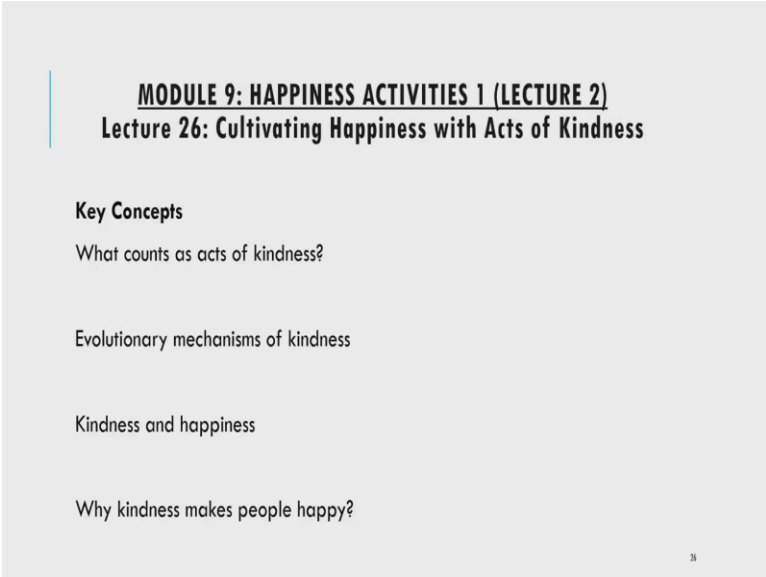


Psychology of Stress, Health, and Well-Being
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Lecture 26
Cultivating Happiness with Acts of Kindness

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MODULE 9: HAPPINESS ACTIVITIES 1 (LECTURE 2)
Lecture 26: Cultivating Happiness with Acts of Kindness

Key Concepts

- What counts as acts of kindness?
- Evolutionary mechanisms of kindness
- Kindness and happiness
- Why kindness makes people happy?

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Hello friends, I welcome you to the lecture number 26 of the course titled Psychology of Stress, Health and Wellbeing. So, we have started now module 9 and this is lecture 2 of the module 9. Module 9 is about happiness activities part 1. So, today we will talk about cultivating happiness with acts of kindness. So, in the module 9, we have started talking about some specific activities for promoting happiness. So, before we talk about today's lecture, let me briefly give you a recap of the last lecture.

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RECAP: LECTURE 25

- What is gratitude?
- Gratitude and happiness
- Gratitude exercises
- Obstacles in promoting gratitude

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MODULE 9: HAPPINESS ACTIVITIES 1 (LECTURE 2)
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In lecture number 25 we talked about how to cultivate happiness or boost happiness by practicing gratitude, and we described gratitude as a state of thankfulness or appreciation for what is useful and meaningful in your life in that context. So, when you become grateful, you appreciate anything you have gotten in your life, whether from other people or from life in general. In that context, we've talked about how we might become grateful by thinking on our life circumstances, notably how lucky our circumstances are, by remembering good things from our lives, or by thinking about and thanking those who have or have contributed favorably to our

lives. As a result, there are a variety of ways to reflect on things for which one is grateful. Then we talked about how gratitude is linked to happiness and well-being. We attempted to discuss some of the conclusions of the investigation. And the majority of research shows that gratitude contributes to a variety of well-being indicators, including an increase in positive emotions, a decrease in negative emotions, depression, anxiety, and so on.

We've also talked about the ways via which gratitude might help people feel better or happier. In that context, we've talked about how gratitude helps people cope with stress, lowers upward social comparison, boosts self-esteem, boosts positive emotions, creates social resources, and stimulates prosocial behavior. So, these are some of the mechanisms that we've explored that potentially link gratitude to happiness or well-being.

Then we spoke about some of the ways we might practice gratitude, such as keeping gratitude journals and expressing gratitude to others directly. Finally, we reviewed some of the potential barriers to gratitude practice, including cultural and attitudinal reasons such as victimhood, jealousy, anger, and an excessive focus on materialistic striving. These are some of the attitudinal characteristics that might function as a barrier. And other personality traits, such as the narcissistic personality trait, may operate as a barrier to appreciation promotion.

As a result, we must overcome these psychological obstacles in order to practice gratitude. And we can remove these barriers by practicing. So, these are some of the concepts we covered in the previous class.

Today, we'll discuss another concept: happiness activities, which are specific activities that, according to studies, add to or boost our experience of happiness, and which are also linked to gratitude. Acts of kindness are what this is referred to as. As a result, we will discuss some of the concepts in this lecture, such as what constitutes acts of kindness. We'll talk about the evolutionary mechanisms of kindness, the link between kindness and happiness, and why kindness makes people happy. So, these are some of the topics we'll talk about today by relating acts of kindness to happiness or well-being. So, let's have a look at these ideas.

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Acts of Kindness

Kindness refers to actions intended to benefit others (Curry et al. 2018).

Kindness has a strong moral dimension just like gratitude. All religions prescribes practice of kindness as a holy virtue and the basis of our happiness.

Kindness includes a combination of emotional, behavioural, and motivational components (Otake et al. 2006). At the emotional level it is compassion, at the motivational level it is urge to help others and at the behavioral level it includes actual helping behavior (Kerr et al., 2015).

