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kindness challenge 101

Kindness is about being generous with your time and with compliments, being respectful, being compassionate, and generally having concern for others. Remember, being kind is not the sign of a 'soft' or weak leader – it is a sign of strength.

how do I incorporate kindness challenges into omm meetings?

At the end of each meeting the meeting leader will choose a kindness challenge to implement in your school. This can be done by club vote or by self choice. The goal is to practice kindness every day. There are so many benefits of being kind, but it starts with you, and it's not always easy. The good news is, it's contagious, and addictive!

how do OMM members remember their challenges or how are members accountable for practicing the kindness challenges?

Have members write down their challenge on a sticky note and stick in on their laptop, book, or phone. This is a great way to hold yourself accountable. If you decide to self select what challenge you practice you could have members write it down on a sticky note with their name and display it on a poster sheet until the next meeting.

when do we discuss the last meeting's kindness challenge?

At the beginning of each meeting, take 5 - 10 minutes to discuss how the last meeting's challenge went. Below are some sample questions you may ask. Your discussions will evolve over time and the conversation will naturally be less structured.

- Was it awkward the first few times you enacted the challenge?
- Did it get easier?
- What kind of reactions did you get? - remember often times people don't immediately know how to respond to genuine kindness.
- Did you feel better after having been deliberately kind?
- Do you think you made a connection with anyone?

resource awareness

sharing is caring

Challenges:

- Share a mental wellness resource(e.g., school social worker) that you have used or would consider utilizing with a trusted friend.
- Talk about mental wellness resources that you didn't know existed but think would help peers at lunch or other appropriate time.

quotes to inspire

“Kindness is an act of selflessness designed to make the receiver feel good”.



stigma reduction

kindness through body language

Before the activity, instruct students to rate their mood on a scale of 1-5 quietly to themselves. Then start the activity.

Challenge: Give as many high-fives as possible in 10 seconds

Post Challenge Discussion:

1. What is your mood now on a scale of 1-5? Did it improve?
2. What did you notice about the energy of the room? Did it change as a result of the activity?
3. Did the challenge and having a specific task of interacting make it easier to connect with different people?
4. What did it feel like to give/receive a high five?
5. Why is giving a high an act of kindness?

Extension Challenge: Count how many high fives you've given between now and next meeting.

find kindness in others

Challenge: offer up a shout out to those who you see being kind to others.

Note: This exercise will require you to put forth a little more effort. As you are going out of your way pay to more attention to the things that are happening around you. Chances are you will see someone do something kind for someone else. Approach that person and let them know you recognize their kindness, and that you appreciate them.

Trust us on this one, you'll both have a little bit better day for it :) Tell that person even though it may feel a little awkward.

quotes to inspire

Kindness is a language which the deaf can hear and the blind can see ~ Mark Twain

Kindness can be its own motive. We are made kind by being kind. ~Eric Hoffer

social systems of support

be a cheerleader

Challenges:

- Give props to someone who is trying to be helpful especially when the person is offering to be a part of the solution to a problem.
- Let someone for know you recognize their sensitivity, kindness, compassion, etc. with others.
- Cheer up someone who is discouraged with a hug, spending time with her, sharing truth, giving hope, telling a joke.
- Be patient with people when you need something, especially when there is a long line of people waiting. Tell that person you appreciate how hard they are working to help everyone around them.
- Do a task normally done by your partner.
- Be quick to listen and slow to talk. Sometimes, the best encouragement is a listening ear.

quotes to inspire

You encourage people by seeing the good in them ~Nelson Mandela

A candle loses nothing by lighting another candle ~ James Keller

respect

building character

Challenge: Select one of the following attributes to build better character: Integrity, Honesty, Loyalty, Respect, Courage, Humility, Authenticity

Note: Character is the combination of traits and qualities only you have. Good character is essential to healthy self-esteem, relationships, and life satisfaction

helping others to help yourself

Challenge: *Open up to strangers or peers you are not already friends with*

As young kids we were taught to be wary of strangers, now that we are grown we are more able to decide if a stranger poses a threat to us or not. Whether we realize it or not, ignoring strangers does not make them go away, together we are all each a part of a whole. And what we think, say, and do affects those around us.

There are ways we can correct this false reality that exists around us and be more mindful of our fellow human beings. This will give us the greatest sense of community connections.

