# Higher Education in an Age of Uncertainty: The Case for Kindness

Jeff Edelstein
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SIMPLE
ACTS of
COURAGE
to REBUILD
AMERICAN
DEMOCRACY

JEFF EDELSTEIN

# America, we have a problem. People aren't feeling engaged with their work

January 25, 2023 · 5:00 AM ET Heard on All Things Considered





"Addressing the crisis of loneliness and isolation is one of our generation's greatest challenges."

U.S. Surgeon General Vivek Murthy

Gen Z and young millennials prioritize mental health and kindness at work, but believe many employers don't offer adequate support systems...

77% of respondents were more likely to apply for a job posting that listed 'kindness' as an important value of the company.

**Born This Way Foundation** 

\*I NATIONAL BESTSELLER

WITH A NEW AFTERWORD BY THE AUTHOR

# The Tipping Point

HOW LITTLE THINGS CAN MAKE A BIG DIFFERENCE

# Malcolm Gladwell

AUTHOR OF TALKING TO STRANGERS.

"A fascinating book that makes you see the world in a different way."

—FORTURE



Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has.

(Margaret Mead)

izquotes.com



"People will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel." Maya Angelou



Bernie Edelstein, 2009

#### **A Profile in Kindness**

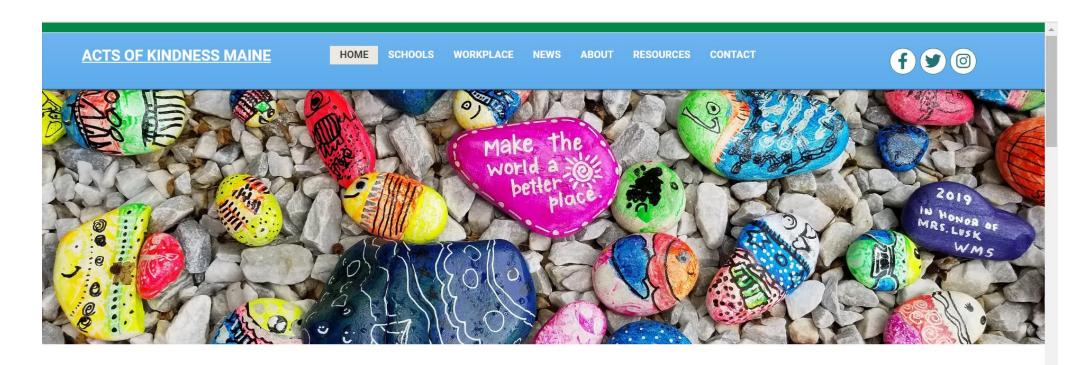


Bernie Edelstein, 1945



# ACTS OF KINDNESS MAINE aokmaine.org





Kindness for the Holidays 2023 Support for Businesses and Nonprofits

#### KINDNESS - THE WAY LIFE SHOULD BE

In these difficult times, when loneliness is epidemic, when political differences seem to be tearing our country and communities apart, when

Sign up for "The Power of Kindness" discussion groups, classes, action teams!

For our Fall 2023 schedule and



#### What Does AOK Maine Do?

- Adult Education Courses on Kindness
- Community Kindness Committees
- Workplace Kindness Programs/Teams
- Monthly Acts of Kindness
- Kindness for the Holidays Workshops
- Local and Statewide Annual Kindness Awards
- Compassionate Leadership Training
- Statewide Kindness Conference
- Kindness in Education
- Kindness in Politics and Policy

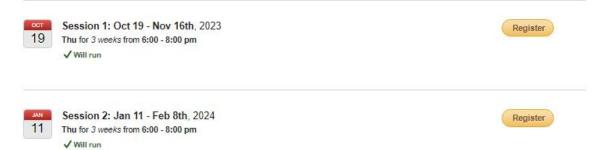


### Radical Kindness – The Superpower That Can Change Your Life (and the World)

\$10

with Jeff Edelstein

Kindness is a superpower that every one of us has. We will explore how "intentional acts of kindness" can transform our friendships, relationships, families, workplaces, schools, and politics. We'll look at the different forms that kindness can take and share our personal experiences with kindness. We'll explore the creation of our own "personal kindness practices" as well as collective acts of community kindness that are fun, creative, and meaningful. Students will have the chance to experiment with their kindness practices between sessions. We'll discuss ways to support each other in rising to our kindest selves, including introduction to a wide variety of inspiring readings, films, and talks. Fall dates: 10/19, 11/2, 11/16. Winter dates: 1/11, 1/25, 2/8.



