

A RECIPE FOR LOVING-KINDNESS

Day 1

CANCEL A DEBT

Forgive the debt of someone who owes you, whether financial or otherwise. Or, if you owe someone something, repay as much as you are able, with a plan for the rest. Offer gratitude and thanksgiving in either situation.

ROMANS 13:8
JOHN 3:16

Day 2

GIVE GENEROUSLY

Jesus offers us—with his birth—the completely unearned gift of His life. Surprise someone with a generous gift of your time, talents, or resources, particularly one that is unexpected and unearned. This is true generosity.

PROVERBS 19:17
ACTS 20:35

Day 3

LOVE AN ENEMY

Identify someone who hurt you. Forgive. Then find a way to show love to that person in a very tangible way. Perhaps you take her flowers or bake him a special treat. If you feel led, confess your grudge and offer verbal forgiveness.

MATTHEW 5:43-44
LUKE 6:27

Day 4

BE PATIENT

Cut off by another driver or another customer in line? Frustrated with kids or a spouse who can't seem to remember anything? Don't complain. Offer an exorbitant amount of patience as you wait. Use that time to pray.

1 COR. 13:4
GALATIANS 6:9

Day 5

SERVE with TIME

Give some of your most precious and valuable gift: your time. For example, spend a few hours helping someone clean, do yard work, or laundry. Or offer a few hours of babysitting so a mom can run errands (or just take a nap!).

GALATIANS 5:13
1 PETER 4:10-11

Day 6

ENCOURAGE

Give a heartfelt compliment. Try to catch people being kind, and acknowledge what you saw. Or maybe bake cupcakes to encourage the service workers in your community (trash truck drivers, mail deliverers, etc.).

HEBREWS 3:13 (NIV)
EPHESIANS 4:29

Day 7

FEED AND CLOTHE

Serve at a soup kitchen or shelter. Donate to an outreach program. Contact your local school to identify a family in need, and drop off gift cards, warm clothes, or a bag of groceries. Give cheerfully out of your abundance.

MATTHEW 25:35-40
LUKE 3:10-11

Day 8

VISIT THE LONELY

Volunteer with a prison ministry or at your local hospital, asking specifically about inmates or patients who rarely have visitors. Or spend time with a shut-in or someone who is convalescing at home. Have no agenda besides friendship.

MATTHEW 25:36-40
HEBREWS 13:3

Day 9

CARE FOR THE WEAK

Take a foster child to buy a gift for his mom. Bring cookies to a widow, while you play a board game together. Research ways you can regularly support orphans and widows, and follow through on the one that works for your family.

JAMES 1:27
ISAIAH 1:17

Day 10

FULFILL A NEED

We are cautioned against ignoring needs we are capable of fulfilling. Look specifically for those you can meet with what you already have. Maybe a neighbor needs a ride, and you have a car, or a family has no electricity while you have a warm home.

1 JOHN 3:17
PROVERBS 3:27

Day 11

BE HOSPITABLE

Invite someone into your home that you normally would not, perhaps a coworker or neighbor. Or maybe you know of someone who lives alone and could use some fellowship. Be hospitable by sharing the warmth of your home and Christ's love.

HEBREWS 13:2
1 PETER 4:9

Day 12

BEAR A BURDEN

Visit someone going through a tough season (whether in person or over the phone). Spend time with this person, with the sole purpose of listening. Resist the temptation to talk about your own problems, as you seek to shoulder the other person's burden.

GALATIANS 6:2
EPHESIANS 4:2

Day 13

SHOW MERCY

Identify someone you've been judging. You don't have to agree, but find a way to demonstrate grace and mercy. Perhaps offer a gift or service—using your time, money, or talents—to someone you wouldn't normally, because of that judgment.

LUKE 6:36
JAMES 2:13

Day 14

GIVE THANKS

Consider who has impacted your life this past year in specific ways. Speak words of affirmation to let those people know how God used them in your life. Then—in all circumstances—give thanks to God for what He has done.

1 THESS. 5:18
PSALM 100:1-5