



The Kindness Campaign

The Kindness Campaign is a social action project organized by Global Awakening In Action and *Good News Toronto*. This collaborative project seeks to spread more kindness at home, at work, and in the world.

The concept behind the campaign is simple, but powerful:

Each month we feature a suggested act of kindness to help readers consider ways to bring a bit of kindness to an unsuspecting soul. Of course, our monthly suggestion is just that — a suggestion. We encourage you to let your spirit soar with possibilities and then put those inspiring ideas into action through your spontaneous good deeds.

You are also invited to leave behind the Kindness Card, provided below. The card explains the campaign and encourages the recipient of your kind act to “pay it forward” in the form of another act of kindness to a stranger.

Kindness Activists are also invited to submit the story of their act of kindness for inclusion in *Good News Toronto*. If selected and printed, we send you a *Good News Toronto* t-shirt as a reminder of your good deed and participation in this social action project.

This month's submission:

This month's story was submitted by Carrie Klassen, who reminds us just how far a few kind words can go.

This month's suggestion: Here are a few simple things you can do to help protect the environment:

Break the plastic-shopping-bag habit and start bringing reusable bags instead.

Protect the environment and your family's health by switching to natural cleaning products. Today.

Instead of driving your car, ride your bike as much as you can for errands, visiting friends, bringing your kids to school (they'll love the excuse to be on their bikes), and even getting to work.



Stephen D'Amico, founder of Global Awakening In Action, coordinates the Kindness Campaign in collaboration with Good News Toronto. Visit stephendamico.com and globalawakeninginaction.org to find out about other fun and meaningful volunteer opportunities

“No act of kindness, no matter how small, is ever wasted.”
— Aesop

Kind Words

CARRIE KLASSEN

I was about 15 years old when I saw an interview with poet Maya Angelou that still dances around my head. She was describing her sureness that one day scientists would be capable of measuring the energy of words. You know when you enter a room and can feel there's been an argument even though everyone is smiling at you? Or when your barista compliments your haircut and something about that stays with you? *That* feeling. That's what she was talking about. It will be measurable — and we'll all start to give words their due weight.

I loved that idea. It struck me because it felt so true. Not only do they have weight, they have a texture — sometimes as light as champagne if you're delicate enough in your choosing.

Years later, I'm a professional writer. Because my clients are mostly holistic practitioners, life coaches, artists, and environmentalists, I spend a lot of time thinking about words and exactly the right ways of reassuring, comforting, or inspiring their readers. I spend a lot of time weighing nouns and adjectives, setting them all down *just so* because Ms. Angelou still whispers in my ear.

A few weeks ago, inspired by afternoon sun and a lull in my work day, I started writing little notes on my very fine, 100% recycled paper. Things like “You're really beautiful” and “There are people who smile every single time you come to mind.”



Kind Word notes on a tree

They were on slips the size of cookie fortunes. Once I started, it all just tumbled out — 675 thoughtful words in all. (My kind husband, Keith, counted them for me.) I made flyers with little pull-tags, each tag with a different message. And then, in time for the nine-to-fivers to see them on their walks home from work, I posted the flyers in the park and on lamp posts, and I dropped the single messages in parking meters and slipped them between the pages of (so-called) beauty magazines. There was a sweet delight for me in noticing the missing tags as the days passed. I thrilled at the anonymity of it.

In fact, I wouldn't be telling you about any of this except for what happened next. I posted a photo of one of the flyers to my Facebook page so my friends could share in the fun. The response was so encouraging that I created a “virtual flyer” next so that I could “tag” my friends on messages that I thought suited them. And they

started tagging more friends and before I knew it, strangers were posting and distributing it, too. I got requests for copies of my printed flyers. They spread across Toronto. And then to Hamilton, Montreal, London, San Francisco. Maybe even beyond that!

It was such a little thing and yet it showed me just how wondrous and expansive the power of a kind word truly is. Treat your words gently, dear readers, and lavish your best ones on the people you love — and maybe some strangers too.



Carrie Klassen is a lover of green tea, yellow sundresses, kind words, and her own writing and design boutique for inspired entrepreneurs, Pink Elephant Communications. Carrie would love it if you connected with her on Facebook



KINDNESS CARD

This Random Act of Kindness is sponsored by *Good News Toronto* and *Global Awakening In Action*

Please help us keep the kindness going... Give this Kindness Card to the next person you help. After you pay it forward, write a brief description of your act of kindness and email it to:

info@goodnewstoronto.ca

If your story is printed in our paper, you will receive a **FREE Kindness Pays T-Shirt** as a reminder of your good deed!

In collaboration with

www.goodnewstoronto.ca
www.globalawakeninginaction.org
Visit us on
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