



# KINDNESS

VIA Survey calls this strength Kindness

**Parent virtue: Humanity.** Strengths of humanity involve caring interpersonal relationships with others, particularly in one-to-one relationships. Strengths comprised in this virtue are love, kindness, and social intelligence.



## WHAT DOES KINDNESS MEAN?

*You are generous to others and you are never too busy to help out. You enjoy doing good deeds for other people.*

Kindness has been a foundation of moral and spiritual life across cultures and religions throughout history. This character strength is grounded in the belief of a common humanity in which others are worthy of care, attention, affection, and compassion. Aristotle defined kindness as, "helpfulness towards someone in need, not in return for anything, nor for the advantage of the helper himself, but for that of the person helped."

Kind people think about the needs and feelings of other people, and then act to help those people. Kind people are selfless. That is why a true act of kindness is distinct from helping another person in order to simply gain something for yourself. An individual with the strength of kindness helps others because it's the right thing to do, not because they expect any reciprocal treatment or gain in reputation.

## WHY DOES IT MATTER?

For individuals, kindness is correlated with desirable developmental outcomes. It is related to other-oriented emotions, like empathy (the ability to experience the emotional state of another person) and sympathy (the tender emotion of concern for another's difficulty). Psychologists have even traced kindness and generosity as the keys to healthy, happy, and lasting marriages.

On a group level, kindness is very important. In addition to empathy and sympathy, the character strength of kindness is indicative of an individual's moral reasoning capacity and level of social responsibility. That means people who develop kindness possess a strong personal ethical responsibility to care for other people. And, their acts of kindness towards others lead to additional acts of kindness by those who have been helped.

## Individuals with this strength might be described as:

- Caring
- Thoughtful
- Considerate
- Selfless
- Compassionate
- Generous

## Individuals with this strength are likely to think, feel, or behave in the following ways:

- All human beings have worth.
- Other people are just as important as me.
- People suffering or in need deserve care and compassion.
- I don't seek recognition for helping others. Helping other people is an end in itself.
- Giving is more important than receiving.
- Giving other people gifts whether a present, a compliment, or my attention makes me feel good.

## QUOTES ON KINDNESS

*"No act of kindness, no matter how small, is ever wasted."*

**-AESOP**

*"Kindness is the language which the deaf can hear and the blind can see."*

**-MARK TWAIN**

*"No kind action ever stops with itself. A single act of kindness throws out roots in all directions, and the roots spring up to make new trees. The greatest work that kindness does to others is that it makes them kind themselves."*

**-AMELIA EARHART**

*"You cannot do a kindness too soon, for you never know how soon it will be too late."*

**-RALPH WALDO EMERSON**