## Kindness FOR THE HOLIDAYS

The holiday season is a time to cultivate and celebrate kindness in our lives and communities. This is a season of contrasts: fraught for many with family tensions, loneliness, religious tensions, and rampant commercialism, yet also a time for gratitude, atonement, renewal, peace and joy. In this workshop, we will share our struggles and aspirations for the season and explore the ways that our various faith and spiritual traditions - and our personal values - inform the giving and receiving of kindness. Participants will be guided in creating kindness-based intentions and practices for the season (and beyond) through discussion, exercises, and personal reflection on our relationships with particular facets of kindness, such as generosity, forgiveness, making amends, reconciliation, welcoming the stranger, and more.



PORTLAND NEW CHURCH
NOVEMBER 11, 2023,
10-12:00 NOON
REGISTRATION REQUIRED
PAY WHAT YOU WILL: \$15, \$25, \$50

Jeff Edelstein is the founder and Executive Director of Acts of Kindness Maine, a non-profit helping individuals, organizations, and communities uncover and cultivate their innate kindness. Jeff has worked for nearly thirty years as a professional mediator helping resolve conflict and (re)build relationships, from individuals and local communities to Congress. Jeff believes that kindness is our world's common, collective and most courageous superpower. Jeff believes that kindness is the world's most courageous (and contagious!) superpower.

https://www.aokmaine.org https://www.jeffedelstein.com





## **Our (Growing) Network of Allies and Partners**

- Maine Development Foundation
- Leadership Maine
- Institute for Civic Leadership
- Maine Association of Nonprofits
- USM Center for Compassion
- Spiritual Care Services of Maine
- Center for Faith and Spirituality,
   Saint Joseph's College
- Chaplaincy Institute of Maine
- Maine Council of Churches
- Maine Association of Mediators
- Maine Library Association
- Youth-Led Justice

- Restorative Justice Institute of Maine
- Portland Center for Restorative Justice
- Jesuit Volunteer Corps
- Maine Resilience Building Network
- Building Bridges Maine (Braver Angels)
- New Approaches Maine
- University of New England
- Spirit Corps
- Maine Social Studies Association
- And more...



Q

ABOUT

RESEARCH

**EDUCATION** 



**EVENTS** 

**VIDEOS** 

BLOG



# THE CENTER FOR COMPASSION AND ALTRUISM RESEARCH AND EDUCATION

### **UPCOMING PROGRAMS**



CCARE Compassion Alumni Community | November

#### APPLIED COMPASSION TRAINING



#### **EMORY UNIVERSITY**



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HOME ABOUT WHO WE ARE RESEARCH EDUCATION EVENTS IN THE NEWS CURRENT PROJECTS CONTACT Q

# THE UCLA BEDARI KINDNESS INSTITUTE IS A NEW INTERDISCIPLINARY ORGANIZATION DEDICATED TO THE RESEARCH, EDUCATION, AND PRACTICE OF KINDNESS, WITH THE GOAL OF EMPOWERING CITIZENS AND LEADERS TO INVEST IN BUILDING MORE HUMANE SOCIETIES.

The mission of the UCLA Bedari Kindness Institute is somewhat unique in that our goal is two-fold – we're committed not only to engage in best-in-class research on kindness, but to strategically turn that learning into real-world practices through education and dynamic local, national and global partnerships. Said more simply, we don't just want people to learn about kindness, we want people to DO kindness.



## The Bertha Crosley Ball Center for Compassion

Menu

Protest as Practice:
Pandit Warren Senders

The Bertha Crosley Ball Center for Compassion presents



Elizabeth Gorny-Wegrzyn (First Author) Beth Perry

Published in 2022 depicting a teaching philosophy based on an equal, mutually respectful, and collaborative teacher-student dyad and not a hierarchal one.

