



Mapping Modern Kindness



Executive Summary

What This Report Is About

This report looks at kindness. What inspires it, what gets in the way, and how people show it in their daily lives.

By listening to people's experiences and studying data from the surveys we distributed, we explored how kindness plays out across different ages, genders, habits, and values. At the heart of it all, we wanted to understand one thing: *how can we help kindness grow?*

Key Findings

Kindness comes naturally... to most

63% of people said being kind isn't hard for them. Another 36% said it can be difficult at times, while only a few found it truly challenging.

It starts from within

Most people act kindly because it feels good (71.1%) or because they see the positive impact it has on others (69.7%).

Core values matter

Personal growth, meaningful relationships, and helping others are top values, especially for women and older adults.

Kindness spreads

Nearly half of the people we spoke to (48.7%) said seeing someone else be kind inspires them to do the same. It's a powerful ripple effect.

But there are barriers

Lack of time, few role models, unsupportive environments, and fear of judgment can hold people back, even those who care deeply about kindness.

It shifts with age

Younger people often focus on connection and self-care, while older people emphasize growth, helping others, and giving back to their communities.

It's not about the spotlight

Only 19.1% said they're motivated by appreciation or recognition. For most, kindness is a part of who they are.

Introduction

Kindness is incredibly important to me. It's a value that has been instilled in me by my parents growing up. It's also what I've seen people quietly expect from the world around them, even if they don't always know how to receive it.

Identifying this difference between wanting and needing kindness, and understanding its relevance in 2025 is why we decided to do a little research.

Kindness has a powerful ripple effect. In communities, it brings people closer, creating a sense of unity and belonging. It helps build more supportive, compassionate spaces where people feel seen and safe. In our closest relationships, whether with a partner, family, or friends, kindness is what builds trust, strengthens bonds, and nurtures empathy.

And on a personal level, both giving and receiving kindness have real benefits. It boosts our mental and emotional wellbeing, helping us feel more resilient and grounded in a fast-moving world.

Methodology

Survey Design

To explore the practice of kindness in everyday life, we designed a survey organized into four thematic sections:

1. **Lifestyle & Values:** Questions about people's daily routines, core beliefs and priorities. We wanted to contextualize kindness within a person's broader life and decision-making framework.
2. **Personal Definition of Kindness:** Open-ended and multiple-choice questions asking how folks define kindness. Our objective was to capture the diverse ways people conceptualize and recognize kindness.
3. **Importance of Kindness:** Tried to gauge how strongly people agree that kindness is worth investing time, effort or resources. With this, we wanted to quantify the value placed on kindness and its priority relative to other life goals.
4. **Perceived Effort:** Explored whether folks view kindness as an easy, everyday habit or something requiring deliberate effort. This helps us identify barriers and facilitators to practicing kindness regularly.

Data Collection

The survey was deployed online via Google Forms and distributed through networking groups on WhatsApp (mostly women's networking groups), email invitations sent to our follower list, and posts on our social media pages. The data were collected over five weeks, from March to April 2025.

Demography

- **Gender:** Majority women (82.9%), with smaller representation from men (15.8%), non-binary (0.7%), and those who prefer not to say (0.7%).
- **Age:** Predominantly working adults, with 73.7% between age 25–44
- **Location:** Urban-centric, with most respondents from Mumbai (35.5%), Bengaluru (12.5%), and Pune (14.4%).
- **Occupation:** Mostly business owners (59.2%), followed by full-time employees (28.3%).

Perceptions of Kindness

Kindness is Important

79% Say kindness is important to them
Of that group, 80.8% rated it a full five stars.

Kindness is deeply valued. For many, it's not a nice-to-have, but a core part of how they see the world and want to live in it. *And for some, it's who they are.*

Is kindness easy to do?



For many, yes. Nearly half (45.4%) of the people we surveyed, said being kind comes naturally to them. It takes little to no effort. Another 44.7% said it's something they can do, but it requires some conscious effort. All together, about 90% of people feel that kindness is either easy or within reach, even if it takes some intention.

What does this mean? Kindness might not always be effortless, but it's overwhelmingly seen as possible. For most, it's a realistic choice they feel capable of making in everyday life.

