

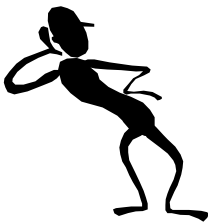
Building Community by Good Deeds

ToolTip #3
Mar 2003



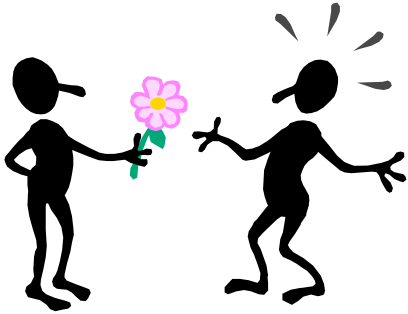
Many of you have heard the expression, "random acts of kindness" to describe an action that an individual takes to help someone without thought of a reward or even a thanks. Since we know one neighbor's willingness to help another strengthens a community, what do you think would happen if residents started consciously committing "random acts of kindness" every day in your neighborhood? It is worth a try! So here are some suggestions to get started.

KEEP YOUR EYES & EARS OPEN FOR OPPORTUNITIES:



"Random acts of kindness" do not have to be big deeds. Remember it's the little things that add up. Picking up a piece of litter on the street can be your act for the day. On the reverse side there is a list of suggestions that you might want to think about.

COMMIT TO A TIMETABLE - ONE A DAY, THREE A WEEK, ETC.



Decide what commitment you are willing to make and stick to it. At the end of your commitment period, you might want to do a mental check to remember what you did. You may even want to keep a journal of your acts. Remember, for a "random act of kindness" to be true, it cannot be done for any kind of reward. Even if you expect a simple thank you, than it cannot be counted.

THE THREEFOLD RULE:



There is a saying that good deeds are multiplied threefold. Since you are not doing these acts for a reward, this is very difficult to track so we have to go on trust that "one good deed begets another and another and another". Taking our example of picking up a piece of trash. Someone might see you and decide to do the same. Then someone observes them, and so on and so on. Look for changes for the better in your neighborhood over time and trust that your actions are a part of those changes.

SOME OPPORTUNITIES FOR "RANDOM ACTS OF KINDNESS"

- ☺ If you hear that a neighbor has been ill, call them up to see how they are. Or better yet, bring them a nice dish of something or some flowers from your garden.
- ☺ If you observe someone having trouble with something, (perhaps they are trying to move a piece of furniture or a heavy plant in their yard), offer to help.
- ☺ If you see a person that is looking unhappy, make an extra effort to smile at them and greet them with a "good morning" or "evening".
- ☺ If you know of an elderly person on your block that has trouble getting around, call them when you are going to the store and offer to pick something up for them or maybe just stop by with a surprise for them once in awhile.
- ☺ If you see a stray dog, try to find its owners.
- ☺ If you see someone looking lost, offer help with directions.
- ☺ Pick a flower from your garden and offer it to the first person that you see.
- ☺ Remember your neighborhood businesses and throw in a good word for them when you are talking to other people.
- ☺ If you are talking to someone who is complaining about something, offer them a positive viewpoint (with no attachment to their accepting it).
- ☺ If someone cuts in front of you in traffic, then consciously smile and let it go.
- ☺ If it is raining, share your umbrella.
- ☺ If you see a neighbor you know walking, offer them a ride. Even if they don't want it, they will appreciate the thought.
- ☺ If a neighbor is ill or elderly and is having trouble keeping up their lawn, then offer to assist.
- ☺ If you see litter on the street, pick it up, even if it isn't yours.
- ☺ Smile at a stranger and greet them in a neighborly way.

Opportunities are presented to you everyday. Look for them and act!