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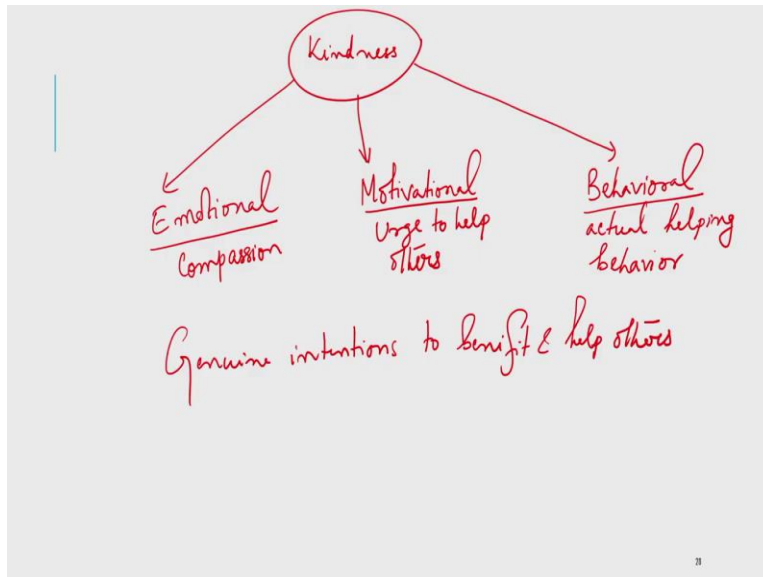
So, when we talk about acts of kindness, or kindness in general, we might define kindness as behaviors that benefit others. So, any activity taken with the goal of benefiting others or with good intentions and goodwill toward others. As a result, any behaviors that are related with such good wishes, goodwill, or the purpose to help others can all be grouped together as acts of kindness. When we mention acts, we usually mean actions at that level of behavior, but kindness can also include mental or emotional components.

Now, kindness has a strong moral dimension, similar to gratitude, which we have already covered. It is emphasized heavily in numerous religious and spiritual traditions, mostly due to its moral connotation or moral value. Similarly, acts of kindness or kindness has a high moral value, and it is emphasized in a variety of religious and spiritual traditions because of its benefits and potential to improve human beings or make human lives more experientially better.

As a result, kindness is prescribed as a holy virtue and the foundation of our happiness in all religions. Most religions teach that kindness is the foundation of happiness, that it is a sacred virtue, and that we should expect those who are holy, religious, or spiritual to practice kindness more frequently. This is something that is ingrained in the majority of our civilizations. As a result, kindness can have emotional, behavioral, and motivational components. So, compassion

on an emotional level, motivation to help others on a motivational level, and actual activity on a behavioral level.

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So, simply allow me to write here so that everything becomes clearer at a higher level. As a result, when we talk of kindness, we often incorporate an emotional component. It is expressed as compassion in this case. It could include a motivational component it may be conveyed as a urge to help others. It may have a behavioral component, where it is exhibited as actual behavior. In essence, it is genuine help. So, as we've already explored, our acts aren't quite "out of the blue," in the sense that they don't happen out of the blue.

The majority of our actions are linked to our thoughts and emotions. So, most things have some correlations or connections with our ideas and emotions, and all acts have some correlations or connections with our thoughts and emotions. As a result, kindness may have an emotional component that manifests as compassion. Compassion is when your heart feels compelled to help someone. You care about the well-being of others. So that's what compassion is. It is an impulse, a motivation to help others, at the motivational level; at the behavioral level, you actually go out and serve others. As a result, a kindness could have all of these elements. What matters most in

the concept of kindness is that it is motivated by a genuine desire to serve others. As a result, that is more critical.

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What Counts as Kindness?

- Acts of kindness need not be some great work of charity or help. It can be as simple as a smile, or saying thank you or a word of encouragement.
- What's important is that it's an act coming from genuine care and concern for another person.
- Acts of kindness can come from a spur of the moment (noticing someone in need) or it can be thought and planned in advance (planning to do something for a friend).
- Kindness require us to be aware of the people around us - and to notice their needs and feelings.

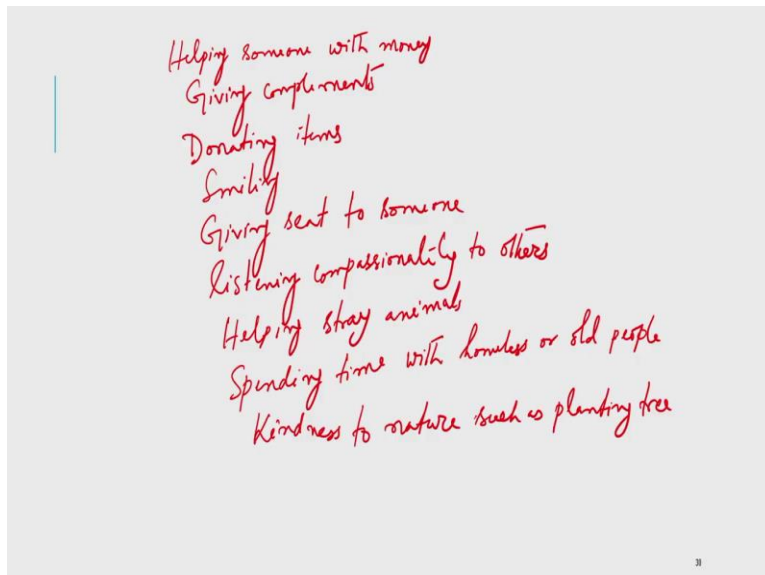
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So, what constitutes a kind act? When you talk about acts of kindness, most people assume it needs to be some kind of spectacular gesture, and that only those with a lot of money, or extraordinary people, can do it. So, the concept of kindness has nothing to do with that. So, acts of kindness don't have to be grand acts of charity or assistance; they can be as simple as a smile, a thank you, or a word of encouragement. So, modest, small deeds, the aim is obviously to benefit someone, and that is what characterizes if an act is kind, acts of kindness or not.

