# **7 Easy Ways to Make Someone’s Day (Including Your Own!)**

Kindness doesn’t have to cost a thing. Here are some free and easy ways to spread good vibes.

Some days get the best of us. The train is late. There’s a pop quiz in class. Your boss is disappointed. The list goes on and on. It can be hard to feel happy when it seems like there are so many factors working against us.

The good news? There’s an easy way to boost your mood that’s completely within your control. And, plot twist, it involves boosting someone else’s first.

We all have an anecdote about how being nice to someone made us feel good. Now, science is beginning to help us understand why.

Using brain imaging, [researchers](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1622872/) found that receiving money increases activity in the brain’s reward system. The same area of the brain that releases feel-good chemicals when stimulated by food or sex. But that’s not all. *Donating* to a charity also had the same effect. In other words, both giving and receiving kindness can produce a natural high.

I know what you’re thinking: “If you have money to donate, of course donating money feels good!” But here’s the thing, you don’t have to spend money to reap the benefits of being nice.

Take this [British study](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/00224540903365554) for example. These researchers found that when people aged 18 to 60 carried out random acts of kindness every day for 10 days, they reported higher life satisfaction than those who didn’t. Kindness: It’s a win-win.

**Share the love**

In the spirit of kindness, here are 7 simple ways to spread joy and, in turn, feel that joy yourself.

**Tell someone they’re doing a great job**

From leaving a thank you note for your mail carrier to writing a Yelp review about a great waiter, noticing the work someone is putting in and saying thank you can make a huge difference in their day.

**Let someone else go first**

Slowing down often opens up opportunities to be kind. Maybe it’s letting a car merge in front of you in traffic. Or, letting a person with fewer items at the grocery store check out before you. There are countless ways being a little patient can make all the difference to someone else.

**Give something other than money**

What do you own that you can give away? Consider carrying items like granola bars or new socks that you can give to unhoused folks. Or, pack up used amenities that are still in good condition, like towels and sheets. Many animal shelters accept old linens to keep their animals warm.

**Pay someone a compliment**

**I**t’s human nature to think that when someone is looking at you, they’re judging you. Flip this perception on its head. The next time you’re loving a stranger’s style, let them know.

**Do someone else’s chores**

Whether it’s a roommate, family member, or colleague, everyone gets overwhelmed. Sometimes just doing something small, like the dishes, when it’s not your turn can help someone else catch their breath.

**Offer up your time**

Everyone needs a break sometimes. If you know someone with kids or pets, offering to babysit or pet sit for free can be a huge help. Or you can get creative with how you offer up your donated time. Help someone clean out their closet, weed their garden, or even move house.

**Get in touch**

Lots of people touch our lives without ever really knowing their impact. If there’s an old teacher, coach, or friend that changed your life, send them a message of gratitude. It could be exactly what they need that day.

**Want to show yourself some kindness?**

Sign up for [**Self Care from AbleTo**](https://member.ableto.com/begin/?utm_source=optum&utm_medium=blog&utm_campaign=optum-2023&utm_content=optum-blog-kindness-2023-09)**,** a mental wellness app that puts evidence-informed self-care tools at your fingertips. Whether you log in from your phone or a computer, meditations, breathing exercises, and more are available whenever and wherever you need them. Best of all, it’s available to you and any covered dependents (ages 13+) at no additional cost. [Sign up](https://member.ableto.com/begin/?utm_source=optum&utm_medium=blog&utm_campaign=optum-2023&utm_content=optum-blog-kindness-2023-09) and give yourself the care you deserve.

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I’m a licensed clinical social worker with over 15 years of providing culturally appropriate psychotherapy and social services to individuals and families. I received my clinical license to provide psychotherapy in 2010. My training and experience come from a varied background of working in community mental health, social services, and private practice with individuals and families grappling with severe and persistent mental illness, anxiety, depression, grave disability, and end of life transitions. When I’m not connecting with my clients, I enjoy the outdoors, dancing, cooking, and spending time with my family and my rescue dog, Maggie.

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