**Motivational Minutes on Kindness from 2011-2014**

**(Also see Building up Others, Character and Communication files.)**

1. **Friendships**

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**Quote of the day:**

“We cannot tell the precise moment when friendship is formed. As in filling a vessel drop by drop, there is at last a drop which makes it run over. So in a series of kindness there is, at last, one which makes the heart run over.” — James Boswell

**Reflection:**

Many acts of genuine kindness will gain you a friend, because love begets love. If you are feeling lonely and friendless, begin doing sincere deeds of kindness towards the people that cross your path every day. You will soon realize that the kindness you show is being reciprocated. Being kind to others is the best proven know-how tip to make new friendships.

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1. **Helping Others**

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**Quote of the day:**

“It is one of the most beautiful compensations of life that no man can sincerely try to help another without helping himself.” — Ralph Waldo Emerson

**Reflection:**

The natural law of giving is just as definite as the law of gravity; what goes up will eventually come back down. When we sincerely help someone else either financially or otherwise, we also benefit. Somehow, somewhere, sometime, acts of kindness always come back to us. It may be through receiving appreciation from the one we helped, or through receiving an unexpected blessing, or simply through the satisfaction of knowing we did the right thing.

Helping others isn’t always about some big project we undertake. Showing kindness can be as simple as giving a smile, a pat on the back, a hug, or an encouraging word to someone who is down; it could be lending a listening ear, or passing on some information that you know will benefit another; or using your skills and talents to help someone in need. One thing is certain, whether you show kindness in big ways or small, it always reaps positive results.

Why not look around and see how you can spread some kindness today—then put action to your plan and see what comes back to you!

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1. **What Kind of Friend Are You?**



**Quote of the day:**

"Real friendship is shown in times of trouble; prosperity is full of friends." — Euripides  
  
**Reflection:**

Have you ever noticed how when things are really going well for you financially, you suddenly have more friends? Yet, when you are struggling, there are only a few friends who stick around. The good news in this situation is you find out who your true friends really are.

Now would be a good time to evaluate yourself and what kind of friend you are to others. Make the decision to be there for your friends when they need extra support or help in whatever way is needed.

Write down the names of three friends who you know are going through some type of struggle and think of a way you can be a help or support to them during their rough period. You will be pleasantly surprised how this type of kindness will come back to you in your time of need.

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1. **Compliments**



**Quote of the day:**

“In life you can never be too kind or too fair; everyone you meet is carrying a heavy load. When you go through your day expressing kindness and courtesy to all you meet, you leave behind a feeling of warmth and good cheer, and you help alleviate the burdens everyone is struggling with.” — Brian Tracy

**Reflection:**

One of the ways to be kind is by giving and receiving compliments. The goal of a compliment is to make others feel good about themselves. The best compliments are those that are sincere and specific. But just as important as giving compliments is to know how to gracefully receive a compliment. When someone else gives you a kind remark, you should show courtesy by graciously accepting the kind word. Don't discount or dispute what the person said, as this can make them feel put down or that their taste is not so good, or worse yet, it is akin to doubting their word. I know that often it is not easy to receive a compliment, but when you don't, you are robbing others of a blessing. So the next time someone offers you praise, try responding with something like, "Thank you, that is so kind of you.”

The whole purpose of compliments, both giving and receiving, is to show appreciation. Think about who you can give an admiring comment to today. Freely give and receive compliments and see what wonders they can do for you and others.

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1. **Let Us Always Give Something**



**Quote of the day:**

“Let us give something to each person we meet: joy, courage, hope, assurance, or philosophy, wisdom, a vision for the future. Let us always give something.” — Daisaku Ikeda

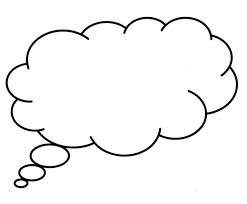
**Reflection:**

No matter how little we possess in material things, we can always give something. Some of the most prevalent human needs are met through gifts that cannot be wrapped. When we show kindness and consideration to others, we cannot help but benefit ourselves.

Stop to think about the people that cross your path each day. Think about what you can do to show kindness to each one. You’ll be amazed how much you have to give. Make a habit of giving something to every person you meet. It will change your day and transform your life!