As a result, even the tiniest of acts, behaviors, and activities can be considered acts of compassion. If it stems from your genuine desire to help someone. So, it might be something as simple as a smile to motivate someone, or it could be something as as saying a few words or thanking someone, or giving some compliments, or it could be something as wonderful charitable work. As a result, it can perform a wide range of tasks. As a result, it is not necessary to do only great works, nor is it necessary for a resourceful person to only perform acts of compassion.

What matters is that the deed is motivated by genuine care and concern for another person. That is one of the most crucial distinguishing features. Acts of kindness can happen on the spur of the moment, or they can happen very spontaneously, depending on the situation and how you react to it, and there is a need in the situation for you to show some compassion or aid someone. So, it may be really spontaneous and spur-of-the-moment, or it could be prepared ahead of time. When you plan to do something for a buddy or something else, you do some planning ahead of time. As a result, it can be of any sort. What's more significant is that kindness necessitates our awareness of those around us, as well as their wants and feelings. So, if you're sensitive to the needs of those around you, kindness will come naturally. And if you're sensitive enough to notice, you'll know what I'm talking about. As a result, there are many different types of acts that can be classified as acts of kindness.

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It could be as simple as lending a hand with money or complimenting someone. It could be as simple as donating some stuff that you no longer use to others who are in desperate need of them. It could be anything as basic as smiling. Giving someone a seat on public transportation, for example, could be considered an act of kindness. So, if you believe that someone else, like an

elderly person, requires this seat far more than you, that is also an act of compassion. It is also an act of kindness to listen sympathetically to others' problems. Helping stray animals is another vital and important act of kindness. It could be stray dogs or anything else; feeding and assisting them. It might be spending time with some needy people, such as the homeless or elderly people who do not have many people in their lives; you spend time with them and provide emotional support; this is also an act of kindness. Kindness to nature, such as planting trees, is an example of kindness. That, too, is an act of kindness; you care about the environment. As a result, acts of kindness can encompass a wide range of activities. So, as you can see from the list, even ordinary day-to-day tasks can be classified as acts of kindness. Assuming, of course, that it stems from your desire to benefit or assist others.

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Evolutionary mechanisms of kindness

Kindness may have strong evolutionary basis as it promotes social connections, cooperation and flourishing of communities and societies.

Evolutionary mechanisms favors kindness in a varieties of ways. Curry et al. (2018) reported following mechanisms explaining kindness-

(1) **Kindness to families (Kin altruism):** Natural selection promotes kindness to genetic relatives, such as family members (Hamilton, 1964). For example, love and kindness for off-springs, siblings, parents etc.

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So, there is an evolutionary basis for compassion, and kindness is not only something that we think about on a mental level. It has an evolutionary mechanism behind it. So, kindness is not something that only humans do. Many animals express kindness in a certain context, in their group, in whatever group environment they live in. So, this is a crucial evolutionary foundation, and it is now, at the level of the human being, evidently, kindness can manifest in a significant way.

As a result, it has an evolutionary basis, as evidenced by many species, and it is critical for our survival. As a result, kindness is not a luxury that should only be displayed by a select few. It is

extremely crucial for our collective survival since we cannot dwell harmoniously and peacefully without kindness as a society, as a nation, or as a world. All of the issues in our society, in our world culture, are caused by a lack of kindness. And this lack of kindness manifests itself in a variety of ways, including war, conflict, conflicts among communities, a lack of concern for our well-being, and an ecological imbalance.

So, all of this is a mirror of our lack of kindness on an individual level, which manifests at a collective level in the form of numerous confrontations, wars, ecological imbalances, and so on. As a result, this is a fundamental prerequisite, not only for individual happiness, peace, and harmony, but also for our collective social and global peaceful coexistence. As a result, it is critical in that environment. So, let's look at what evolutionary, what evolutionary basis or examples of kindness exist, and how evolution has embedded this sense of compassion in animals as well as humans.

So, kindness is favored by evolutionary mechanisms in a variety of ways. So, here are a few examples of what we'll see. Curry and his colleagues, for example, explained the following mechanisms in a 2018 report to explain how kindness is conveyed from an evolutionary standpoint. Kindness to families, or kin altruism, the principle of kin altruism, is one method or one particular principle in the context of kindness from an evolutionary perspective. Natural selection favors compassion to genetic relatives, genetically close relatives, such as family members, and this is very obviously represented in our behavior. For example, we demonstrate love and kindness to our children, siblings, parents, and other family members. It is undeniable that we have a high level of affection and kindness for those who are genetically related to us, such as our children and parents. As a result, this is an evolutionary mechanism for promoting or propagating our gene to future generations. So, because we love and care for our loved ones, especially those who are genetically related to us, we try to protect them.

So, this is how natural selection operates in our life to protect those who are genetically related to us. So, kindness is engrained here, especially among those who are genetically related to us. As a result, this is referred to as kin altruism.

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(2) Kindness to members of one's community (Mutualism)

Natural selection favours the tendency to be kind, to coordinate and collaborate with others who shares a common interest such as team mates and group members.

This tendency led humans to form clubs, gangs, sects etc. This form of kindness can explain loyalty, solidarity, camaraderie, civic-mindedness, community spirit, and commitment to a cause greater than oneself (Curry et al. 2018).