True Acts of Kindness


When we asked people, “Which acts of kindness do you regularly engage in?”, their answers revealed the many ways kindness shows up in everyday life—both toward others and themselves.

 **92.1%**
*Listening to a friend
or family member*

 **79.6%**
*Complimenting
someone*

 **77.6%**
*Offering help to
someone in need*

 **78%**
*Taking care of own
well-being*

 **68%**
*Smiling at a
stranger*

 **64%**
*Donating/helping
less fortunate*

 **57%**
*Mentoring someone
over time*

 **55%**
*Volunteering for a
cause*

 **48%**
*Financial support to
someone in need*

What does it mean? Kindness is multifaceted. It shows up in conversations, in communities, in quiet moments of self-care, and in life-changing acts of generosity. Whether it's through words, time, attention, or support, people are living kindness in ways that are both personal and profound.

Small Acts of Kindness

When we first began speaking with people, and paying attention to how kindness is portrayed in NGO campaigns on social media, we noticed a common theme: kindness often gets framed as something big, dramatic, or life-changing.

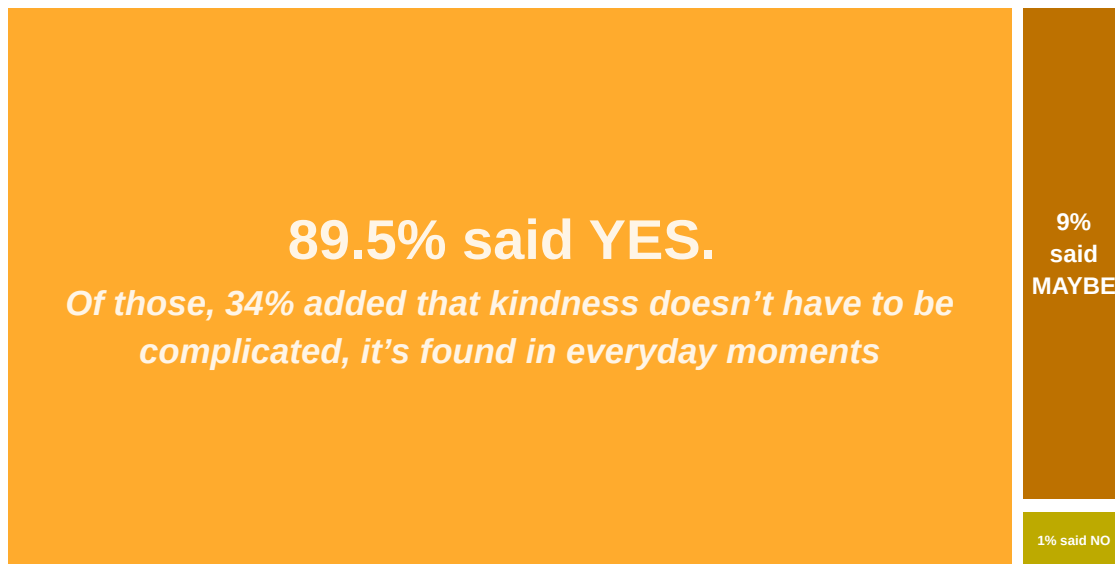
But our 30-Day Kindness Challenge told a different story.

Participants responded with genuine appreciation for the small, simple acts: holding the door open, offering help to a stranger, or taking a moment to check in on someone. At the same time, a few expected grander gestures and felt that only large, noticeable acts "counted" as genuine kindness.

This mix of expectations challenged our assumptions. It reminded us that while many people find deep value in everyday kindness, others may only feel it's meaningful if it stands out.

To explore this further, we asked a question in our survey: *Do you consider small acts, like smiling at a stranger, helping someone, or listening to a friend, true expressions of kindness?*

The response was overwhelmingly positive:



Looking through a gendered lens:



What does it mean? Most people believe kindness is simple. It doesn't have to be loud to be real. It lives in the small, thoughtful choices we make every day, and most of us recognize that.

