

**“No act of kindness, however small, is ever wasted.”**  
~ Aesop

We often think of kindness as something we offer others through our words and deeds, but what about kindness toward ourselves? Here are specific ways in which each of us, by type, can be kinder to ourselves. These suggestions are not always the most obvious ones. When we are kinder to ourselves, a deeper kindness toward others often emerges.

#### ONES

While it would be obvious to encourage Ones to be less self-critical and, thus, kinder to themselves, what may not be as obvious is to encourage Ones to go more deeply into their hearts through breathing into the heart and/or staying more with their feelings that emerge. In general, Ones honor their gut reactions and their thoughts rather than their Heart Centers, the place where kindness lives.

#### TWOS

If Twos could be even 20% as kind to themselves as they are to others, this would go a long way. How do Twos act in such kind ways to others that they could use with themselves? Here is a simple list: ask how you are on a regular basis; ask how you feel, also regularly; notice shifts, both subtle and not subtle, in voice tone; pay attention to patterns of non-verbal behavior and infer what these mean. Do all of this for yourself.

#### THREES

Threes typically pressure themselves so constantly that they may not even recognize that they are doing so. Although this pressure is not intended to be unkind to themselves – it is intended to help them keep continuously performing – their self-pressuring behavior has unkind consequences. It creates internal anxiety, promotes tension rather than relaxation, and generates unkind self-thoughts such as “You need to do better than this” and “You’re not good enough if you don’t...” Sense your body – or as many parts as you can – and your breathing will become more relaxed without effort. When you do this, some of the pressure will lift.

#### FOURS

Fours are well-known for their self-disparaging self-talk, and the obvious implications are that this internal monologue is inherently unkind to self. Find one very kind thing about self that is true, make it simple, and repeat multiple times per day.

#### FIVES

Fives may not think they need more self-kindness as kindness is more from the heart than the mind. However, internally, Fives really clamor for heart-felt-kindness. Breathe gently into the heart area, emphasizing gently, and self-kindness will emerge.

#### SIXES

Trying so hard to be so good that they are not “bad,” Sixes can be self-chastising and, as a result, unkind to themselves. Moreover, Sixes can do this over and over again, relentlessly. But Sixes are often very kind to others, sensitive to their suffering and offering a helping hand if they can. Follow the motto: “Be kind to self as you are to others.”

#### SEVENS

Spreading joy is not the same thing as being kind. Joy is fun, pleasurable, and engaging. But kindness involves the heart, specifically a warmth and caring that translates into kind words and action. Spend more time in your heart, allow yourself to feel more and longer, and then allow kindness toward yourself to flow inward. This can be through thought, self-compassion and/or a somatic sense of soft, gentle kindness.

#### EIGHTS

Eights can be extraordinarily kind and generous to others, but to themselves, not so much. Demanding of others, they are more demanding of themselves, and this insistence on responsibility, performance and utmost integrity can veer into harshness, which can be most unkind. Decrease your demands, especially on yourself and your self-kindness is likely to appear.

#### NINES

Nines appear very kind to others – respectful, accepting, and interested. In fact, if someone else is unkind or rude to another person, Nines will do something or say something, although not necessarily in a confrontational way. But are Nines kind to themselves? Essentially no, because Nines “forget” themselves and their needs and engage in self-neglect. Be as kind, respectful and open to your own feelings and needs as you are to others.

Ginger Lapid-Bogda PhD, the author of seven best-selling Enneagram-business books, is a speaker, consultant, trainer, and coach. She provides certification programs for professionals around the world who want to bring the Enneagram into organizations with high-impact business applications, and is past-president of the International Enneagram Association.

<https://theenneagraminbusiness.com/the-enneagram/development-tips/10/11/19>