



Exploring Leadership

INTERPERSONAL SKILLS: KINDNESS

Kindness is the act of showing care, compassion, and generosity to others, often in simple but meaningful ways. It's one of the simplest things to share, yet its impact can change lives. When kindness becomes a habit, it's like adding sunshine to someone's day, creating warmth and positivity that spreads.

CONVERSATION STARTERS:

Show this [YouTube video](#) (5:44 minutes), which follows an act of kindness as it is passed from one person to the next. What message about kindness stands out in this video?

Choosing kindness is like tossing a pebble into a calm lake, sending ripples that can lift someone's confidence, offer support to someone in need, or help someone feel noticed or valued. Even when times are tough, offering a simple word of encouragement can create a wave of respect and understanding that touches everyone.

EXPLORATION ACTIVITY:

In this activity, you'll share kindness by writing uplifting messages for others and collecting them in a special "Kindness Jar." It's a great way to celebrate what makes each of us unique and spread positivity.

- Sit in a circle and give each person a jar or cup with a lid. Write your name on the lid.
- Hand out slips of paper, giving each person the same number of slips as there are participants in the group. (For example, if there are 7 people, give each person 7 slips of paper.)
- Begin with self-kindness. Ask everyone to write one thing they like about themselves on a slip of paper, fold it, put it in their jar, and replace the lid.
- Pass the jars to the right. Write a kind or encouraging message about the person whose jar you now have, sign your name, fold the slip, and place it in the jar.
- Continue passing the jars and adding positive messages until the jars return to their original owners.
- Take a moment to read through your "Kindness Jar" and enjoy the thoughtful messages from the group.

FACILITATION TIPS:

- Ensure that participants write genuine and kind statements about one another, avoiding comments that feel obligatory, such as 'because we had to.'
- Encourage participants to focus on character strengths instead of focusing on physical traits. Offer suggestions if participants need inspiration.

KEY OBJECTIVES:

- Participate in a simple, meaningful act of kindness.
- Reflect on how small acts of kindness strengthen relationships and build self-worth.

WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

- Computer and projector to show YouTube Video
- Cups or pint jars with lids for each participant
- Pens/Pencils/Sharpies
- Multicolored slips of paper, each cut to 1.5" x 8"



REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

- Was it difficult to do this activity? Why or why not?
- Did you ever have so many ideas that it was hard to choose what to write?
- Did you find it harder to write kind words for someone you don't know well? Why?

APPLICATION DISCUSSION:

- What kinds of things make the best compliments, and why?
- What are the personal rewards of being kind, even when kindness isn't done for a reward?
- Think of one person in your life you could do a simple act of kindness for today. Who is it, and what will you do?



CONCLUSION:

Kindness is more than just a gesture—it's what makes us stronger together. From helping a friend to listening with patience and supporting someone in need, every small act matters. As Mother Teresa said, "I alone cannot change the world, but I can cast a stone across the waters to create many ripples." When we choose kindness, we start a ripple effect that can touch many lives. If we all live by the motto "Kindness First," the world truly becomes a better place. Start today—be kind, and watch the amazing changes it brings to you and those around you.

Utah State University is an affirmative action/equal opportunity institution and is committed to a learning and working environment free from discrimination. For USU's non-discrimination notice, see equity.usu.edu/non-discrimination.

REFERENCES

- We Teach Kindness: <https://weteachkindness.org/>
- 9 Tips for Teaching Kindness in the Classroom: <https://www.pbs.org/education/blog/9-tips-for-teaching-kindness-in-the-classroom>
- 40 Empathy Activities & Worksheets for Students & Adults: <https://positivepsychology.com/kindness-activities-empathy-worksheets/>
- Life Vest Inside - Kindness Boomerang - One Day: <https://youtu.be/nwAYpLVyeFU?si=n78r0qtGlTTC-xZY> (5:44 minutes)
- 5-Minute Film Festival: 10 Videos About Generosity and Giving Back: <https://www.edutopia.org/blog/film-festival-generosity-lesson-ideas>