Small Acts of Kindness And Its Impact On Relationships

We asked people, "Do you believe that small acts of kindness have a positive impact on your relationships?", with answers recorded on a scale from 1 (no impact) to 5 (strong positive impact).

78.9% said yes

2.21% participants ranged from neutral to unsure, with very few expressing skepticism.

Those who selected 4 or 5 said yes. They believe that even small gestures can make a meaningful difference in their relationships.

When we broke the data down by gender, we saw a small but notable difference:



women rated small acts of kindness as having a strong positive impact



men rated small acts of kindness as having a strong positive impact

This suggests that while most people see kindness as essential to connection, women were slightly more likely to recognize its emotional significance.

What does it mean? Kindness, especially the small, everyday kind, remains one of the most powerful, accessible tools we have for strengthening relationships. When paired with authenticity and patience, it becomes even more meaningful.

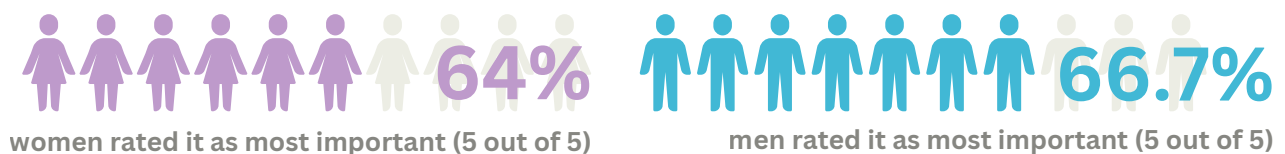
Demographic Influence on Kindness

We were curious to understand whether demographics had any influence on how people perceive kindness, and how people perform acts of kindness. In this section, we explore gender, age-groups, and social lives of the people who took our survey, and see how that impacts kindness. We asked them to rate how important kindness is to them on a scale of 1 to 5, 5 being the most important to them.

Kindness and Gender

We wanted to explore whether gender, and the roles or expectations that come with it, shape how people perceive and practice kindness. The short answer? Not by much. But there are subtle, interesting differences in how kindness is experienced.

When asked to rate how important kindness is on a scale of 1 to 5, men and women responded similarly:



Both also showed high confidence in identifying as kind people. Women were slightly more certain (fewer said “no” or “unsure” when asked if they see themselves as kind). Interestingly, no men selected “unsure,” but more directly said “no” (16.7% vs. just 0.8% of women.)



Very few in either group found kindness truly difficult, but men were again more definitive in their responses, none selected “unsure,” suggesting a more black-and-white view of their experience.

So, what does this tell us? Both women and men value kindness deeply. Women are slightly more likely to describe kindness as something natural and easy, while men may experience it as more intentional, but no less genuine.

Kindness isn’t gendered. It’s a shared value. Whether it feels intuitive or takes a bit more effort, people across the spectrum are practicing kindness in meaningful ways.

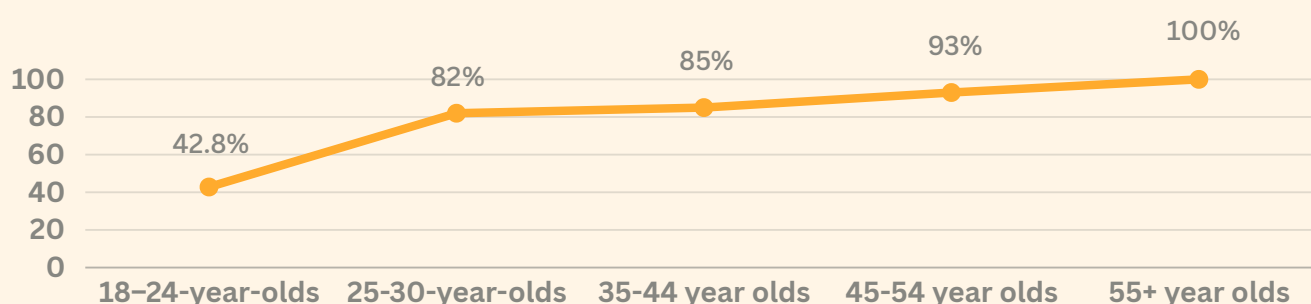
Question	Women	Men	Takeaway
Believe they’re kind	84.8%	83.3%	Nearly equal, but fewer women said "no"
Kindness is not difficult	63.2%	58.3%	Women slightly more at ease with doing kind acts
Kindness is easy to practice daily	46.4%	37.5%	More women see kindness as simple and natural

Kindness and Age

Through time, and as we get older, we learn more about the world, and build values that shape us. Is kindness one such value we retain, or do we lose it over time? A common notion is that the world is a terrible place, and we cannot be kind if we want to survive it. How does that stay with us as we grow older.