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The second concept is mutualism, which is defined as kindness to community members. Which natural selection also favors kindness, especially when it comes to coordinating and collaborating with those who share common interests, such as colleagues and group members? As a result, our generosity extends beyond our personal genetic, genetically near family members to our community or group members. Because they have some basic features that are critical to our survival and, more importantly, our flourishing in life. As a result, natural selection favors kindness among our group members who share a same interest, such as our teammates or group members. This tendency or principle can explain why people establish clubs, gangs, sects, and other organizations. So, we have always had a tendency, human beings have always had a predisposition to establish groups, whether it is in the shape of a community, gangs, clubs, or sects, whatever it is, it is this inclination that propagates or encourages people in that direction. As a result, this type of compassion can explain a variety of human characteristics such as loyalty, solidarity, camaraderie, civic mindedness, communal spirit, and devotion to a greater good. As a result, this concept can explain all of these features. So, in addition to genetically related people, our evolutionary mechanisms on natural selection promote friendliness to our group members.

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(3) Kindness to those who will meet again and return favor (Reciprocal altruism).

Natural selection favors kindness to those who might return a favor later (Axelrod, 1984; Trivers, 1971).

Reciprocal altruism can explain kindness in the form of sympathy, trust, returning favours, gratitude, forgiveness and friendship (Curry et al. 2018).

Reciprocal altruism predicts that these tendencies will most likely to be shown in interactions where individuals expect to meet again (Kraft-Todd, Yoeli, Bhanot, & Rand, 2015) and may include kindness to strangers as it may be a way of making a new friend (Delton et al., 2011).

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The third evolutionary process is reciprocal altruism, which is defined as compassion to people who will meet again and reciprocate favor. As a result of this natural selection, kindness is favored, particularly toward those who may return a favor later. So, if you think there's a likelihood that if I help these people, they'll return the favor, the compassion or the helping behavior will increase. As a result, reciprocal altruism can explain compassion in the form of sympathy, trust, and the return of favors. As a result, we have a tendency to repay favors to others so that they might assist us when we need it. This principle also demonstrates gratitude, forgiveness, and friendship, all of which can be described by this principle. Now, reciprocal altruism predicts that these tendencies will be most visible in exchanges where people expect to meet again. So, especially for those with whom you anticipate to encounter again. As a result, reciprocal altruism is more likely to occur in such persons. We didn't know if we'd see them again. And it could even include acts of kindness toward strangers, which could be a way of creating new friends. As a result, even if you help strangers, they become your friends. As a result, natural selection may promote various forms of this behavior, such as compassion behavior or acts of kindness.

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(4) Kindness to others when it enhances one's status (competitive altruism)

Natural selection favours kindness that impresses peers and attracts mates (Gintis, Smith, & Bowles, 2001).

Competitive altruism can explain kindness in the form of generosity, bravery, heroism, chivalry, magnanimity and public service (Curry et al. 2018) and these are elicited specially in the presence of rivals and potential mates as it may enhance one's status (Raihani & Smith, 2015).

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Kindness to others when it improves one's position is the fourth principle or evolutionary mechanism. This is known as competitive altruism, and it occurs when people are more likely to show kindness in a circumstance or situation where such kindness may boost their status. So, if there's a probability that showing kindness in a given situation may raise your status, you're more inclined to display kindness, and natural selection encourages it. So, in order to impress peers and obtain mates, natural selection favors kindness. As a result, we frequently exhibit specific behaviors in order to impress or attract persons of the other sex, who may be potential mates. As a result, this is referred to as competitive altruism. Many people are guided by the natural selection principle, and they act in specific ways as a result. So, competitive altruism can explain generosity, bravery, heroism, chivalry, magnanimity, and public service as acts of kindness. And these are aroused in the presence of a rival or potential partner, as it may improve one's status.

All of these behaviors, such as kindness or bravery, can actually improve your status in the presence of rivals, as you can demonstrate that you are better or your position will rise, or in the presence of possible mates or opposite sex, as it raises your status in front of that person. That this type of behavior may become more common. These are evolutionary explanations, so to

speak. So, in many ways, evolutionary mechanisms, genetics, or natural selection encourage kindness. As a result, we have a better chance of passing on our Genetic material to future generations. As a result, our species is preserved. So, most evolutionary mechanisms occur at a subconscious level, and the premise is that natural selection is mainly concerned with ensuring that your gene is passed down to future generations. As a result, acts of compassion can be extremely beneficial in this situation. So, from an evolutionary standpoint, these are some of the ideas that can be articulated.

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Kindness and Happiness

- There is a saying "What goes around comes around". With kindness we give happiness to others and it returns to us.
- Apart from strict evolutionary reasons, one psychological reason why people may engage in kindness is happiness.
- People show kindness as it gives them happiness. This may explain a wide varieties of kindness behavior of human beings including donations and charity works
- Many research supports this proposition that acts of kindness increases happiness and well-being.

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Let's take a look at some of the study findings that link kindness to happiness. What goes around comes around, as the proverb goes, and this is especially true in the case of kindness. We can bring happiness to others by being nice, and it will most likely come back to us in a much larger amount. So, when you provide happiness to others, it comes back to you in some form. It may not come in the form of explicit help from others, but when you help people or show kindness to others, there is an instinctive mechanism that makes you feel good about yourself or makes you feel good.

As a result, there are positive emotions associated with it. As a result, it returns to you right away. So, in the context of kindness, it's extremely reasonable to say that what goes around, comes around. So, in addition to the evolutionary mechanisms that we have seen, human beings can really go beyond these evolutionary mechanical principles, which is why we describe

kindness in the human context as a genuine desire to help someone without expecting anything in return. The majority of evolutionary mechanisms explain behavior in such a way that you can learn something from it.

