WORDS FROM THE HEART
Kinder Together by Pam Lewis

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In our last quarterly newsletter, I shared two simple acts of kindness with **contagious** results that we took note of from our Random Acts of Kindness Day project. Doing such acts is one of the simplest ways to **connect** to others and enjoy kindness' many benefits to mental and physical health. Whether through simple or more involved acts, being intentionally kind is often life-changing for the giver, receiver, or witness in terms of feeling grateful, "seen", valued, worthy, useful, caring, generous and an integral part of humanity.

- During our Project Kindness each Fall, we ask paired freshman honors students and seniors to reflect together on their answers to these questions: "What is the Kindest Thing You Have Ever Done for Another?" and "What is the Kindest Thing Another Has Ever Done for You?" I highly recommend this as a personal or shared practice to help open your heart and strengthen your own kindness muscle.

Considering the multiple benefits of kindness, it remains surprising that most of us don't act in ways to experience it regularly. Research suggests several causes that may be in play:

- **we don't appreciate how much a simple act means to those we reach out to**;
- **we are often self-absorbed and don't even notice the opportunities always available to help someone in need**;
- **we might want recognition and feel that small acts of kindness don't generate the same type of admiration as do heroic acts**.

Research shows that when witnesses see kind people being praised or rewarded, they are more likely to do the same. It is very likely that societal reinforcing of kindness is one way to help positively change the world.



Will YOU help us highlight kindness?

- Catch yourself or others in a kind moment. Follow the news for kind and uplifting stories.
- Then share your stories and photos on your social media, tag Compassionate Houston, and use the hashtag #KinderTogether.
- And/or email us photos, your personal experiences or uplifting stories you encounter, and we will post them to our social media platforms and newsletters.

Let's share broadly, using the hashtag #KinderTogether. Because we **are** kinder together!

With gratitude,
Pam