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1. **Send Friendly Thoughts**



**Quote of the day**:

“If you do not let your heart grow hard, if you prove your friendliness toward your fellow people, they will answer you with affection. They will send you friendly thoughts. The more people you can help, the more positive thoughts you will receive. That people act kindly toward you is worth more than wealth.” — Henry Old Coyote

**Reflection:**

Kindness begets kindness. It is as simple as the fact that what you sow, you reap. When you are kind, it starts a ripple effect that enhances your life and fills you up with a happiness and love that cannot be purchased for all the money in the world. Don’t let opportunities to be kind to someone pass you by. Look for ways to support others and show kindness every day.

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1. **Understanding Others**



**Quote of the day:**

“Any fool can criticize, condemn and complain—and most fools do. But it takes character and self-control to be understanding and forgiving.” — Dale Carnegie

**Reflection:**

A key to understanding others, and therefore, treating them right, is to put yourself in their place. Try mentally projecting yourself into their circumstances.

For example, before you ask someone to do something that may seem simple and straightforward to you, first consider: whether that person will feel the same. Or, if someone is out of sorts or isn’t being as productive as usual, think about what might be causing that person to act that way, perhaps they had a bad night’s sleep, or maybe there are difficulties at home. This is a much safer way to operate than assuming the next person sees and feels the same way you do about things.

As the saying goes, ‘walk a mile in another’s shoes’. If you’ll do this, you will be much more inclined to be understanding and supportive when any given situation calls for it. Then adjust your expectations or presentation accordingly; others will sense that you’ve anticipated their needs or concerns and that you’ve taken their limitations into account, and this will help you live and work together in better harmony. Empathy helps create unity of spirit, and that’s a wonderful thing!

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1. **Just Because You Care**



**Quote of the day:**

“Let no one ever come to you without leaving better and happier. Be the living expression of God's kindness: kindness in your face, kindness in your eyes, kindness in your smile.” — Mother Teresa

**Reflection:**

When someone does something special for you, doesn’t it make you feel loved?

You can do the same for others—and I’m not just talking about giving a gift on a special occasion to a special someone, although that can be wonderful too. I’m referring to the little things that you can do for anyone, anytime, for no other reason than because you care—things that may cost you little or nothing, but which could mean the world to those on the receiving end. Thoughtful gestures, especially when they are least expected, have a wonderful way of brightening people’s day. They convey, “You are special.”

Take a personal interest in those you see regularly but don’t really know—the checkout clerk, the waiter, the repairman, the receptionist. Ask about their health, their families, or how their day is going, and then ask for an update the next time your paths cross.

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1. **Courtesy**

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**Quote of the day:**

“Courtesy is the one coin you can never have too much of or be stingy with.” — John Wanamaker

**Reflection:**

*Years ago, a 10-year-old boy approached the counter of a soda shop and climbed on to a stool. "What does an ice cream sundae cost?" he asked the waitress. "Fifty cents," she answered. The youngster reached deep in his pockets and pulled out an assortment of change, counting it carefully as the waitress grew impatient. She had "bigger" customers to wait on. "Well, how much would just plain ice cream be?" the boy asked. The waitress responded with noticeable irritation in her voice, "Thirty-five cents." Again, the boy slowly counted his money. "May I have some plain ice cream in a dish then, please?" He gave the waitress the correct amount, and she brought him the ice cream. Later, the waitress returned to clear the boy's dish and when she picked it up, she felt a lump in her throat. There on the counter the boy had left two nickels and five pennies. She realized that he had had enough money for the sundae, but sacrificed it so that he could leave her a tip.*

Adapted from *A Lifetime of Success* PAT WILLIAMS Fleming H. Revell

The moral: Everyone in this world is important. We should always treat others with courtesy, dignity, and respect*.*

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1. **Love**

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**Quote of the day**:

“Life is short. Be swift to love! Make haste to be kind!” — Henri Frederic Amiel

**Reflection**:

I heard this story about someone who was always seeking a new love, but never finding one that satisfied or lasted, the reason being, this person was always seeking to get love, to receive love, to be loved. One day, someone suggested to the seeker of love, that perhaps they needed to learn how to give love—to love unselfishly for the benefit and happiness of another. After years of searching, these words hit home as an entirely new thought that had never occurred before. And so, they decided to give it a try and set out in pursuit of someone they could “give” love to. It wasn’t long before they found what they were looking for all along—all because they went in search of someone whom they could make happy by giving love to them.