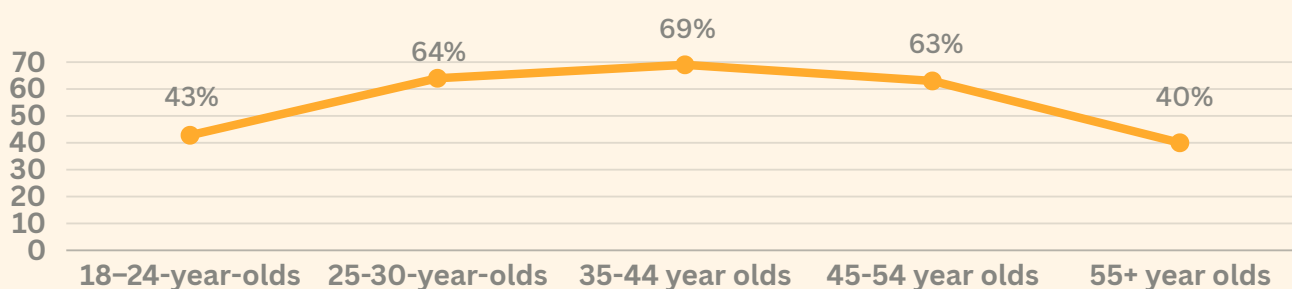
Do You Believe You're a Kind Person?

As people get older, they tend to feel more certain about their own kindness.



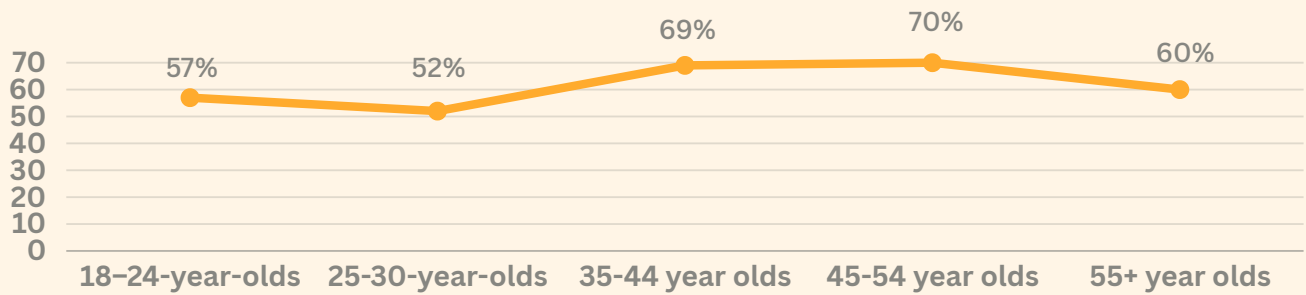
How Important Is Kindness to You?

Kindness is valued at every age, but the youngest group (18-24) showed the widest range of opinions, while older groups showed stronger and more consistent appreciation. Overall, kindness seems to grow in importance as people mature.