Humans, on the other hand, are capable of going beyond even those evolutionary mechanical principles. And they are primarily motivated to perform acts of kindness because it makes them happy. People engage in acts of kindness because it makes them happy, which is a psychological explanation that goes beyond evolutionary principles. As a result, people show kindness because it makes them happy. And this may explain a wide range of human kindness behavior, including donations and charity activities that may not profit them in any way. People can undertake anonymous donations and charities, and people may not even know who has given. So, what motivates people to act in this manner? One probable explanation is that it makes them happy. Some people may assist us only to demonstrate to others, but that is a different matter. But, if people have the opportunity, they are capable of being kind, displaying kindness, and assisting others, even if they have no specific expectations.

As a result, that possibility exists. And there are numerous examples of people like this all around us. So many studies back up the idea that acts of kindness boost pleasure and well-being. Many studies have shown that when people perform acts of kindness, it makes them joyful or improves their well-being.

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An interesting study of kindness (Schwartz & Sendor, 1999; reported in Lyubomirsky, 2008) indicated the connection with happiness.

This study followed 5 women with multiple sclerosis (MS) over the 3 years. They were given the task of peer supporter for 67 other MS patients by training them to compassionate and active listening. They were suppose to call each patient 15 minutes per month.

After 3 years, these 5 women reported-

- experienced increased satisfaction, self-efficacy, and feelings of mastery.
- engaging in more social activities and less depression
- shifted their focus away from themselves and their problems to toward others
- stronger sense of self-esteem and self-acceptance

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In this line, in 1999, Short Schwartz and Senders published an interesting study on kindness that revealed some of the possible links between kindness and happiness. So, in this study, they followed five women who were diagnosed with multiple sclerosis. Multiple sclerosis is a condition that affects your brain and spinal cord. It is a neurological disorder. And this could cause a coordination difficulty between your brain and other areas of your body, which could appear as mobility issues, visual blurring, and a variety of other symptoms. So, it's a neurological illness that can cause a variety of symptoms, some of which can be extremely bothersome and impair a person's life. So, here are five women with multiple sclerosis who have been diagnosed with the disease for three years. So, in this study, these five women were tasked with assisting another 67 multiple sclerosis patients. So, these five ladies were basically urged to assist them, to support them in terms of actively listening to these individuals, to comparable people, since they, too, are multiple sclerosis patients, and the people they should support are multiple sclerosis patients. There were a total of 67 patients like this. And these five women received instruction on how to actively and compassionately listen to others. So, this was a straightforward task. This is

what they were expected to do: they were supposed to call each patient for 15 minutes once a month, everyone of them, 67 patients, needed to be called for 15 minutes at least once a month. So, 67 people in a month, they'll be calling someone every day, and they'll have to talk for at least 15 minutes. So, this was the task, and the objective was to talk to them and assist them, because they are also similar patients and compassionately listen to them and their problems, and active listening was taught to them.

So, after three years, this research shows that these five women, who themselves had multiple sclerosis and a slew of problems and issues, experienced increased satisfaction, life efficacy, capability, and confidence after doing these acts of kindness, by compassionately listening to them and emotionally supporting them, which is also an act of kindness. Because this is a highly limiting illness, they were participating in more social activities and experiencing less depression. As a result of this disorder, many people may experience a lot of psychological depression. As a result of all of this, they are less depressed as a result of talking to similar people, listening to them, and assisting them. They were also becoming more socially active, participating in more social activities. They turned their attention away from themselves and their issues and toward others. As a result, they learnt to shift their emphasis away from their own concerns and toward others. As a result, they were able to basically solve their own difficulties. They also expressed a higher sense of self-esteem and acceptance of themselves; they learned to accept themselves because they saw how many people with similar problems are also suffering. As a result, they learn to accept it, as do they. as well as a boost in self-esteem

So, all of these positive aspects, the majority of them, are truly indications of happiness and well-being. So, while there are many studies like this, this is one that demonstrates how simple acts of kindness can enhance happiness and other happiness indices.

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Acts of kindness has many positive effects such as-

- Increase in happiness and well-being (Lyubomirsky et al. 2005)
- Decrease in symptoms of depression or anxiety and increasing positive emotions (Sin & Lyubomirsky, 2009)
- Increase in social well-being and the quality of relationships (Otake et al. 2006).

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So, research reveals that acts of kindness have a variety of positive impacts, including increased happiness, well-being, decreased symptoms of sadness and anxiety, more pleasant emotions, increased social well-being, and improved relationship quality. These are some of the findings from many research that show a direct link between acts of kindness and happiness and well-being indices.

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Why Kindness Makes People Happy?

Lyubomirsky(2008) suggested following possible mechanisms of kindness-

- Kindness leads you to perceive others more positively and more charitably.
- Kindness changes self perception. Acts of kindness may help you to view yourself as a compassionate altruistic person which may promote higher self-esteem, confidence and optimism.
- Acts of kindness to others may distraction people from their own troubles and ruminations and shifts the focus from the egoistic self to others.
- Acts of kindness for a worthy cause may give you a sense of your abilities, resources, and expertise and feeling of control over your life.