If you've been looking for someone to make you happy, why not try reversing the process—look for someone who you can make happy, and then happiness will find you!

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1. **Mr. Willey’s Challenge**

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**Quote of the day:**

“Make one person happy each day and in 40 years you will have made 14,600 human beings happy for a little time at least.” — Charley Willey

**Reflection:**

How simple a thing to do! In today’s world you hear so much about the bad, rude, inconsiderate things people do, not to mention the outright cruel, evil, mean and criminal things the papers report. You don’t hear much about the good things people do, but wouldn’t that be wonderful if we did. I love hearing about random acts of kindness.

After thinking about this quote, I’ve decided to take on the challenge of Mr. Willey. I am committing to making at least one person happy a day, and thus making the world a happier place. Want to join me in the challenge?

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1. **Focused Attention**

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**Quote of the day**:

“Get a life in which you are not alone. Find people you love, and who love you. And remember that love is not leisure, it is work.” — Anna Quindlen

**Reflection:**

The essence of love is not what we think or do or provide for others, but how much we give of ourselves. Sometimes this concept is difficult to grasp. The most desired gift of love is focused attention. Love that concentrates so intently on another that you forget yourself at that moment. Attention says, "I value you enough to give you my most precious asset—my time."

Whenever you give your time, you are making a sacrifice, and sacrifice is the essence of love. The greatest gift you can give someone is your time. You can give without loving, but you cannot love without giving. Love means giving up—yielding our preferences, comfort, goals, security, money, energy, or time for the benefit of someone else.

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1. **Sunshine**



**Quote of the day**:

“Those who bring sunshine to the lives of others cannot keep it from themselves.” — Sir James Matthew Barrie

**Reflection:**

Did you ever think about the sunshine—and how it freely shines down on all mankind, rich, poor, young, old, red, yellow, black or white? The sun unreservedly gives light, warmth and happiness to all of us; it certainly is no respecter of persons. Oh, that we all would be like the sun.

Little acts of kindness throughout the day can bring sunshine to others—a warm touch, an understanding glance, a listening ear, the soothing tone of your voice, the sparkle in your eyes, the kindness of your smile. Try spreading a little light of this kind on others—you’ll be pleasantly surprised, because every time you do, the sunshine reflects right back on you.

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1. **Relationships**



**Quote of the day**:

“A man without ambition is dead. A man with ambition but no love is dead. A man with ambition and love for his blessings here on earth is ever so alive." — Pearl Bailey

**Reflection:**

Often we act as if relationships are something to be squeezed into our schedule. We talk about finding time for our children or making time for people in our lives. That gives the impression that relationships are just a routine part of our lives along with many other things on our long to-do lists. But relationships are one of the things life is all about.

Relationships, not achievements or the gaining of things, are what matters most in life. So why do we allow our relationships to get the short end of the stick? When our schedules become overloaded, we start skimming relationally, cutting back on giving the time, energy, and attention that loving relationships require. What's most important is displaced by what's urgent. Busyness is a great enemy of cultivating good relationships. We become preoccupied with making a living, doing our work, paying bills, and accomplishing goals as if these tasks are the main point of life. They are not. The most important point of life is learning to love people.

Are you letting your relationships get the short end of the stick? If so what can you do today to turn that around?

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1. **Stop Procrastinating**



**Quote of the day**:

“We can only learn to love by loving.” — Iris Murdoch

**Reflection:**

The best time to love is now. Sometimes procrastination is a legitimate response to a trivial task, but because love is so important, it takes top priority. Why is now the best time to express love? Because you never know how long you will have the opportunity. Circumstances change. People die. Children grow up. You have no guarantee of tomorrow. If you want to express love, you had better do it now. The best use of life is to love.

How will you explain those times when projects or things were more important to you than people? Who do you need to start spending more time with? What do you need to cut out of your schedule to make that possible?

