

Random Acts of Kindness

Get happier and healthier by doing things for others

How to do it

One day this week, perform five acts of kindness in one day. Whether the acts are big or small doesn't matter, but it's more powerful if you perform a variety of acts. The acts don't need to be for the same person, and the person doesn't even need to be aware of them. For example, you could top up a stranger's parking meter, pick up litter, help a friend with a chore, or provide a meal to someone in need.

After completing each act, write down what you did and how it made you feel.

Why you should do it

All of us perform acts of kindness at some point. The acts could be large or small, and their beneficiaries may not even be aware of them. Despite this, their effects can be profound to both the giver and the recipient.

This exercise asks that you perform five acts of kindness in one day to cultivate feelings of kindness and happiness in yourself so that you are able to extend kindness to your local community and the world.

Why it works

Researchers believe that practicing random acts of kindness makes you feel happier because it makes you think more highly of yourself and makes you aware of positive social interactions. It may also increase your kind, helpful attitudes and tendencies towards others. Evidence suggests that variety is key: there is a risk that kindness can start to feel routine, so it is beneficial to approach it with a spirit of curiosity, always looking for new ways to express your care and kindness and looking for new people to help.

Evidence and sources

- Lyubomirsky, S., Sheldon, K., & Schkade, D. (2005). Pursuing happiness: The architecture of sustainable change. *Review of General Psychology*, 9(2), 111-131.

This study found that performing five acts of kindness in one day significantly boosted the participants' happiness, but not when spread out over the week.

- Sonja Lyubomirsky, Ph.D., University of California, Riverside.

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Brainstorming area

[illegible]

Source and further reading at the [Greater Good Science Center at UC Berkeley](#).