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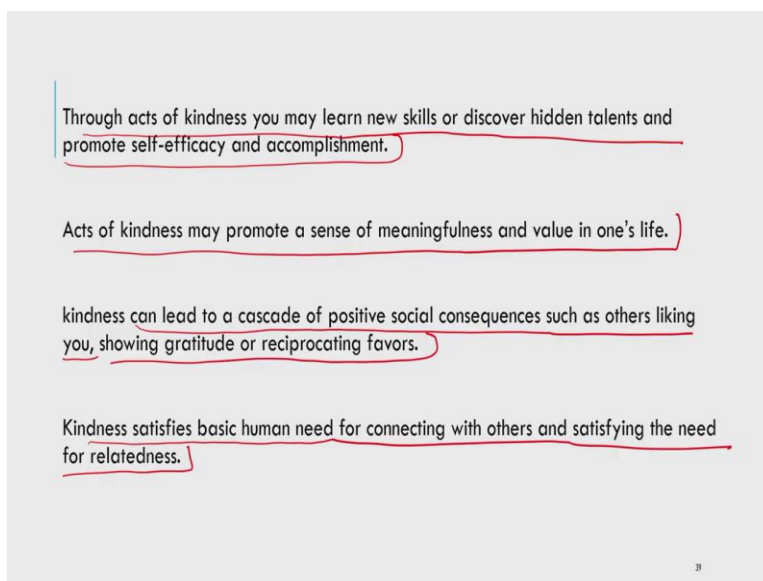
So, let's get to the bottom of why kindness makes people happy. What mechanism may it be? As we've seen, there are a variety of systems that can explain why gratitude makes people happier. Similarly, we can examine some of the systems that may explain why acts of kindness improve happiness or well-being. So, based on numerous research findings, Lyubomirsky proposed some plausible mechanisms. One thing is that kindness causes people to see others in a more favorable and charitable light. Assists you in perceiving. So, one thing is that anytime you perform acts of kindness, you regard others in a more positive and charitable light. As a result, your view of others improves. As a result, you don't see individuals in a degrading or, or in a lesser, in a bad, negative light. But only when you look at people positively and charitably can this entire notion of deed of kindness emerge. As a result, your perception of people improves, or improves to a better or more favorable state. As a result, that perception will undoubtedly alter your outlook in a good direction, so increasing your happiness. As a result, it alters other people's perceptions. It also affects self-perception and self-perception about yourself. When you engage in acts of kindness, one thing that happens is that you begin to feel better about yourself, and your self-perception improves and becomes more positive. So, so, this is why your self-esteem rises; you feel like you've accomplished something worthwhile, and you feel good about yourself. So, self-perception is critical; a positive self-perception is critical for increasing self-esteem, which in turn enhances happiness. As a result, these acts of kindness may assist you in seeing yourself as a compassionate, selfless individual. As a result, your perspective of yourself will improve, and you will become a more selfless, caring person. We often form perceptions about ourselves based on our behaviors. So, whatever activities we take to improve our own perceptions of ourselves, you may think, "Okay, I didn't realize I could do that." And now you're doing it, and your entire self-perception, how you think about yourself, and your self-esteem are all changing. As a result, better self-esteem, confidence, and optimism may be promoted. As a result, which eventually contributes to your happiness. As a result, acts of kindness to others may serve as a diversion or distraction from one's own problems and ruminations, shifting the focus away from the egoistic self and toward others. So, when you perform acts of kindness, one thing that happens is that you focus on others. When you are too concerned with your own egoistic life, it is a recipe for a lot of misery. And since we are too concerned and insecure, when you turn your

focus to others, your ego dissipates, and you forget, or at least tend to forget, a lot of your own problems because you are focusing on someone else's problem.

So, that distraction really assists your ego in being more flexible and stepping away. This improves your openness as well as your happiness. Another benefit of doing a charitable act for a good cause is that it can offer you a sense of your own strengths, resources, and expertise, as well as a sense of control over your life.

Many times, when performing such acts, you learn about your own feeling of ability, resources, and capacities, and you may be surprised to learn that you have those potentials and can now do a variety of things. Which will provide you with information on your capability, abilities, resources, and knowledge. As a result, all of this boosts your confidence and self-esteem, as well as your happiness.

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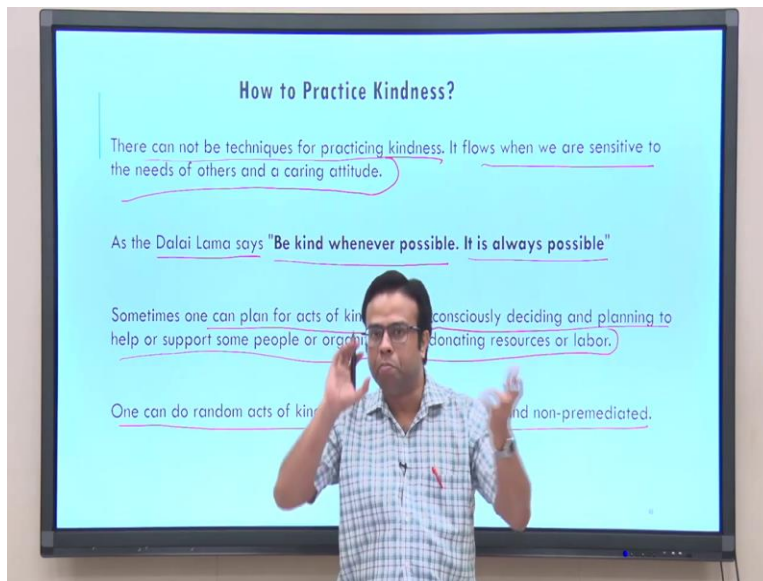


People can gain new skills or find latent talents as a result of acts of kindness, which fosters self-efficacy and compassion. So, this is something linked to what I just said: many times, people find themselves undertaking a variety of activities that were previously hidden within them, which they were unaware of, and these skills and abilities suddenly emerge. And they are

occasionally surprised that I am capable of such feats. As a result, it boosts your self-esteem and self-efficacy.

