

Mental Health Awareness Week - Kindness

As the World continues to react and change to cope with COVID-19, there are many challenges posed in our everyday lives. This week is Mental Health Awareness week and the theme for this week is 'Kindness'. We have seen some amazing acts of kindness during the COVID-19 pandemic and this article will look at ways to be kind to others and to yourself. Being kind to both yourself and others can have a positive effect on not only your mental health but also on other people's mental health as well. Below are some ideas to inspire you to be kind during Mental Health Awareness week and beyond.

Be Kind to Family and Friends

- Call a family member or friend that you have not spoken to in a while
- Tell someone how much you appreciate them or tell them something that you really like about them – or you could do both!
- Find a really good news story and share it with others
- You could host a virtual quiz through Zoom or Skype for example and invite all the family and friends to join in
- Send an inspirational quote to family or friends
- Send a joke to family member or friend

Be Kind to Yourself

- Put positive messages where you will regularly see them
- Write down three things that you appreciate about yourself
- Make sure you spend some time doing something that you enjoy at home
- Look for any positives from the current lockdown – Try and find something positive
- Do something that makes you feel good – It could be something simple like dressing smart for a video call
- Try to smile and laugh as much as possible whether your speaking to someone on the phone or just looking back at pictures or memories for example

Be Kind to your Work Colleagues and Clients

- Give praise for work that an individual has produced wherever you can
- Just call a colleague to see how they are getting on with the current situation and if they need any further support
- When having a meeting with a client or speaking to a customer ask how they are doing
- Have a virtual lunch video call with a colleague

Be Kind at Home

- Make a drink or cook a meal for someone in your house
- Help with some of the household chores where you can
- Spend some time playing with your pet
- Try and make people in your household laugh and smile

Be Kind to your Community

- You could donate to a charity or take part in some fundraising using any skills or interests you have
- You could offer support to a vulnerable neighbour
- Donate or get involved with helping foodbanks
- You could order a gift or meal to be delivered to someone in your community
- You could teach someone a new skill via video call – for example if you play a musical instrument could you teach someone else to play via video call



There are lots of acts of kindness including the ones mentioned above. However it is also important to remember not to overdo it as you may end up becoming overwhelmed or giving more away than you can handle, which could then have a negative impact on your mental health. It may be worth starting off in a small way with your acts of kindness, so that you do not end up feeling overwhelmed. Always remember why you are doing that act of kindness and the effect that will have on the other person or people.

Studies have shown that practicing kindness can boost serotonin and dopamine levels in your brain, which are known as the “feel good, happy hormones”. Whilst the opposite, cortisol - the “stress hormone” can lead to unhappiness, anger and resentment.

During this time at home, maybe think of what you can do to be ‘kind’ to people both inside the home and out. It really is such a simple thing, but can make a world of difference not just to the person (or people), but to you as an individual and will be of huge benefit to your own mental health. How can we all be more kind to one another not just now but in the future as well?

If you feel you may need some support, you can contact Care first. Care first is a leading provider of confidential, professional counselling, information and advice services. All employees are eligible to use Care first, our services include; telephone counselling, information services and online support. Call Care first on the Freephone number provided by your organisation and you can speak to a professional in confidence.