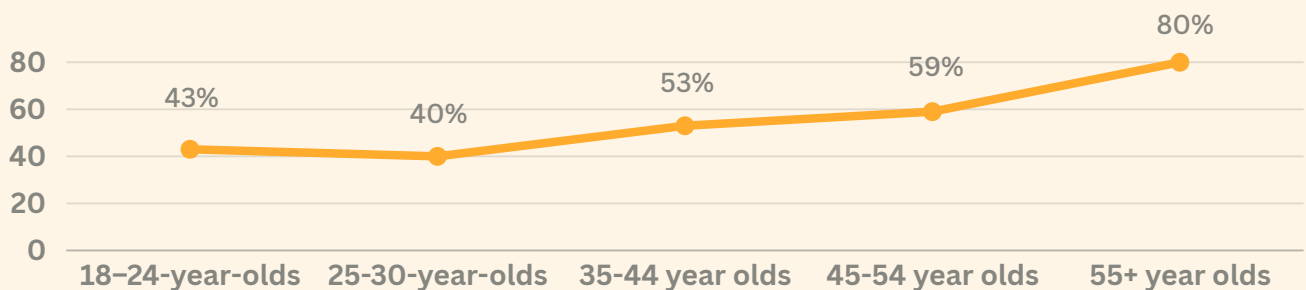
Is Being Kind Easy?

Most people find kindness easy, but younger participants were more likely to say it sometimes feels challenging. Kindness feels less like a challenge and more like second nature as people age.



Is Kindness Simple to Practice Daily?

With time, kindness becomes a natural part of life, something you do without overthinking.



Kindness may feel complicated or uncertain in youth, but it becomes more effortless with age. For older adults, kindness isn't just a value, it's a way of life, flowing naturally through relationships and everyday moments.

Active Social Life & Kindness

We were curious if social life had anything to do with kindness. Were people who spent time with their friends or colleagues kinder than those who kept to themselves?











Social interaction does play a role, but it's not the complete picture.

- Among those who **regularly socialize**, a strong majority (**64%**) said being kind was **not difficult** for them, while about **35%** found it sometimes challenging.
- Those who **occasionally** meet friends or family felt kindness was **even easier**, with **63.5%** saying it's not difficult.
- Even among people who **prefer solitude**, **62%** said being kind **wasn't hard** at all. This shows that being introverted doesn't stop people from being kind.
- People whose loved ones **live far away** tend to find kindness a bit more **difficult**, probably because distance can make everyday acts of kindness harder to express.

So what does this mean? Having an active social life can make kindness feel easier, but it's not a guarantee. Many people with quieter social lives still find kindness accessible and natural. Kindness depends just as much on personal values and individual circumstances as on how often you see others.

Core Human Values

Our values define who we are. They are the little rat that hides inside your chef's hat (Ratatouille anyone?) and guides you towards making right decisions, and steering away from scalding ones. In our survey, we gave folks a bunch of values to choose from - values that we believe are important.

	Self-care (83.6%)
	Personal growth (92.5%)
	Helping others (88.8%)
	Building strong relationships (88%)
	Community involvement (55.2%)
	Fulfilling my duties and responsibilities (<1%)
	Being honest with myself and others (<1%)
	Learning (<1%)
	Connecting with nature (<1%)
	Professional growth (<1%)

The strongest value that everyone agreed with was **Personal Growth**, selected by around 92.5% of people.

After that, **Helping Others** was chosen by 88.8%, followed closely by **Building Strong Relationships** at 88%, and then **Self-Care** at 83.6%.

The other values like **Community Involvement** (55.2%). **Learning**, **Connecting with Nature**, **Professional Growth**, and **Being Honest with Myself and others** were very rarely selected, each in less than 1% of the responses.

What does this tell us? That for most people in this group, what matters most is growing as a person, supporting others, building meaningful connections, and taking care of themselves. In short: growth, connection, care, and contribution.

Through the gender lens

For both women and men, personal growth stood out as the most important value.



So while both groups deeply value growth, women tend to place slightly more emphasis on care, connection, and giving back.

In the bigger picture, this community sees kindness as something that begins within, through personal development, and then flows outward to others. They're driven not just by the desire to grow, but by a sense of shared humanity. For them, personal success and caring for others walk hand in hand.

Age-Breakup

As we age, our values shift, but some stay steady across generations. Here's how different age groups shared what matters most to them:

Ages 18–24

This group led with Helping others, often paired with building strong relationships. personal growth also stood out, meaning that even early in life, there's a desire to make a difference while growing into one's identity.

Ages 25–34

Building strong relationships took center stage, often linked with community involvement. Self-care and helping others were also common, reflecting a growing awareness of personal well-being and social responsibility during life's busier years.