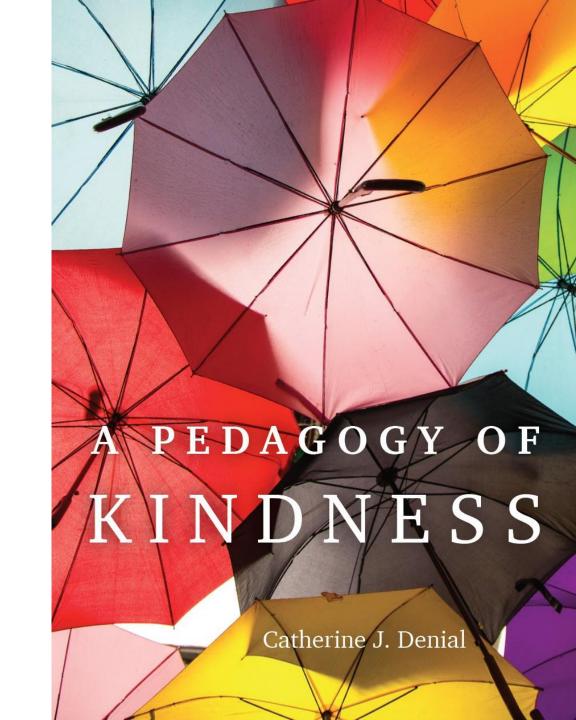


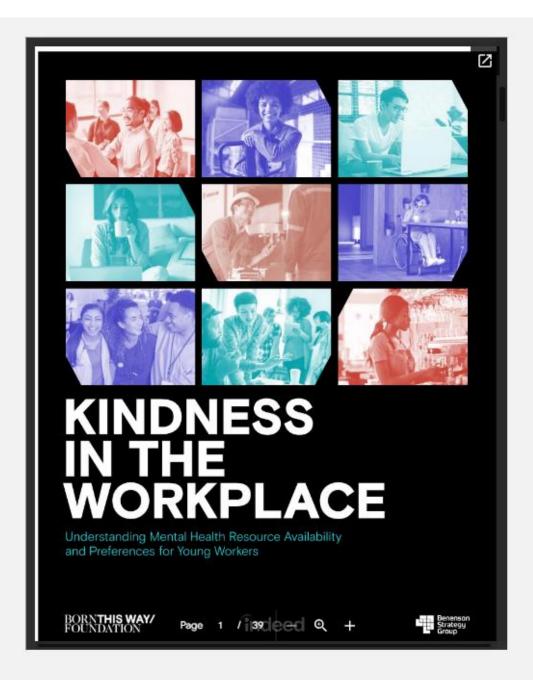
Pedagogy of Kindness

Changing Lives, Changing the World

Coming out in 2024.

Cate Denial is the Bright Distinguished Professor of American History, Chair of the History department, and Director of the Bright Institute at Knox College in Galesburg, Illinois.























Retry Premium for



## Is Kindness a Core Leadership Competency







April 5, 2023











#### The future of leadership is kindness



Listen-up companies big and small: move over command and control, there's a new leadership style in town.



Prime Minister of New Zealand Rt Hon Jacinda Ardern Source: Ardern's Facebook

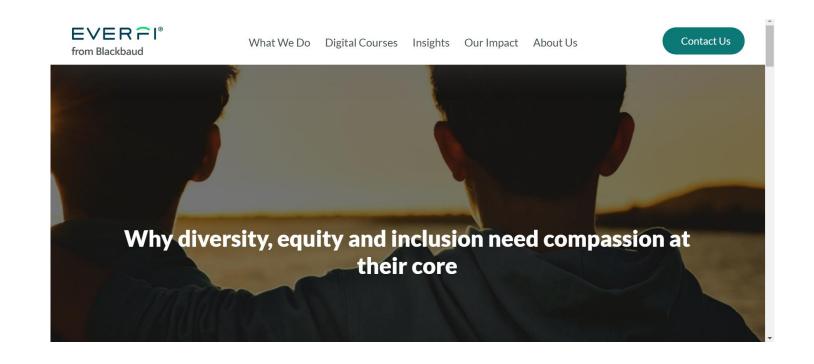
Serial entrepreneur **Gary Vaynerchuk** consistently talks about the power of kindness in business. He believes soft skills matter more than you think.