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1. **The Sun and the Wind**



**Quote of the day:**

“Constant kindness can accomplish much. As the sun makes ice melt, kindness causes misunderstanding, mistrust, and hostility to evaporate.” — Dr. Albert Schweitzer

**Reflection:**

I tend to agree with Dr. Schweitzer. I wonder sometimes if he acquired his wisdom from the following fable:

*The sun and the wind quarreled about which was the stronger. The wind said, "I'll prove I am. See that old man down there with a coat? I bet I can make him take his coat off quicker than you can."*

*So the sun went behind a cloud and the wind blew until it was almost a tornado, but the harder it blew the tighter the old man wrapped his coat about him.*

*Finally the wind calmed down and gave up; and then the sun came out from behind the cloud and smiled kindly on the old man. Presently, he mopped his brow and pulled off his coat. The sun then told the wind that gentleness and friendliness were always stronger than fury and force.*

Next time you are trying to influence a situation, opt to show a little kindness and love instead of force.

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1. **Support**



**Quote of the day:**

“Too often we underestimate the power of a touch, a smile, a kind word, a listening ear, an honest compliment, or the smallest act of caring, all of which have the potential to turn a life around.” — Dr. Leo Buscaglia

**Reflection:**

The story of one of the great presidents of Harvard College, Charles William Eliot, is worth recalling.

*Born with a serious facial disfigurement, he discovered as a young man that nothing could be done about it, and he must go through life with his mark. It is related that when his mother brought to him that tragic truth, it was indeed "the dark hour of his soul."*

*His mother told him, "My son, it is not possible for you to get rid of this handicap. We have consulted the best surgeons, and they say that nothing can be done. But it is possible for you to grow a mind and soul so big that people will forget to look at your face." And so he did, all because of a little encouragement.*

In marriage, with children, at work, in any association—an ounce of encouragement, of sincere appreciation of some act or attribute, can do more than a ton of fault-finding. If we look for the good in others, in even the most unlikely, unlikable, and incapable person, we can always find something to commend and encourage them about.

Reach out and give a little support and appreciation to those around you today—and you’ll be shaping the world of tomorrow.

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1. **Expressing Gratitude**



**Quote of the day:**

“Feeling gratitude and not expressing it is like wrapping a present and not giving it.” — William Arthur Ward

**Reflection:**

Have you ever felt thankful for something someone did for you? Thankful for a kindness shown, or thankful perhaps that someone simply puts up with you? I sure have. I know I’ve been guilty of not expressing enough gratitude and thankfulness to those I love, or even to those who pass my way.

Tell those around you how thankful you are for having them in your life. So many times we neglect to take the time to craft the words to express to those closest to us what their presence in our lives means to us. Take the opportunity to put your hand on their shoulder, look them in the eyes and tell them. Let them know what they mean to you, and in return you'll begin to create the possibility of deeper, richer, more fulfilling relationships.

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1. **Do One Favor**

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**Quote of the day:**

“There's no such thing as a small act of kindness. Every act creates a ripple with no logical end.” — Scott Adams

**Reflection:**

Kindness is a good thing however, in our busy lives it is often easy to overlook the needs of others. Here is an exercise that may help you initiate a chain of kindness and thus a ripple effect that can touch many lives.

--Picture yourself in the center of a set of concentric circles. You're in the center, but the focus isn't on you. Within the first circle are your family and closest friends. It's probably easy to identify the needs of at least two or three of these people. Write them down.

--Now picture the next circle, your colleagues and acquaintances. Make a note of their names and needs.

--Now picture the widest circle, people whom you don't know personally, but whose needs you are aware of, jot down the ones who come to mind and their need.

--Take your list and try to do one favor for each circle each week.

Each month do the exercise again and make a new list, repeating the process of helping one from each circle and experience the joy it brings into your life, not to mention the difference you are making in the world with the ripple effect you are causing.

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1. **Kindness**

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**Quote of the day:**

“Ask yourself: Have you been kind today? Make kindness your daily modus operandi and change your world.” — Annie Lennox

**Reflection:**

“Do to others as you would have them do to you.” So many problems would be solved if people would live by that simple rule. Not only is it the right thing to do, but it is the smart thing to do. When you do it—even when it's to your own hurt at first—it eventually comes back to you in the form of more love and other good things in your own life. When you build your life and character on treating people the way you want to be treated, it's inevitable that they will return the favor by treating you with respect and kindness. But it starts with you. Do your part and start changing the world today.

