or classroom, please check these out:

Twinkl has produced [Daily Kind Acts ideas](#) for primary-aged children as well as a PowerPoint [lesson for Kindness week](#) amongst other resources.

The Anna Freud Centre has produced a [7 day Acts of Kindness Calendar](#) which encourages individuals to partake in two acts of kindness for others, and act of kindness to themselves for self-care

[20 Acts of Kindness for children](#) during Covid-19

[Virtual Kindness Cup](#) resources from Place2Be

TED Talk: [How one act of kindness a day can change your life](#)

Positive Psychology: [40 Kindness Activities](#)

Edutopia's guide to [Getting started with gratitude in you classroom](#)

Positive Psychology: [How to Start a Gratitude Journal](#)—this has a collection of templates, ideas and apps as well as explaining how a gratitude journal can have a positive impact.

[Sunshine Parenting blog](#): this is an American site and references Thanksgiving but has some really lovely and simple to implement ideas for families at home.

[Seven Ways to Foster Gratitude in Kids](#) an American article exploring the power of gratitude and how we can encourage it with children of all ages.



“Everything can be taken from us, but one thing: the freedom to choose our attitude in any given set of circumstances”

– Viktor Frankl

So today, choose gratitude and choose kindness



As always, please keep us posted of anything you're doing on social media:

@NatWellbeingWSA

@ATWellbeingWSA

@ChrissyOrson



If you require any further support please don't hesitate to contact your advisor or email wholeschoolap- proach@oldham.gov.uk