Another key point to remember is that acts of kindness build a sense of meaning and value in one's life. This is critical; everytime you perform several acts of kindness, you are contributing to something larger than your own life. And in that sense, it raises your feeling of life's meaning; you discover more, your life becomes more important; you aren't simply spending your time on, say, little things or being preoccupied with yourself; your sense of life's meaning grows, and the worth of your life grows. As a result, this self, and everything of one's self-perception, alters. As a result, acts of kindness can have a cascade of positive social repercussions, such as others loving you, expressing gratitude, or returning favors. As a result, a random act of kindness can lead to a slew of additional great outcomes in your life. As a result, when you assist someone, others are more likely to like you. As a result, one good thing will lead to another good thing. They might also be willing to assist you in future. So, positive feelings and behaviors lead to upward spirals, where one positive thing leads to another positive thing, and another positive thing leads to another nice thing. As a result, this has a cascade effect, allowing you to find your life more fulfilling and meaningful. Another significant point is that kindness satisfies the underlying human desire to connect with others and to feel connected. So, as I previously stated, a sense of kindness serves a crucial evolutionary function for our survival as well as fulfilling certain basic needs. So, because we are social animals that cannot live alone, connecting with other people is a basic psychological need. So, we have a tremendous desire to connect with others, and an act of kindness satisfies that desire, that need for connection, since you were worried about others and demonstrating behaviors that benefit others. As a result, you get positively linked to others. As a result, this satisfies or fulfills our basic need for connection, or for forming connections or relationships with other individuals. As a result, this compassion can perform all of these duties, which may contribute to a greater sense of well-being or happiness.

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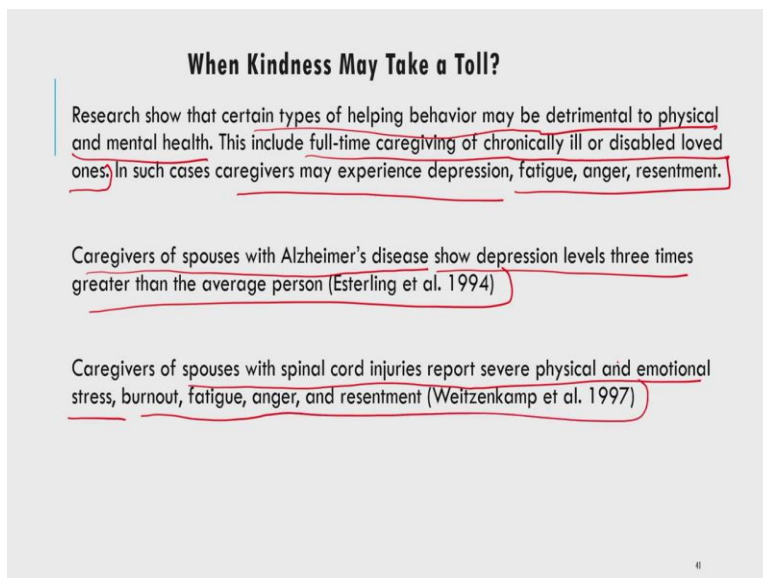
Let's take a look at how to be kind. So, in that context, we've given some precise guidelines in the case of gratitude, but we clearly can't give you very specific strategies or kindness practices. It's something that comes naturally when you're sensitive to other people's needs and have a caring mindset. So, kindness will come naturally from that inner characteristic of sensitivity, empathy, and a loving attitude, and it will do everything it can for you, depending on the situation.

As the Dalai Lama famously remarked, be kind whenever possible, it is always possible. As a result, he is implying that if you have the right intentions, you can always do something in terms of acts of kindness. So, sometimes you can consciously plan for certain acts of kindness by deciding and planning to help and support some people or organizations by donating resources, levers, or your effort. Other times, we can elaborately plan and do something for people or organizations by either giving resources in terms of money or giving your lever, effort, or hard work, whatever it is.

Random acts of kindness, which is also a very relevant concept nowadays, are something that one can do. When you perform kindness, it happens on its own, without any premeditated thinking processes or preparation. So, you see a boy and, in certain cases where there is a need

for assistance or someone needs assistance on the spur of the moment, you assist them. As a result, these are referred to as random acts of kindness. So, many of the examples of acts of kindness that I gave you at the beginning of the presentation are, for the most part, instances of random acts of kindness. So, for example, if you see some stray animals and decide to help them in any way you can, you give your seat to someone who is in need. So it's not like it was pre-meditated or pre-planned in any way. As a result, these are some examples of random acts of compassion. And this idea is gaining a lot of attention these days. And there are numerous websites dedicated to it, such as randomactsofkindness.org. You can go to their website, where they have a lot of information about it, and people even have a dedicated day to honor random acts of kindness, which is February 17, which is known as Random Acts of Kindness Day. So, I mean, the notion is that an act of kindness should not be a one-of-a-kind occurrence, but rather a norm. It is crucial for our collective coexistence, harmony, and peace that people demonstrate it more and more.

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When Kindness May Take a Toll?

- Research show that certain types of helping behavior may be detrimental to physical and mental health. This include full-time caregiving of chronically ill or disabled loved ones. In such cases caregivers may experience depression, fatigue, anger, resentment.
- Caregivers of spouses with Alzheimer's disease show depression levels three times greater than the average person (Esterling et al. 1994)
- Caregivers of spouses with spinal cord injuries report severe physical and emotional stress, burnout, fatigue, anger, and resentment (Weitzenkamp et al. 1997)

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Now, we'll talk about how individuals aid in specific situations, according to study, but it can take a toll on them. As an example, research reveals that certain types of actions, such as helping behaviors, can have a significant negative impact on people's health. For example, providing full-time care to chronically ill or disabled people, or disabled family members. People who provide care to chronically ill patients, particularly those who are your loved ones. So you're a

caregiver for disabled or chronically ill patients. And these are the individuals you care about. In that circumstance, caregivers may experience a significant amount of stress. As a result, caregivers may experience depression, fatigue, anger, and resentment in such situations. So, for example, study suggests that caregivers of spouses with Alzheimer's disease, so Alzheimer's disease, as you may know, is a type of degenerative condition in which people gradually forget things. And, in the worst-case scenario, they may forget their own name. As a result, they may be unable to recognize anyone, including themselves, their children, or anyone in their immediate vicinity. So, it's a neuro degenerative illness. So, reserach indicates that caregivers of a spouse with Alzheimer's disease, or someone who is your kin in this setting, have depression levels three times higher than the ordinary individual. Serious physical and emotional stress, burnout, exhaustion, anger, and resentment are reported by caregivers and spouses with spinal cord injuries.