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1. **Build Bridges**



**Quote of the day:**

“If someone listens, or stretches out a hand, or whispers a kind word of encouragement, or attempts to understand a lonely person, extraordinary things begin to happen.” — Loretta Girzartis

**Reflection:**

It’s been said that people are lonely because they build walls instead of bridges. How true! When you build bridges by reaching out to and connecting with others, it may add a few problems and complications, but it’s well worth the effort because it also brings warmth, friendship, love, and other blessings into your life. It is a matter of give and take, and it require some effort, patience, and perseverance. The bridge doesn’t build itself, and sometimes others aren’t so keen at first to see you building in their direction. But if everyone got stuck in the “me-first” mentality and built nothing but walls, the world would be a terribly lonely place.

When you begin to think in terms of what others want and need, the framework is in place. Then that bridge grows a little stronger each time you give of yourself to that hard-to-reach person. It might take a little courage to cross that bridge the first time when you’re not sure how well it’s going to hold or how you’ll be received on the other side, but you’ll be glad you did.

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1. **Little Acts of Kindness**

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**Quote of the day:**

“The happiness of life is made up of minute fractions—the little, soon-forgotten charities of a kiss or smile, a kind look or heartfelt compliment.” — Samuel Taylor Coleridge

**Reflection**:

I take this quote from Samuel Coleridge to mean that the little acts of kindness are what really count, such as going out of your way to help a friend; remembering to have manners; being a good listener; smiling often; and responding to others' rudeness with restraint.

Behave as if you care about others as a way of caring about yourself. Your behavior is an indicator of your character.

Here are two tips for building kindness.

* Be thoughtful. Thinking with your head and your heart can help you go a long way in putting others' needs before your own wants and desires. Look for ways you can help others at home or at work.
* Watch what you say and how you say it. Your choice of words has an enormous impact on the way you interact with others as well as your tone of voice when you speak to others.

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1. **Your Honored Guest**

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**Quote of the day:**

“Etiquette is based in ethics and kindness, not pretense. It is the mark of character and manners. It is respecting others no matter what their position in life. In fact, you indicate who you are by the way you treat others.” — Sara Pentz

**Reflection:**

Manners and being nice is simply using common sense, it's making others feel comfortable. As you go about your day, polite contact with others can garner pleasant and helpful responses. Unfortunately, being polite and nice is often regarded as something you can turn on and off for special occasions. However, that just isn't so, kindness takes work, especially in today's society where rudeness is often the norm. This does not have to be the case for you. You are better than that, and you can prove it by the way you treat others. Thoughtful behavior works in any situation, anywhere, anytime, with anybody and this approach can work miracles. Courtesy is contagious!

Why not try treating others, no matter what their station in life, as if they are your honored guests—their responses may surprise you.

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1. **A Pocket Full Of Love**



**Quote of the day:**

“Do not keep the alabaster boxes of your love and tenderness sealed up until your friends are dead. Fill their lives with sweetness. Speak approving, cheering words while their ears can hear them and while their hearts can be thrilled by them.” — Henry Ward Beecher

**Reflection:**

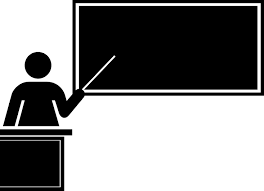
Each day we have an opportunity to send messages of love. It could be very direct messages like saying "I love you" that we might speak to those closest to us, or more subtle messages, like smiling at a stranger.

To make full use of this opportunity, imagine that each morning you are given a pocketful of love to share with others throughout the day. Your mission is to empty this pocket daily. How are you going to go about it? When and where will you fill their lives with sweetness? To whom will you speak approving, cheering words? Why not start now? What’s stopping you?

No matter what your situation or how you go about it, as you empty your pocket of love, notice how good it makes you feel too!

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1. **Life Is Schoolroom Not a Play Ground**

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**Quote of the day**:

“Just remember the world is not a playground but a schoolroom. Life is not a holiday but an education. One eternal lesson for us all: to teach us how better we should love.” — Barbara Jordan

**Reflection:**

Life is all about love. Learning to love unselfishly is not an easy task. It runs counter to our self-centered nature. That's why we're given a lifetime to learn it. However, love cannot be learned in isolation. You have to be around people, some of them irritating, imperfect, and frustrating.