Ages 35–44

Personal growth emerged as the clear leader, chosen by nearly half of the people. It was frequently paired with helping others and building strong relationships, showing a strong focus on becoming better while staying connected. Self-care also gained traction, as people juggle careers, families, and their own needs.

Ages 45–54

This group showed a more balanced approach. Personal growth remained important, but helping others and building strong relationships were also top priorities. Interestingly, community involvement rose in significance, meaning that there is a growing outward focus.

Ages 55+

Personal growth and helping others remained strong values. There was also a continued interest in community involvement, as people look for ways to give back and stay engaged.

Across all ages, one thing is clear: growth, kindness, and connection are lifelong pursuits. While the way we express them may change, the heart behind them remains the same.

The data shows that as people age, they tend to place a stronger emphasis on values related to personal growth, helping others, and building meaningful relationships, with younger age groups focusing more on social connections and self-care.

This highlights how values evolve with life experiences, especially in relation to career, family, and community involvement.

Encouraging More Kindness

Motivations for Practicing More Kindness

When we asked folks about their motivation for practicing more kindness and doing more kind acts, the results revealed a broad range of motivations. There are both internal and external factors that encourage acts of kindness.



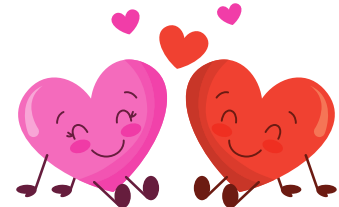
Kindness comes from within

The top motivators for kindness is feeling good and seeing a positive impact. This tells us something powerful: kindness is driven by intrinsic motivation. A natural sense of satisfaction and emotional alignment, not the promise of praise or reward. You feel it from within you.

This mirrors what psychology calls Self-Determination Theory: that when we act from autonomy, connection, and competence, our actions feel meaningful.

Relationships inspire kindness

Over half of folks we surveyed said that stronger connections with friends, family, or colleagues would encourage them to be kinder. Kindness is deeply relational. We're often motivated to care when we feel cared for, and when our actions strengthen bonds of trust and belonging.



It echoes attachment theory: when we feel secure and valued, compassion flows more freely. Simply put, kindness grows in safe, connected spaces.

Kindness is contagious

Nearly half of the people we surveyed said they feel inspired to be kind when they see others being kind. This reflects what we know from social learning theory, we tend to model the behaviors we observe, especially when those behaviors are positive and rewarding.



It's the ripple effect in action. When kindness is visible, it spreads. Whether it's a friend helping out, a stranger's generous gesture, or a feel-good story online, witnessing kindness brings it to the forefront of our minds and hearts.

Validation matters less than meaning

Only a small number of respondents said they were motivated by recognition or appreciation. For most people, kindness isn't about applause. It's about doing what feels right. This aligns with research on motivation, external rewards can sometimes diminish our inner drive. When an act already feels good, we don't need a gold star to justify it.



Kindness thrives in community

While our inner values matter most, what we see and experience around us makes a difference. Kindness doesn't always have to be personal, it can be cultural. Whether it's a warm workplace, a caring friend group, or uplifting stories shared online, kindness is reinforced when it's modeled and made easy.



While personal values are critical, societal norms and visible examples play a powerful supporting role in encouraging kindness. This doesn't need to happen face-to-face, it can come from anywhere, including feel-good videos on Instagram or stories shared.

When kindness is seen, it becomes more top-of-mind and socially accepted, reinforcing people's own desire to act kindly.

In environments where kindness is modeled, celebrated, and made easier, individuals feel more empowered and confident to act on their natural motivations. These settings affirm that kindness isn't just a personal value, it's part of the collective culture.

Barriers to Kindness

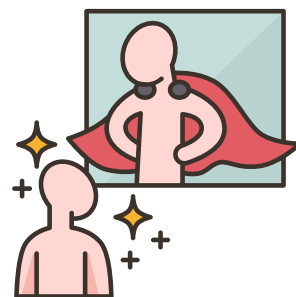
Even though we may be highly motivated to be kind, certain practical and psychological factors can limit kind behavior. Here's what can get in the way:

Time and opportunity matter

About 35% of people said they'd be kinder if they had more time or more chances to show it. Kindness often competes with a busy schedule. If we want kindness to flourish, it helps to make it easier, by building it into habits, systems, or moments that are already part of the day.

