



# Do Something for Someone

### CHALLENGE

Do something special for someone each day.

## Requirements to Complete this WELLNESS CHALLENGE

1. Keep a mental or written record whenever you do something special for someone else. Record the activity on your monthly Wellness Challenge Calendar.
2. Read “The benefits of benevolence” and “What you can do” below.
3. To complete the Challenge, do something nice for someone else at least 22 days this month.
4. Keep records of your completed Challenge in case your organization requires documentation.

Doing something for someone else is the ultimate altruistic act. Or is it? When people give of their time or talents or just do something that makes someone else feel happy or special, many times they find themselves benefiting too.

Ask anyone who’s done something nice for someone and likely they’ll tell you that it made them feel good. There’s actually research to substantiate the “feel good” factor, and the health benefits it brings.

One study involving more than 3,000 volunteers of all ages at more than 20 organizations throughout the country found a correlation between being nice to others and health. When asked how they felt when they did something nice for someone else, 95% of the respondents said they felt “a rush of euphoria” and then a sense of calm, inner peace, and self-worth for hours or days after doing something for someone else.

The study’s lead researcher, Allan Luks, termed the rise in feel-good endorphins “helper’s high.” Endorphins reduce stress, and consequently, also reduce stress-related illnesses.

The study also found that the mental and physical health benefits increased with the frequency of others-centered acts, and were experienced to a greater extent among people who’s “good deed” involved close personal contact with a person or group of people. Doing something nice for someone the volunteers didn’t know resulted in the greatest endorphin surge.

## What you can do

Discover who you are and what motivates you. Develop a passion. Find something you feel strongly about – for example: a charity, a cause, or a belief system. Or just be on constant alert for the opportunity to do something special for someone else.

The following list of ideas can help you get started:

- Read stories to schoolchildren
- Write letters for seniors in a care home
- Volunteer at a local hospital
- Make food baskets in cooperation with your community’s food drive
- Give your spouse a foot massage or a surprise hug around the neck
- Wink or smile at your child across the dinner table
- Pay the turnpike toll fee for the car behind you
- Donate a book or set of books to your local library
- Clean house for a harried mom
- Serve food at a local shelter
- Hold a door open for someone
- Bake cookies and send them to a college student you know
- Kiss your children
- Become a big brother
- Surprise neighbors with flower baskets
- Listen to your child tell you a story or talk about what happened to them during the day
- Adopt a road and go on litter patrol
- Do someone else’s chores for the day
- Pay for music lessons for a low-income student
- Let someone go ahead of you in line at the grocery store
- Volunteer as a tour guide at an historic site in your community

“Kindness is a language which the deaf can hear and the blind can see.”

– Mark Twain

“Do all the good you can. By all the means you can. In all the ways you can. In all the places you can. At all the times you can. To all the people you can. As long as ever you can.”

– John Wesley

## Keep a kindness journal

At the end of every day, write down what special thing you did for someone that day. Some days you might find you have more than one act to record. Review it regularly. You'll have a list of memories that will bring a smile to your face. Plus, you'll be able to see how easy it is to “Practice random acts of kindness and senseless beauty.”

## Form a kindness club

There are plenty of things you can do for others on your own. But sometimes it's nice to be part of a group that practices kindness. If you like planning small or large projects and enjoy working with a group, you might want to form a kindness club. The club can be made up of neighbors, coworkers, friends, or acquaintances. It can meet in your home, a community center, coffee house, library, church, or conference room where you work.

The **Random Acts of Kindness Foundation** has produced a projects planning guide with helpful resources. Start small, and have fun!  
[www.actsofkindness.org/file\\_uploads/files/215\\_pdf.pdf](http://www.actsofkindness.org/file_uploads/files/215_pdf.pdf)

- Adopt a disabled person, and then mow the lawn or wash windows for them
- Write a note of admiration to someone
- Share an umbrella with someone standing in the rain
- Throw a party for residents and staff of an extended care facility
- Donate blood
- Give someone a hug
- Compliment someone genuinely
- Call someone on the phone just to let them know you're thinking about them
- Give encouragement to someone who's embarrassed
- Weed a neighbor's garden



## Not always easy

The ingredients for practicing random acts of kindness are universal. Caring, showing respect, being honest, listening, finding your passion, taking action, and allowing enough time for solutions to work are important.

Before you engage in your benevolent act, ask yourself a few questions:

- 1. Is this the best way to help?** You might be drawn to make a credit card payment for someone or spend a few hours consoling a distraught friend. Perhaps your actions are enabling rather than truly helpful. Don't take responsibility away from someone.
- 2. What's your motive?** You can appreciate when someone lends you a helping hand or does something that makes you feel special. When you do something special for someone, make sure it's from your heart. Doing good grudgingly will only heap more stress on you.
- 3. Can you handle a negative reaction?** Actions you think are benevolent, even benign can elicit negative responses. The person for whom you are doing something special might resent your offer, regardless of your good intentions. Perhaps they suspect your motive, want to know “the catch,” or simply cannot allow themselves to receive a kindness. Be sensitive to the feelings of the other person.

Lending a helping hand or encouraging another person who's feeling down is not always as easy as it seems. Acts of kindness can make you feel heady – but be sure to use good judgment when doling out your good deeds.

### Sources:

1. Luks A, *The Healing Power of Doing Good: The Health and Spiritual Benefits of Helping Others*. New York: iUniverse.com, Inc., 2001
2. *Helping Skills*. Mental Health Net. 2006.
3. *Random Acts of Kindness Foundation*. 2006.





# Do Something for Someone

### Instructions

1. Post this record sheet where you will see it daily (bathroom, kitchen, bedroom, etc.).
2. Make a notation each time you do something special for someone else.
3. At the end of the month, total the number of days you did something special for someone. You must meet this goal at least 22 days during the month to complete the Challenge. Then keep up this healthy practice for a lifetime of good health.
4. Enter your completion of the Wellness Challenge on your Health Activity Tracker report for the month. Keep this record for evidence of completion.

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MONTH:							WC = Wellness Challenge	ex. min. = exercise minutes
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	Weight & weekly summary	
WC [ ] ex. min. _____	WC [ ] ex. min. _____	WC [ ] ex. min. _____	WC [ ] ex. min. _____	WC [ ] ex. min. _____	WC [ ] ex. min. _____	WC [ ] ex. min. _____		
WC [ ] ex. min. _____	WC [ ] ex. min. _____	WC [ ] ex. min. _____	WC [ ] ex. min. _____	WC [ ] ex. min. _____	WC [ ] ex. min. _____	WC [ ] ex. min. _____		
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WC [ ] ex. min. _____	WC [ ] ex. min. _____	WC [ ] ex. min. _____	WC [ ] ex. min. _____	WC [ ] ex. min. _____	WC [ ] ex. min. _____	WC [ ] ex. min. _____		

\_\_\_\_\_ Number of days this month I did something special for someone

\_\_\_\_\_ Number of days this month I got 30+ minutes of physical activity such as brisk walking

**Other wellness projects completed this month:**

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Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

