



In this issue:

- *Giving the Gift of Kindness
- *Kindness Challenge
- *Mental Health Phone Apps
- *Shows to Watch!
- *On-going groups



GIVING THE GIFT OF KINDNESS

One of the most powerful clinical skills/tools I have utilized throughout my career has been Kindness. When faced with rage, frustration, hopelessness and helplessness, clients can become activated and be intimidating and labeled as difficult and resistant. When this happens, it may be challenging to see past what seems like an impenetrable shield of survival, and we may also get activated and not be as patient or understanding. However, I have discovered that this is the time to be extra patient, understanding and kind because our clients are showing themselves at their most vulnerable time. Also, we have the opportunity to offer support and help them “be seen and heard.” Ultimately, that is what we all want– to be seen and heard–. How can I be kind when they are yelling or throwing a tantrum? How can I offer kindness when they are not being kind and are blaming or insulting me? Why should I be kind when they are not being kind? What if they get more upset if I offer assistance or try to intervene? Those are all questions I’ve had when contemplating intervening or offering support, but once I got past them and intervened by validating their feelings, offering time to listen and being with them fully present in that moment, it was a powerful experience for the clients and myself. Again, we all want “to be seen and heard” and when working with people that have been impacted by trauma, accomplishing that task is key in building the therapeutic relationship and establishing trust. How do we do it? How can we utilize kindness when interacting with clients? Well, simple, we utilize the clinical skills we were taught in school, validation of feelings, attentive listening, unconditional positive regard, genuine empathy and empathic response, being fully present, linking to proper resources, giving them space, asking what they need from us at that time, and offering support. We can also be attentive to their needs, for example if they are coughing during the session or have been crying, we may offer some water or have it already available in our office for their use, it’s the little things sometimes that go a long way. Think of how you would like others to intervene when you are feeling helpless, hopeless, frustrated, and in defense mode. Is it helpful when they lecture you, remind you of what you did wrong and why you’re so messed up, or tell you to calm down or not be sad, or when they completely ignore you or dismiss you? My guess is that it’s not helpful at all, and instead it may intensify the feelings you were struggling with in the first place. Therefore, let’s incorporate kindness into our interactions with others (not just clients) and strengthen our relationships to be more effective, meaningful and productive. May your gift of kindness bring joy to others so you can also witness its beauty and power.



“Listening,
Validating,
Unconditional
Positive
Regard,
Genuine
Empathy
Empathic
Response,
Being fully
Present,
Linking to
Proper
Resources,
Giving them
space,
Asking what
They Need
from Us at
that Time,
and Offering
Support.”

Marilyn Mejia-Peña, LCSW



impact

You never really know the true impact you have on those around you. You never know how much someone needed that smile you gave them. You never know how much your kindness turned someone's entire life around. You never know how much someone needed that long hug or deep talk. So don't wait to be kind. Don't wait for someone else to be kind first. Don't wait for better circumstances or for someone to change. Just be kind, because you never know how much someone needs it.

- Nikki Banas

Join me in passing on kindness this holiday season by engaging in an act of kindness everyday this month. I will be posting a kindness challenge daily on social media (IG, LinkedIn, FB) @resiliencesocialwork, so look out for them. Here are some ideas to get you going from www.spectrumeducation.com

KINDNESS to SELF

- Do something that makes you happy today
- Exercise for 10 minutes and get your heart pumping
- Smile more often
- Avoid complaining for the entire day
- Create a new game and play it with friends and family
- Take time to practice mindfulness
- Take long slow deep breaths for 3 minutes
- Listen to your favourite music

KINDNESS to FAMILY

- Help with the dishes without being asked
- Express your gratitude to your family
- Play a game with a family member
- Wash Mum or Dad's car
- Make a handmade card for someone in your family
- Tidy up after yourself
- Surprise a family member by doing their job for them
- Cook a meal
- Leave a special note under a family member's pillow

KINDNESS to OTHERS

- Write a letter or note to someone out of town and post it
- Bake a cake or your favourite food and deliver it to a friend or someone in need
- Find opportunities to give compliments today
- Say "thank-you" as much as possible
- Hold the door open for the person behind you
- Do something kind for a stranger
- Greet people with a Hug, High Five or Handshake

KINDNESS to PLANET

- Use less plastic
- Drink from a reusable water bottle
- Turn off the lights when you leave the room
- Use reusable shopping bags
- Pick up 5 pieces of litter
- Walk more, drive less
- Recycle
- Make a piece of art work from recycled materials

spectrumeducation
AT THE HEART OF TEACHING & LEARNING

Mental Health Phone Apps

Here are some of my new finds in mental health apps. Check them out and utilize with clients to help them apply coping skills at home. You can also utilize as a self-care tool for yourself. Some of them include mindfulness and breathing exercises and a chatbot that provides feedback and emotional support.

CBT-I Coach **Mindshift** **Happyfeed**

Wysa: Anxiety, Therapy chatbot **Woebot: Your Self-Care Expert**

Daylio **Virtual Hope Box** **PTSD Coach**

SHOWS TO WATCH!

DOPE SICK on HULU

INSPIRED BY THE TRUE STORY OF HOW AMERICA GOT HOOKED ON A DRUG

If you have not seen this, I strongly recommend it, especially if you work with families affected by addiction. The show walks us through how and why we ended up with the Oxycontin epidemic, the role pharma played and the impact it had in our communities and families.

MAID on Netflix

MAID WORKS. LOU PAK AND A MOTHER'S WILL TO SURVIVE

Maid does a pretty good job of bringing awareness to some of the struggles mothers experiencing domestic violence go through when they leave the abusive relationship. It is based on a true story.

ON-GOING GROUPS

Sharing is Self-Caring Therapist Group
Every other Tuesday at 7 p.m. 12/7 & 12/21.
Cost: \$10

sign up at: <https://resiliencesocialwork.com/events>

If your agency is looking for an in-service trainer or is in need of consultation, I would love to see how we can work together. Please have them contact me at: Marilyn@resiliencesocialwork.com