"We've placed over time so much emphasis on notions of assertiveness and strength that we have assumed it means you can't have those other qualities of

"We've placed over time so much emphasis on notions of assertiveness and strength that we have assumed it means you can't have those other qualities of kindness and empathy."

Jacinda Ardern, Prime Minister of New Zealand

"Too often, we talk about diversity, equity and inclusion in terms of what we shouldn't be doing, but to understand why some actions might actually harm another person, we need compassion."







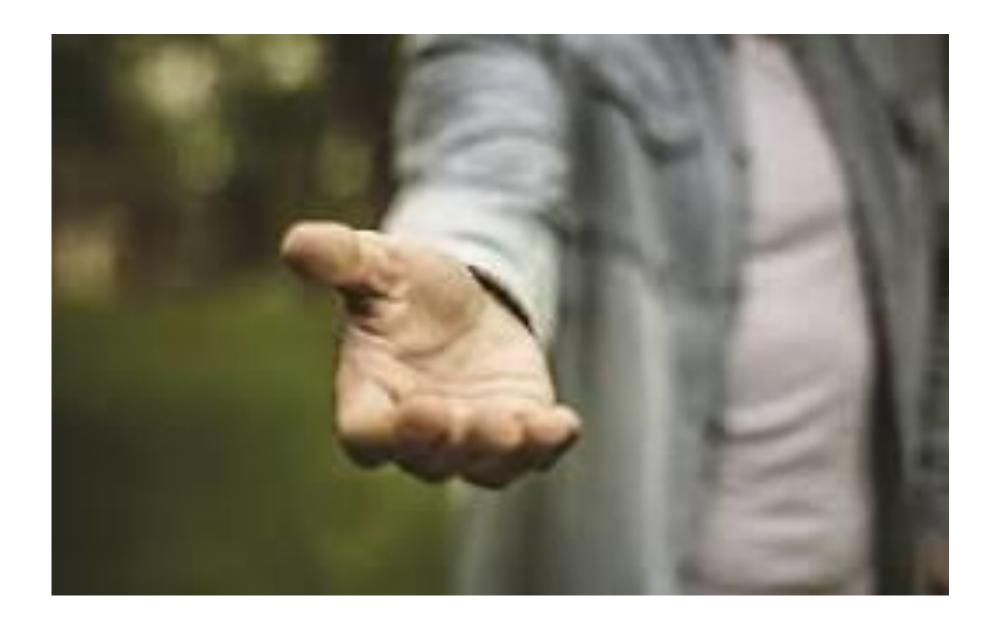
Home > The Stone Clinic Blog by Kevin R. Stone, MD

#### **Kindness / Competency**

Tips and Advice

October 07th, 2015

Successful surgeries, and probably most complex team interactions, are determined in part by where the collaborators live on the Kindness/Competency Curve. Extremely competent individuals who are also always extremely kind are as rare as unicorns. They are the role models we strive to be, when we think about it. The problem is, we don't think about it often enough. We perform with dexterity, but not with enough kindness; or with kindness, but without studying or working hard enough to perfect our skills.



### **FORMS OF KINDNESS:**

- Being courteous
- Noticing and appreciating others
- Letting others go first
- Being honest/authentic
- Attuning
- Withhold judgment
- Honing your inner calm and equanimity
- Reaching out to those in need
- Giving time, money, attention
- Doing what's right, not just what's convenient
- Listening
- Withholding judgment

## **EXERCISE**

- Thank-you cards: Make list of <u>up</u> to three people to express your gratitude to. What will you tell them? How have they impacted you? How have they impacted others? What is it about them that you appreciate?
- Share highlights with each other, as you feel moved.