But even so one of the best uses of life is to love. Love should be our top priority, primary objective, and greatest ambition. Love should not be a good part of our life; it's the most important part. It's not enough to say, "One of the things I want in life is to be loving," as if it's on your “top ten things to do” list.

Take time to reflect if relationships have priority in your life above everything else and make the proper adjustments.

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1. **Gentle Nurturing of Appreciation**

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**Quote of the day:**

“Kind words and good deeds are eternal. You never know where their influence will end.” — H. Jackson Browne

**Reflection:**

So many people lack simple confidence. They've felt shut out by others, condemned, unappreciated, and ridiculed, and this has been a loss to the development of their possibilities. It's a rare soul who can go so contrarily against the crowd and forge ahead, regardless of what others think, or whether or not he receives any praise or encouragement for what he hopes to achieve. Most people need the gentle nurturing of appreciation, faith, love, and belief that they can succeed.

Don't feel that you need to have wonderfully warm feelings about a person, or be their best friend and really know them deeply before you can make a difference in someone’s life. You can be the stranger at hand whose words or deeds had a marvelous effect on someone’s need for encouragement. Having such faith in others doesn't always come easily. Sometimes you must extend the hand of acceptance, even when your logic is screaming that you shouldn't. But if you know that it's the right thing to do, then it's your heart that you must listen to. Don't push it aside as illogical or foolish thinking that the person doesn’t deserve your approval. Love isn't logical. In fact, it’s more often illogical, doing things that others never would.

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1. **Show Them The Way**



**Quote of the day:**

"I'd rather see a sermon than hear one any day, I'd rather one would walk with me than merely show the way." — Edgar A. Guest

**Reflection:**

This quote reminds me of a personal story. When I was just starting off in my career, a veteran worker came up to me and asked me for something. I promptly began to explain to him where to find it, at which time he recited to me the above quote. It so convicted me that I immediately stopped what I was doing and showed him where he could find what he was looking for.

That one incident so impressed me that since that time whenever someone asks me for help I try to not only explain it, but actually show them the way or how to do it.

This simple act of kindness has served me well for many years, and will do the same for you.

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1. **Kill Them With Kindness**



**Quote of the day**:

“Lead the life that will make you kindly and friendly to everyone about you, and you will be surprised what a happy life you will lead.” — Charles M. Schwab

**Reflection:**

Dealing with difficult people in the workplace can put a strain on your nerves and on your ability to perform in your job, especially when jealousy over position is a factor. But it doesn't have to be that way. It takes time to build relationships of mutual trust and respect, and you may have to work at it. As frustrated and threatened as you may feel, you can be sure that persistent kindness will pay off in the end. It's like the story of a man who moved into a community where a notoriously disagreeable and contentious old man lived.

*When the newcomer to the neighborhood was warned about the old man's temperament, he answered, "If he disturbs me, I will kill him!" His statement reached the ears of his ill-tempered neighbor who had, in various ways, already begun to torment the new settler. But every offensive action was met with kindness until at last the cantankerous old man was overwhelmed by the kind words and deeds of his new neighbor. As a new friendship began to blossom, the old man admitted, "I was told that you said you would kill me, but I didn't expect you to do it this way!"*

A soft answer can end an argument. A pleasant word can change the atmosphere. A dark disposition can literally be laid to rest by the kind expression on your face and warm tone in your voice. Kindness causes anger, bitterness, hatred, ill-will to fizzle out and replaces them with the desire to be likewise kind.

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1. **Opportunities Are Like Sunrises**



**Quote of the day:**

“Opportunities are like sunrises—if you wait too long, you miss them.” — William Arthur Ward

**Reflection:**

The smallest good deed is better than the grandest intention. Unfortunately most of us fail too often to express words of love, appreciation, comfort and encouragement to those around us.

If you were given five minutes warning before sudden death, what would you do with that five minutes? I dare say you would be occupied trying to tell someone who matters in your life, to tell them you loved them, appreciated them or admired them.

