GROWING MORE OF A GOOD THING

Cultivating Kindness, Gratitude, and Compassion for Well-Being
I will be kind.

Simple acts of kindness can have a big impact at work!
Try this: post a Be Kind Be Well pledge in your office.

Research shows that kindness helps improve trust to facilitate innovation, engagement, and collaboration. And you can let others know that you are a positive presence in the workplace by posting your own pledge to be kind.

Download your own pledge and learn more about simple actions you can take to Be Kind, Be Well: mhealthy.umich.edu/bekind
WHY KINDNESS?

- Expressing gratitude improves cardiovascular stress responses during teamwork tasks (Gu et al., 2022)
- Expressing thanks to others results in individuals feeling more valued and more willing to engage in helping behavior (Grant & Gino, 2010)
- Practicing and observing acts of kindness can boost happiness (Rowland & Curry, 2018)
- Journaling about “good things” results in increased happiness & decreased depressive symptoms (Seligman et al., 2005)
- Practicing compassion can improve general health and well-being, enhance positive emotions, and decrease physical pain (Carson et al., 2005; Frederickson et al., 2017)
CREATING THE CONDITIONS FOR A POSITIVE WORKPLACE

Presence
Gratitude
Connection
Be present in all things and thankful for all things.

MAYA ANGELOU
The most basic and powerful way to connect to another person is to listen. Just listen. Perhaps the most important thing we ever give each other is our attention.

-Rachel Naomi Remen
PRESENCE IS AN ACT OF KINDNESS AND COMPASSION

When we…
◦ Acknowledge others' strengths & positive attributes
◦ Notice others’ emotional well-being
◦ Recognize and respond to distress
◦ Practice self-compassion

We foster…
◦ Positive connections with colleagues
◦ Collaborative culture
◦ Trust and safety

CREATE AN INTENTION

◦ Each day, wake up and make a deliberate intention about your actions and behavior for the day.
  ◦ May I be more present to myself and my team.
  ◦ May I be engaged from a place of compassion, warmth, trust and collaboration.
  ◦ May I strive to be at my best for myself and my team.
  ◦ May I be kind.
OPENING STATEMENT

Facilitator notes: this is a example opening statement to help get you started. This does not need to be a script and can be modified as needed.

It’s been a hard time for everyone lately. Given the challenges we face – both at work and at home – it is completely normal and understandable to have a range of responses to this situation. Let’s pause and take a moment to check-in with each other.

PICK ONE OR TWO

Facilitator notes: if you pick one, use asterisked items to give people space to acknowledge challenging feelings/experiences. Consider ending with a second one that pulls for hope. Remind people it is okay to pass.

• Take a “Minute to Arrive” – everyone pauses, try not to talk or look at devices for 1 minute and just breathe.
• *What are the most important things on your mind today?*
• *What are you worried about?*
• *What is weighing on you today?*
• *What word describes how you are feeling right now? (you can use the chat function if connecting remotely)*
  - What is going well (or what are you hopeful about)?
  - What is one positive out of this pandemic, big or small?
  - What are you grateful about? Who are you grateful to today?
  - What gives you strength?
  - What gives you hope?
  - What is something you are looking forward to when this is behind us?
  - How have you been able to connect with others recently?
  - Has anyone you know done or said something that really helped?
  - How have you helped someone else recently?
I don't have to chase extraordinary moments to find happiness - it's right in front of me if I'm paying attention and practicing gratitude.

BRENÉ BROWN
WHAT’S TO LIKE?

Source: Rick Hanson, https://www.rickhanson.net/see-whats-likable/
“...momentary experiences of mild, everyday positive emotions broaden people’s awareness in ways that, over time and with frequent recurrence, build consequential personal resources that contribute to their overall emotional and physical well-being.”

FREDRICKSON & JOINER, 2018
EXPRESSING GRATITUDE

◦ How does your work team express appreciation for each other?
◦ Who and what do we appreciate? Why?

◦ What gets in the way of giving thanks?
◦ How can we express “thank you” more?
If you could only sense how important you are to the lives of those you meet; how important you can be to the people you may never even dream of. There is something of yourself that you leave at every meeting with another person.

FRED ROGERS
QUESTIONS FOR BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS

- What would have to happen for you to be committed to building more trust and positive regard for each other?
- What are you willing to do to invite your best self forward?
- What are you willing to do to invite the best self of others forward?
- What would have to happen for you to expand your story about each other?
- How can you routinely accomplish your work while building relationships?
When you go out into the woods, and you look at trees, you see all these different trees. And some of them are bent, and some of them are straight, and some of them are evergreens, and some of them are whatever. And you look at the tree and you allow it. You see why it is the way it is. You sort of understand that it didn’t get enough light, and so it turned that way. And you don’t get all emotional about it. You just allow it. You appreciate the tree.

The minute you get near humans, you lose all that. And you are constantly saying ‘You are too this, or I’m too this.’ That judgment mind comes in. And so I practice turning people into trees. Which means appreciating them just the way they are.

RAM DASS
CULTIVATING COMPASSION EXERCISE

Just like me, this person is seeking happiness in their life.

Just like me, this person is trying to avoid suffering in their life.

Just like me, this person has known sadness, loneliness and despair.

Just like me, this person is seeking to fill their needs.

Just like me, this person is learning about life.
COMMITMENTS

◦ To be kind, patient, and encouraging.
◦ To trust that we are all focused on the same goal.
◦ To give me feedback in a respectful way that recognizes my needs for both self-esteem and development.
◦ To assume half the responsibility for our working relationship.
◦ To remember that neither of us is perfect, and mistakes are opportunities for forgiveness and for growth.
BRINGING KINDNESS TO YOUR TEAM

- Make intentional opportunities for connection and play
- Develop a “Kindness Commitment Statement”
  - Include specific kindness practices, ideas, or intentions for your team
    - What does kindness, respect, gratitude, and compassion mean to you and your team?
    - How can you practice kindness daily?
- Use the MHealthy Be Kind, Be Well resources to support your ideas
Do your little bit of good where you are; it's those little bits of good put together that overwhelm the world.

DESMOND TUTU