

Family Togetherness Week of Prayer  
**September 3 - 9, 2023**

**2023 Resource Book**

# **KEYS TO HEALTHY MINDS**

## **Flourishing Families**

**Adventist Family Ministries**

# THURSDAY

## CHOOSE

## KINDNESS

### Key Verse

Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you. Eph 4:32 NKJV

Cut out paper hearts. Write each word on a separate heart. Shuffle them and then arrange them in the right order.

### Exploring Kindness

Did you know that kindness is good for you? Whenever we do kind things for others, or even think about doing them, a lovely feel-good hormone called oxytocin washes over our brain. This makes us more thoughtful, considerate, caring, and wise. Kindness lowers our stress and releases anti-ageing hormones into our body. It helps us to have better relationships with others and reduces the number of conflicts we have. When someone is kind to us, we can feel happy for several hours. And when we are kind to others, we feel happy too. Doing kind things for others can sometimes be the most effective way to experience a sparkle of joy when we are feeling sad and down.

God wants His children to be kind because it blesses them as well as those they are helping. Jesus was filled with compassion for everyone He met. He told us that the two most important commandments are loving God and loving others. When we are kind, we are like big funnels, catching as much of God's love as possible, and pouring it into the lives of others. And that's exactly what Jesus did too.

### Kindness – Sharing God's Love

(John 13)

Jesus loved being kind. His heart was so full of God's love that kindness flowed through everything He did. Each person was very precious to Him, and He wanted to let them know how special they were to God by being kind to them, too.

When people were hungry, He fed them. When they were lonely, He stopped to speak kind and encouraging words to them. When they were sick, He healed them. When they were sad, He made them laugh and smile again. When they felt ashamed, He lifted them up, forgave them, and gave them a brand-new life. He hugged and blessed little children and their parents. When Jesus saw how much people were hurting in their hearts, He wanted to mend their pain with the very special 'medicine' of kindness, that we can all share.

Jesus told many stories about the importance of kindness. He told the story of a stranger who happily took care of an injured enemy because it was the compassionate thing to do. He told the story of the sheep and the goats, to show us that the best thing we can do is to fill our hearts with God's loving kindness towards us, so that we can share it with others. We can help by feeding the hungry, giving clothes to the poor, visiting those who are sick and in prison and making sure they are fed and cared for. He told people to be as kind as possible, even to their enemies, because kindness can melt hearts and make them more open to God's loving care. He also said that whenever anyone does the smallest kind thing, they are doing it for Him.

Jesus knew that His time on earth with His disciples had almost ended. They had gathered for the Feast of the Passover, and they were all looking forward to a delicious meal together. They had rented a room and prepared all the delicious food...but there were no servants to wash their feet. The bowl was there, and the towels, and even the water, but no servant. The disciples looked at each other awkwardly. No one wanted to take the place of the servant by washing everyone else's dirty feet. Jesus felt sad. They had been together for three years. Every day Jesus had shown them what it means to be kind, and still they didn't understand that kindness does whatever it takes to bless and care for others.

So, Jesus quietly took off his robe, tied the towel around his waist, and poured the water into a bowl. Now the disciples felt ashamed of their pride. But Jesus wasn't embarrassed at all! He was happy to be the servant because it would give Him another way to show them how much He loved them. And perhaps they might learn that if He was willing to do such a humble job to care for them, they could also be willing to do whatever is needed to bless others.

### **Wonder Prayer Activity**

- Draw around an adult's hand.
- Write something kind that you could do for others on each of the fingers.
- Write a short prayer on the palm of the hand asking God to help you be kind.
- Cut out your hands and arrange them on a poster.

### **Experiencing Kindness Activities**

**Flourish! - Choose well - think well - live well - grow well!**

### **Kindness Tags**

- Draw heart shapes on a piece of white cardstock.
- Make them about as big as your closed fist.
- Decorate the hearts and write on each one 'You've been kindness tagged! Now it's your turn to be kind!'
- Cut out the hearts.
- Whenever you do something kind for someone in your family, leave a tag behind to show where you have been kind. Then it's the finder's turn to do something kind.

### **Kindness birthdays**

Celebrate birthdays, by planning one act of kindness for each year of your life, or for every five years if you are adults.

- Make food parcels to give away.
- Make a batch of cakes or cookies for the police station, fire team, or ambulance service.
- Wrap small gifts that anyone might like. Hide them in safe public places with a message that if anyone finds it, they can keep it or pass it on.
- Take a bag of good quality clothes that you don't need to a charity or thrift store.

### **Everyday Kindness Activities**

- Whenever you go to the grocery store buy one extra packet of good quality food. Donate it to a food bank or collect a box of food to give to a hungry family, a women's refuge/shelter, or a homeless shelter.
- Collect coins in a jar. Open it once a year and buy something for a person in need.
- Write short, encouraging and kind messages on sticky notes. Stick them in different places - inside a magazine, in a library book, on a package in a grocery store, on a mirror, etc.
- Do something kind for each person in your family every day. It will make everyone feel happier, and it can even help you to argue less! (Gal 5:22-23)
- Try this: In every situation think about how you can be kind. Then think how you can be even kinder and choose to do the second thing.
- Find hundreds of simple kindness activities on this website:  
<https://ted.adventist.org/live-kind>