If you love someone, tell them so. If you're thankful for something, say so. Don’t wait, as the opportunity may not come again. Chances are, those in your life are yearning for some kind word of love and encouragement. Don’t miss an opportunity to do even the smallest good deed even for a stranger if the opportunity arises.

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1. **Kindness**



**Quote of the day:**

“I wonder why it is that we are not all kinder to each other than we are. How much the world needs it! How easily it is done!” — Henry Drummond

**Reflection:**

If you want to see the world and those around you change, then it starts with you—with your belief that others are more than they appear to be. You can draw out the good in those around you, appreciate individuals for who they are, acknowledge their gifts and talents and humbly be a conduit of love and appreciation to others.

Start by thinking of the positive ways that someone has helped you and the good that a person has done. Appreciate them in your thoughts. You will experience a change in how you view others, because you will have taken the time to go deeper, past the surface assumptions that are so easy to make and past your history with them.

Go slower in your interactions with people. It takes time to see people in a new light. It takes a slowdown of the hasty assumptions that are a result of mental ruts and thought patterns that require a change in perspective. Be willing to see who the person is today, or the potential of what they can be tomorrow, and don't let your view be marred by your past experiences.

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1. **Treat Everyone With Kindness**

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**Quote of the day:**

“Treat everyone with politeness, even those who are rude to you--not because they are nice, but because you are.” — Author Unknown

**Reflection:**

When someone is rude to me I often think of this story.

*A father was buying a news paper from a paper boy who was rude to the man. However, the man continued his interaction with the newsboy with politeness even giving him a tip. The son of the man questioned his father afterward as to why he had been so nice to the paper boy when he had been so rude to him. The father advised his son "My boy treat everybody with politeness, even those who are rude to you. For remember that you show courtesy to others not because they are gentlemen, but because you are one."*

How you act reflects your character. That advice is not always easy to follow, but it certainly is sound. Is there anyone in your life that you need to treat kindly, generously or nicely not because they are nice but because you are?

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1. **Bring Joy**

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**Quote of the day:**

“Every day we're given small opportunities to bring someone joy that can make a huge difference in a life.” — Dalai Lama

**Reflection:**

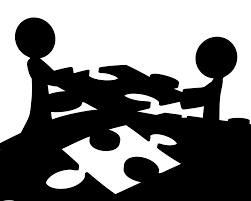
In today’s world climate, you may think twice about who you help and how you help them, but don’t let this stop you from making a difference in other’s lives in small ways.

For example, I was crossing the street the other day and I noticed a young woman with a child who had her hands full. She was barely managing. I asked her if she needed some help crossing the street and carrying her things. She readily agreed and was so appreciative. It was just a small thing but it made a difference to her and was possibly even a life saver. After the initial awkwardness I felt good knowing that I had brighten someone’s day.

You and I can share kindness with others even in small ways. How will you make a difference in someone’s life today?

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1. **Problem Solving**

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**Quote of the day**:

“Never let a problem to be solved, become more important than the person to be loved.” — Barbara Johnson

**Reflection:**

How many times do we take those dearest to our hearts for granted, and give priority instead to solving the problem at hand? Shouldn’t it be the other way around? Wouldn’t it be better to give our attention and priority to the ones we love and realize that there will always be obstacles to deal with? In addition, love gives us purpose and strength to overcome our obstacles and problems.

Reflect on your track record regarding problem solving in your life. When faced with difficulties, do you show the ones you love how much you value them? Do you draw strength from loving and being loved in return? Or do you shut others out of your life while your problems become the most important part of your day? Redefine your priorities accordingly.

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1. **Don’t Cram All Your Good Deeds Into Just A Few Days**

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**Quote of the day**:

“I sometimes think we expect too much of Christmas Day. We try to crowd into it the long arrears of kindliness and humanity of the whole year. As for me, I like to take my Christmas a little at a time, all through the year.” — David Grayson

**Reflection:**

This quote succinctly answers exactly what I was questioning last year during the holidays. I enjoy watching Christmas movies but it dawned on me how in each of the movies I watched, the main character was so negative about the holidays. I think it just might be that we expect too much of it, and so we cram in all our good deeds for the year in just a few days, and that’s too much to expect of anyone.

Wouldn’t you agree, it would be much better to do as the quote suggests, and give a little love, kindness, forgiveness and generosity all through the year?