Mental Health Awareness Week: Kindness

A guide for adults during the Covid-19 lockdown

Mental Health Awareness Week is taking place from 18-24 May 2020, and in response to the coronavirus outbreak, this year's theme is "Kindness".

What is kindness?

Kindness is defined by doing something towards yourself and others, motivated by genuine desire to make a positive difference. We know from the research that kindness and our mental health are deeply connected. The research shows that kindness is an antidote to isolation and creates a sense of belonging. It helps reduce stress, brings a fresh perspective, and deepens friendships. Kindness to ourselves can prevent shame from corroding our sense of identity and help boost our self-esteem. Kindness can even improve feelings of confidence and optimism.

Why is kindness important right now?

"Kindness unlocks our shared humanity and is central for our mental health. It has the potential to bring us together with benefits for everyone, particularly at times of great stress.
One thing we have seen all over the world is that kindness is prevailing in uncertain times, helping people to connect and communities to cope with the impact of the coronavirus pandemic." - mentalhealth.org.uk

The Mental health Foundation has published research on the impact of kindness on our wellbeing, which you can read here.

Acts of kindness help to reduce stress and improve emotional wellbeing

Counting Kindness

Sometimes we can find it easier to pay attention to the difficult things in our lives. This counting kindness challenge encourages us to be aware and alert to all the acts of kindness that also surround us. You can use the space below to note some things down. It may be something you see on tv, online, at home or even something you've done yourself! e.g. a kind message from a friend, helping from a loved one, a positive news story.

Click on each of these for a reminder of some other acts of kindness taking place during the lockdown.

- Drawing chalk messages on pavements
- Flags around Bristol to brighten people's day
- The primary school pupils emailing care home residents

Write down three acts of kindness that you would like to do over the next week:

1. ....

2. ....

3. ....

We have attached a sheet of ideas in case you are after some inspiration!

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Make a cup of tea for someone you live with

Make and send a care package to someone who needs it

Call a friend that you haven't spoken to for a while

Sign up to volunteer at a food bank

Acts of Kindness during Lockdown

Make a nice meal for someone you live with

Send flowers to a friend

Send an interesting article to a friend

Donate tins of food to your local food bank

Send a funny video to cheer up a friend

Arrange to have a video lunch with a colleague

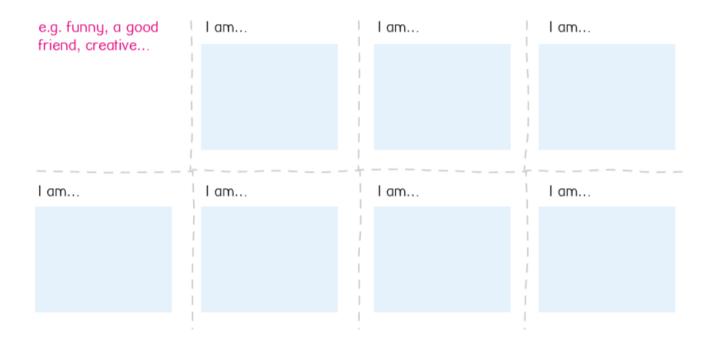Send a letter to a friend or family member

Offer to skill share with a friend via video call - you could teach guitar, dance etc

Print this page and stick it on your fridge for inspiration -or you could set it as the background of your phone as a reminder!

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Positive affirmations

Being kind to ourselves is important for our mental health and wellbeing. But sometimes we can find this hard to do. So, it can be helpful to practise celebrating the things we like about ourselves.

e.g. funny, a good friend, creative...

I am...	I am...	I am...

I am...	I am...	I am...	I am...

Remember: be kind to yourself

Giving and the 5 ways to wellbeing

If you would like more information on the role of giving in relation to worries, anxiety and the 5 ways to wellbeing, click or scan this link to watch a video:

Click here or scan this QR code

Other resources for you to use:

If you are a parent and/or a staff member and would like more information on how to get involved in Mental Health Awareness Week, please see below:

https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/campaigns/mental-health-awareness-week/get-involved

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Use the Clickable links to access more information:

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