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Here the problem is not kindness but accompanying grieving for the loved ones and impending loss of life. Furthermore, such caregiving may interfere with daily goals and functioning of the caregiver which may increase stress and frustrations (Lyubomirsky, 2008).

At the emotional level such caregiving may have detrimental effect, but, it may increase certain dimensions of eudaimonic well-being such as purpose and meaning of life as this is an appropriate and honorable work and one sacrifices pleasures of life for the duty.

A true acts of kindness should be done freely and autonomously and only such acts bring the maximum improvement in well-being (Lyubomirsky, 2008). A forced help may not bring about the benefits of kindness as it is not truly an act of kindness.

So, no, there isn't a problem of kindness in this circumstance. All of these negative concerns arise not as a result of kindness, but as a result of grieving for loved ones, as a result of your role as a caregiver for a loved one. And you see your loved one suffer on a daily basis, in a daily moment, every day, due to whatever chronic sickness is the major issue. It's not an issue of kindness; it's a problem of seeing your loved ones suffer at every turn, with the possibility of loss

of life or death. Furthermore, such caregiving may interfere with your daily goals and caregiver functions, causing stress and dissatisfaction because you must constantly help such people. As a result, you may be unable to perform other functions of your life, such as working toward other goals and objectives, which may lead to greater frustration.

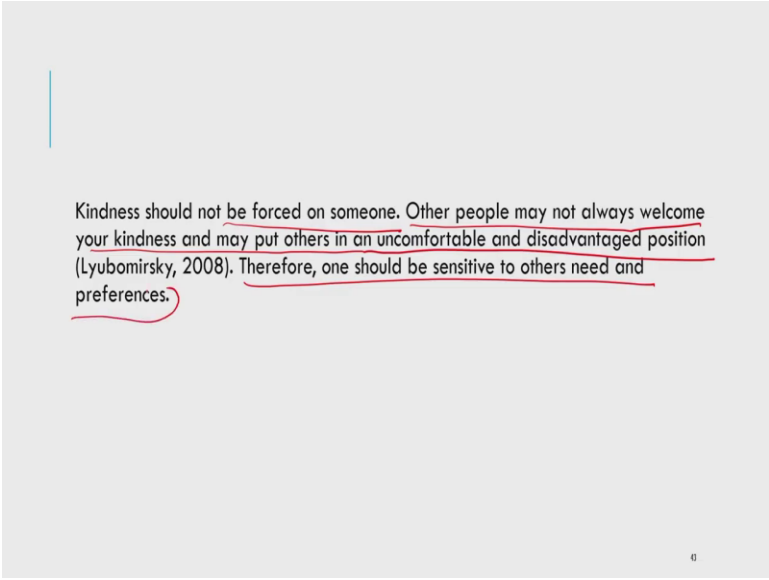
So, while caregiving may have a negative emotional effect, it may boost certain dimensions of eudaimonic wellbeing, such as purpose and meaning of life, because it is an appropriate and noble job in which one sacrifices personal pleasures for the greater good. So, on an emotional level, hedonic conceptions of well-being may be poor in such situations, because emotionally they are suffering, not primarily because of kindness, but largely because of seeing your loved ones or near and dear ones, or even strangers.

It affects us emotionally when we see them suffer. As a result, our emotional well-being may deteriorate in such situations, but it may improve eudaimonic, some dimensions of well-being, such as life's purpose and meaning. Well, this is an honorable, vital work that you must do and complete, and it is the proper thing to do. And you're putting your own joys on hold for their sake. As a result, it may help you find a greater sense of purpose and meaning in your life in this situation.

As a result, a genuine act of kindness should be performed freely and independently, and only such acts will result in the greatest improvement in well-being. As a result, the majority of my acts of kindness are random acts of kindness. If you don't have someone urging you to do something, it won't benefit you or improve your situation. The influence is greatest when you undertake such deeds freely, out of your own volition and independence. Because it is not actually an act of kindness, forced help may not bring about the advantages of kindness. Then it isn't genuinely a kind gesture.

If someone is pressuring you to do anything, or if you are performing an act of kindness as a result of that pressure, it is not a sincere act of kindness and will not benefit you. You will not be happy as a result of it.

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Kindness should not be forced on someone. Other people may not always welcome your kindness and may put others in an uncomfortable and disadvantaged position (Lyubomirsky, 2008). Therefore, one should be sensitive to others need and preferences.

As a result, kindness should not be pushed upon others; others may not always appreciate your kindness, putting them in an uncomfortable and disadvantageous situation. As a result, one should be aware of others' wants and preferences. So, instead of jumping into every situation to help others, you should be attentive to their requirements; if it is required, you should do it; if it is not required, it may not; other people may not view it favorably; they may feel uncomfortable and disadvantaged. When it comes to acts of kindness, one should be alert to these issues. These are some of the key concepts behind acts of kindness. The basic notion is that genuine concern is something we should cultivate as much as possible, do, and convey as much as possible. So, the basic idea is that it is your concern that is more important, if you are open and sensitive to the needs of others kindness will flow automatically. So, with these few thoughts, I'll conclude today's presentation. Thank you very much.