Help strangers allow us to:

- Forget about our problems while working on helping someone mend theirs’.
- Taking time out of our day to help a stranger, for no reason at all, satisfies our need to feel useful and accomplished.
- This sense of well being will refresh our mindset and help us look for solutions to our own problems from a fresh perspective.
- Helping others will open our minds to receiving help for ourselves.

quotes to inspire

Character is built by striving to be kind, not famous. ~Brendon Burchard

healthy habits

accepting kindness

Challenge: Accept kindness gracefully

We cannot be emotionally healthy if we do not accept kindness. Learning how to accept the kindness someone offers you is not as easy as it seems. Here are a few tips on how to accept kindness:

- Recognize your self-worth. Accepting kindness means accepting that you are WORTHY of kindness—a notion that some of us struggle with.
- Rejecting kindness denies the person the chance to give and robs you both of the chance to connect.
- Don't apologize by making excuses, this diminishes the givers' kindness..
- Take the Compliment. Just because someone shows you kindness, it doesn't mean you owe them anything.

self-kindness

Challenge: Be kind to yourself

Tips:

- Pack in the Z's - research shows that you'll be happier, more energetic, more focused and so much more!
- Eat well
- Work that body - the human body is built for and capable of so much more than hanging out on social media. Go outside and breath in the beauty of nature. Exercise doesn't have to be routine, when was the last time you went tree climbing?
- Discover ways to manage your stress. Slow down and think about what makes you feel content, do it, and do it often!

quotes to inspire

The other side of giving is receiving. ~Andrea DeBell

coping skills

ask for kindness

Challenge: Ask for help when you are in need

Kindness isn't a one way street. Sometimes you just have to ask. Most people truly want to help, let them! Acts of kindness don't have to be random. Acts of kindness don't have to be ordinary, in many cases acts of kindness are, as you're learning, can be a source of strength and inspiration from others.

If you could use a little extra kindness in your life, ask for it. It may be something as simple as borrowing a friend's gym shoes or as self-caring ask for advice. Asking for help gives the other the person the opportunity to be kind to someone else, and that will, in turn, make them feel more appreciated.

create your own kindness

Challenge: Share what works for you when you are stressed or under pressure.

You and your peers are vitally important to each other, because you are likely to be experiencing similar stresses. Consequently, you are able to validate each others' feelings, and practice empathy; and perhaps offer some good advice.

quotes to inspire

"Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure".~ Marianne Williamson

"And as we let our own light shine, we unconsciously give other people permission to do the same".

healthy mindset

find goodness in others

Challenge: Find goodness in others that you have a difficult relationship with.

Seeing the positive attributes in others is an uphill battle. But it can be done, with a little bit of work. Here's how to find goodness in others:

- Lose the labels, labels are not intrinsic features of a person; they are merely creations of the mind to help describe them.
 - Rarely is it true that a person can be summed up in a one word label.
- Slow Down And Be Curious About Others
 - In order to see the good in other people, you need to look for it
- Look Them In The Eyes
 - Eye contact is an important part of your social skills toolkit
- Smile At Them
 - Chances are they'll smile back and already you have something nice to say about them. They are friendly, have a nice smile, etc.

find goodness in yourself

Challenge: Let's look for the good in ourselves, and when we find it, let's treat ourselves as though that's all we see.

When you find goodness in yourself, it is easier to recognize goodness in others:

- Accept yourself
- Express yourself
- Be present in the moment, direct your full attention to what is happening
- Make every experience one you can learn from
- Believe in your abilities
- Don't hold back
- Focus on the positive

quotes to inspire

As you become [better] at finding positive aspects in other people, you get better at seeing positive aspects of yourself.~Mikey D

Anyone can find the dirt in someone, be the one who finds the gold. ~Proverb
I'm starting with the man in the mirror.~Michael Jackson

mindfulness in adversity

let people know they are important to you

Challenge: Give a personal note(s) to someone important to you.

Rule #1 - You don't need a reason to write a personal note to someone.

Rule #2 - Short and sweet works just fine.

Writing a note to someone is simply making a personal connection with another person. Often the receiver of these notes will cherish the thought and hold on to the note as a keepsake to remind them of you and the friendship you share.

- Your note doesn't have to be on special paper, you can use a sticky note or notebook paper.
- Personal notes can show admiration, "I appreciate how you...."
- Use your note to express a feeling you have about something they have done for you, for example "thank you for helping me with...I'm so glad to have that behind me!"

quotes to inspire

A warm smile is the universal language of kindness. ~William Arthur Ward

compassion in action

you go first

Challenge: Let someone go ahead of you in line. We all have somewhere to be, if you're not in a hurry let someone go ahead of you!

warm hugs

Challenge: Offer hugs to your friends or peers and with their consent share a hug. Being kind is giving even when it seems like you have nothing to give. Even when you have nothing, you still have a hug.

- Hugging has been scientifically proven to increase levels of the hormone that makes us happy.
- Hugs can instantly boost oxytocin levels, which heal feelings of loneliness, isolation, and anger
- And the longer you hug someone you care about the better you both will feel! Your heart rate will slow a bit and your stress hormones will dissipate.

quotes to inspire

Being kind isn't always easy. Or convenient. But it has the potential to change everything.