BE NICE:
STRATEGIES TO INCREASE YOUR KINDESS FACTOR

Because we all have so many things to accomplish in an average day, it's sometimes necessary to remind ourselves to take the time to be kind to others. Your kindness will often be paid back with more kindness that makes your life easier, so being nice to others has double benefits!

Ways s to increase your kindness factor:

Listen Better.

Sure, you have lots of things on your mind. Maybe you're mentally rehearsing your list of things to do or wondering how on earth you'll complete a project at work by next week. However, learning to focus on whoever is speaking shows politeness and that you're interested in what they're saying. Remember how you feel when someone stops everything and truly listens to you. Such an act of kindness.

Slow down.

The pace you're keeping can cause you to overlook the feelings of others. Pushing your way through or rushing by others appears rude and unkind.

Acknowledge others who are nearby

It doesn't take long to make eye contact, smile, and say, "Hi." In fact, you can do all 3 of those things while you're walking by. People can feel overlooked for a variety of reasons, age, disability, low self image, etc. Being acknowledged can be a simple but profound gift.

Take an extra moment to help another person

If you notice a person is struggling to carry their bags at the grocery, say, "Let me get you a cart" and then do it. Notice how you feel after you offer help. Kindness pays you back with a happy heart.

Vow to yourself to be kind to others.

Each morning when you arise, remind yourself of your personal edict to treat others nicely. When you keep the topic of kindness in the forefront of your mind by promising yourself to be nicer to others, you're more likely to practice it regularly.

Ponder kindness.

When you occasionally reflect on what kindness means to you, you'll be better able to practice the virtue in your daily life. Consider how closely patience and kindness are related: in order to be kind, you've likely got to be patient with others, no matter what else is going on in your own life.

Establish a "kindness" role model.

Who do you know who's exceptionally kind to others? Is there a very nice person you'd like to emulate?

If you select someone to be your kindness role model, you'll pick up some ideas on how to be a kind person, simply by watching him or her and reflecting on how they made you feel . You don't have to share that you've got a kindness role model if you don't want to.

Being kind to others is an easy virtue to practice. It doesn't take a lot of work or effort. However, if you decide to apply the suggestions above, you'll see yourself as one of the kindest people you've ever known. When you keep kindness in your heart, you attract it back like a shining beacon in the dark.