Lack of visible role models

Many people said they feel more inclined to be kind when they see others doing it. So when there are few visible role models, in the workplace, at home, or on social media, kindness can feel *rare* or weird, or even suspicious. We need to see it to believe it's welcome. We need more social proof.



Cultural or environmental factors

In fast-paced, high-pressure, or competitive settings, kindness can feel like a luxury, or worse, a liability. When leaders or cultures don't actively support or encourage compassion, it can start to feel out of place. People adapt to what's rewarded (or expected), and in some environments, that means putting kindness on the back burner.

Fear of judgment or emotional exposure

Even when people want to act kindly, many hold back because they're afraid of being misunderstood, judged, or seen as weak. Kindness often involves vulnerability, reaching out, standing up, or expressing care. If someone fears that they will be dismissed or misread, they stay quiet.

This connects to something called pluralistic ignorance where everyone's waiting for someone else to go first, assuming no one else feels the same. But in reality, most people are holding the same kind thoughts (privately).

Kindness needs support to thrive

Even deeply held values like compassion can be silenced by the wrong conditions. In rushed, disconnected, or emotionally cold environments, people often pull back, not because they don't care, but because they don't feel safe.

That's why visible leadership, cultural cues, and everyday reinforcement matter so much. When kindness is supported, modeled, and made easy, it grows.



This highlights the importance of normalizing kindness and making it part of daily expectations, in workplaces, schools, neighborhoods, and broader society. Without that normalization, people may wonder between what they believe and what they feel safe or supported enough to do.

By building cultures that embrace and reinforce kindness, communities can not only strengthen people's intrinsic motivations, they can also lower the barriers that hold them back.

Recommendations for Encouraging More Kindness

Based on what we found, we believe that by doing the below, we'll be able to foster greater kindness at both the individual and community levels:

Show kindness so others can see it

People are more likely to be kind when they see others doing it. So don't be shy, let your kindness show! Whether you're a manager, teacher, teammate, or friend, your small actions set the tone for those around you.

- Give someone a genuine compliment.
- Offer help without being asked.
- Share stories of kindness you've seen at work, online, or in your neighborhood.



The more we talk about and celebrate kindness, the more normal it becomes.

Make kindness easy and part of the routine

Life is busy, and sometimes we just don't have the time or headspace to do something big. That's okay. What helps is building small acts of kindness into your day, so it doesn't feel like one more thing on your to-do list.

- Leave a kind note or give them a Kind Card
- Text someone just to say you're thinking of them.



At Kind Hearts Brigade, we offer fun prompts and tools to help you bring kindness into your everyday habits, without it feeling forced.

Create spaces where kindness is welcome

Kindness grows when it's noticed and appreciated. Whether it's at work, in a school, or within your friend group, call out the good stuff.

- Give shoutouts to people who do something thoughtful.
- Encourage peer recognition; "I saw what you did, and it made a difference."

It's about showing that kindness is valued.



Learn and talk about kindness more

Kindness isn't always obvious, sometimes we just need new ideas or reminders. Talk about what kindness looks like, and how it feels.

- Remind people (and yourself) that kindness doesn't have to be big, perfect, or public.
- Think in terms of small but meaningful. A smile, a check-in, a tiny favor.

The more we understand kindness, the easier it becomes to practice.

Connect with your community

Kindness gets stronger when we feel connected. Look for ways to build real bonds with people around you, whether it's at work, in your hobbies, or in your neighborhood.

- Start a group chat that lifts people up.
- Join a club or interest group where people support each other.
- Be the one who reaches out first. It often takes just one person to create a ripple.



When people feel like they belong, kindness flows more naturally.

Kindness doesn't have to be one more thing to remember, it can just be how we do things. When it's built into how we lead, work, and relate to others, it spreads. The more we make kindness visible, easy, and normal, the more it becomes part of the culture and that benefits everyone.

