

Wellness At Work - Simple Habits For A Happy Workplace

September 2016 - Random Acts of Kindness

Research, particularly that associated with [positive psychology studies](#), shows that people who are kind and compassionate are more satisfied with their lives, have better physical and mental health, and have stronger relationships. Being kind and compassionate also helps other people, and makes you feel good too.

This month's Wellness Habit outlines why being compassionate and practising random acts of kindness doesn't just benefit others, but it can also improve your own health and wellbeing. We've included just a few of the ways you can be kind as well as the ways in which kindness can improve your life and the lives of those around you.



Small acts of kindness can have enormous power for both the person being kind and the recipient, whether that's a stranger or someone in your family. According to David R. Hamilton, Ph.D., performing a kind act releases oxytocin, which temporarily lowers your blood pressure. Oxytocin is the same brain chemical that's released when you hold a baby or snuggle with a dog, so '[kindness is literally good for your heart.](#)'



According to an article about stress relief expert Lauren E. Miller by PR Newswire, practicing random acts of kindness in your life could lead to:



- Strengthened immune system
- Improved Cognitive Performance
- Increase in Energy
- Lower Heart Rate
- Balanced cortisol levels which result in less internal stress
- More likely to live a longer and more satisfied life
- Laughter and inner joy resulting in decreased stress hormones; lower blood pressure; diminished pain.



Positive psychology is dedicated to researching what makes individuals and communities flourish. Popular positive psychology techniques include random acts of kindness, like:

- Pay it forward: treat someone to something, like buying a cup of coffee for the person behind you in the café queue
- Send notes of gratitude: hand-write a thank you note to someone you admire or who has helped you out
- Be a sticky note ninja: stick post-it notes with nice messages written on them around your house or somewhere in public
- Volunteer: being a volunteer helps others and is good for you too
- Donate to a charity store: help people out by giving away what you no longer want or need
- Smile at strangers: smiling is contagious and it makes you feel good if people smile back
- Let people know you love what they do: this could be someone you know or people you admire, like a writer or musician.



If you would like to learn more about how random acts of kindness can positively impact you and the people around you, take a look at: [Random Acts of Kindness Then and Now: The 20th Anniversary of a Simple Idea That Changes Lives](#)

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