



Us Plus

Mental Health and Wellbeing Bulletin 5

Welcome to this week's Us Plus Bulletin. This week's focus is kindness - the most important virtue to show every single day.

We all have so much going on in our lives - competing strains and stresses – not to mention the recent coronavirus pandemic and lockdowns. This has sometimes pushed kindness to one side, in favour of what is urgent now.

It can be easy to show kindness when posting online, but when it comes to reality it's harder to commit to kindness in our real-life words and actions. By taking the time to be kind to others, we can benefit from emotional upsides. It really does make a difference, especially for people who are vulnerable or struggling.

With everything that's going on in the world, now is the time to help make a kinder society that improves our mental health. Kindness should be built into business decisions, government policy, and other official systems in a way that supports everyone's mental health and also reduces discrimination and inequality. That can start with individual commitments to showing kindness in our words and our actions.

What do we mean by kindness?

Kindness is choosing to do something that helps others or yourself, motivated by genuine warm feelings.

Kindness, or doing good, often means putting other people's needs before our own. It could be by giving up our seat on a bus to someone who might need it more or checking in with someone in your tutor group to see if they are ok – even if they are not one of your friendship group.

Evidence shows that helping others can also benefit our own mental health and wellbeing. For example, it can reduce stress as well as improve mood, self-esteem and happiness. There are so many ways to help others as part of our everyday lives. Good deeds needn't take much time or cost any money.

Small changes can make a big difference.

It's important to be kind to yourself as well

Whatever you can manage today is good enough. Some people feel that it's really important to learn new skills or try new things. That may be you, and if so, enjoy and celebrate that.

If this isn't you, don't beat yourself up about it. If things are hard for you right now, try and find some small things to celebrate each day. Getting up and washing your hair can be just as much of an achievement as someone else posting about a 5k run on Instagram. Try to tune out the voice of judgement and comparison and tune in to the voice that says you are enough.

Remember that you can contact the TIS team at Penrice if you need to discuss any worries or anxieties you might be feeling.

You can do this by emailing us at

tis@penrice.org.uk