Conclusion

Kindness is very much alive. Most people want to be kind — not for applause, but because it feels good and creates real connection. But wanting to be kind doesn't always mean it's easy. Life gets in the way. We're shaped by our surroundings, our schedules, and how safe we feel being open and generous.

What we've seen is that people aren't lacking kindness, they're often just waiting for the right moment, the right example, or a little permission to let it show. That's why it matters so much to create spaces where kindness feels normal, supported, and celebrated.

We're living in fast-moving, sometimes overwhelming times. It's easy to feel rushed, disconnected, or guarded. And in those moments, kindness can seem like a nice idea, but not a priority.

But here's the truth: kindness is the quiet glue that holds communities, friendships, and teams together. It builds trust. It lifts moods. It reminds us we're not alone.

In a world that often rewards following hustle over the peace of listening to your heart, being kind is actually kind of rebellious. And it's one of the most deeply human things we can do.

Special Note

Kindness doesn't need to be grand or performative. It can be small, regular, and real. Smile at a stranger. Text a friend. Share your umbrella. Speak gently. Ask how someone's really doing. The more we model kindness, the more it multiplies.

At Kind Hearts Brigade, we make it easier to do just that. To help integrate kindness into daily life, we've designed tools, prompts, and experiences that gently nudge you (and those around you) toward more kind actions:



Kind Cards

Kind Cards are the perfect way to recognize small acts of kindness and brighten someone's day. Whether you're at work, a gathering, or with friends, these cards allow you to express gratitude and encouragement. With 7 cards in each pack, they're ideal for everyday use or gifting, helping spread kindness wherever you go.



A Week of Kindness

It includes 7 cards, each with a simple kind act for you to complete at your own pace. It's a great way to build a kindness routine and reflect on how small gestures can make a big difference. Upon completion, submit a form to receive your e-certificate! *For a deeper experience, upgrade and try our 30-Day Kindness Challenge.*



Kind Ember

This is a fun game designed to build empathy and connection with friends, colleagues, or acquaintances. With 50 questions across 3 difficulty levels, players earn points assigned on the card if answered. Whoever gets 25 points first, wins the game. This game leaves everyone feeling more connected and empathetic towards one another.



Ignite Kind Connections

An engaging game with 35 cards featuring thoughtful questions to deepen relationships through kind words. Perfect for birthdays, anniversaries, or friendly gatherings, this game sparks meaningful conversations and brings a touch of warmth to any occasion, helping you connect with loved ones in a fun and heartfelt way.

Mini Kindness Challenges

Inspired by the report? Here are some fun challenges you can try while being kind to yourself and the people around you!



Unplug Hour

Take one hour today without screens. Use it to rest, read, or walk outside.



Self-Appreciation List

Write down three things you did well this week, no matter how small.



Skill Share

Offer to help a colleague with something you're good at.



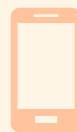
Genuine Praise

Tell a colleague what you value about their work or attitude. Be specific.



Memory Share

Reach out to your friend recalling a happy or funny moment you've shared.



Focused Catch-Up

Call a friend just to ask how they're doing. Listen fully without multitasking.



Compliments

Give a genuine compliment to three different people today.



Listening

Give someone your full attention without checking your phone or interrupting.

Kindness Self-Test

Circle “Yes” or “No” for each question. Count your “Yes” answers at the end.

- ☐ I take short breaks during the day to rest or recharge.
- ☐ I speak to myself in the same way I’d speak to a friend who’s struggling.
- ☐ I notice and celebrate my own small wins.
- ☐ I check in with friends just to see how they’re doing.
- ☐ I remember details they’ve shared and follow up on them.
- ☐ I show appreciation when friends make time for me. I acknowledge when colleagues do something well.
- ☐ I offer help when I see someone under pressure.
- ☐ I include others in conversations or activities so no one feels left out.

Score guide

- 7–9 “Yes” = Kindness is a daily habit for you. Keep it going.
- 4–6 “Yes” = You’re building great habits. Pick one new action to try this week.
- 0–3 “Yes” = You have plenty of room to grow—start with one small step each day.



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