## CASE STUDY: Leadership Maine Class

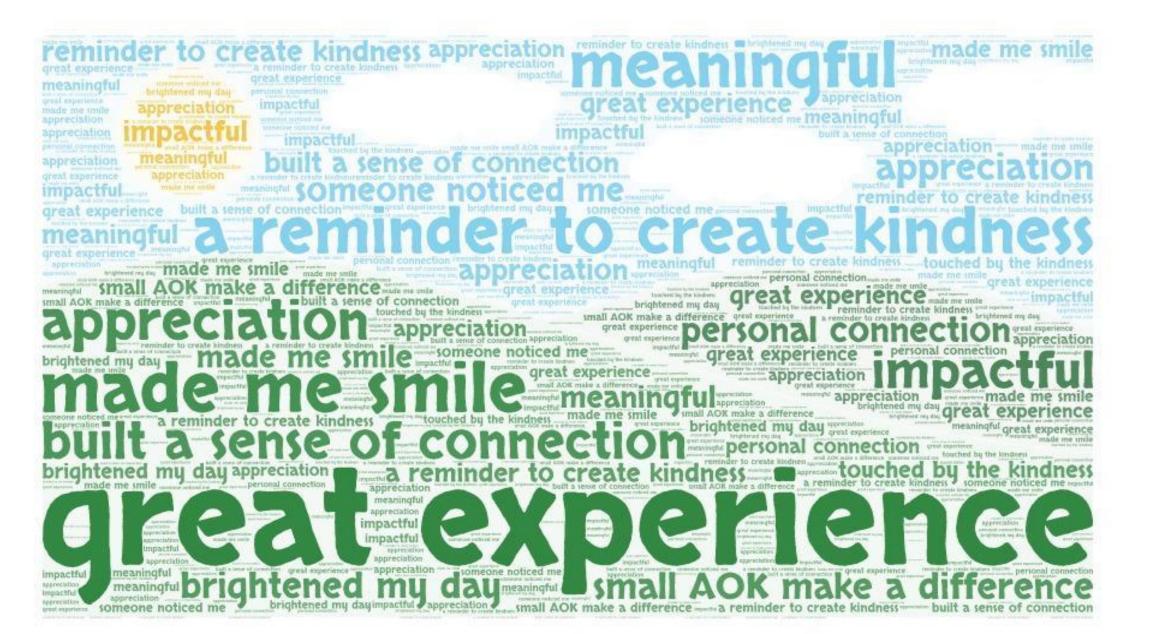
The AOK team gave out cookies and an individualized note of kindness to all Leadership Maine members.

Our goal was to: make a personal connection and foster kindness moving forward.

We asked Leadership Maine's members survey questions about their personal experience of our act of kindness.



#### How did this experience resonate with you?



By experiencing an Act of Kindness - Did it change anything for you?

more aware of how I can do AOK daily at work
reminder that a simple recognition of someone's good qualities can help with their challenges
Reinforced for me how simple things can go a long way
made me reflect on all the good that exists in the world
appreciated even more the relationships built through Leadership Maine
reinforced for me that taking the time to write it down and share it is worth it
Keeps it in front of my mind that there are good people out there

aware how I can do kind things reminder to try to fit small AOK into my day

#### Did the experience inspire you to perform an Act of Kindness?

"Yes...it's a reminder to take the time to create positive experiences for people."

"That small moment of reflection carried over into the rest of the day, and I made sure to connect with my kids and partner when I got home."

"I have thought about this AOK daily since then, and have been working into my day small AOKs giving to others."

"Absolutely. When you are a recipient of acts of kindness it makes you want to go out and do something nice for someone else to pay it forward."

"I truly thought about it for a long time! In a few situations that might ordinarily be frustrating for me I slowed down and gave others the benefit of the doubt and a smile."

## **EXERCISE**

 Identify ways that kindness can enhance the activities of HR. Pick out the activities that would most benefit from particular aspects of kindness. Discuss the pros and cons, the challenges, and the opportunities.

	Noticing and Appreciating	Being Generous, Going Out of One's Way	Authenticity – Being and Accepting	Doing what's right over what's convenient	Listening, asking and withholding judgment	Showing Caring, Support and Presence	Other kindness attributes?
Recruiting		X				X	
Onboarding							
Retention							
Training & Leadership Developmen							
Benefits management							
DEIB							
Grievance processing				X	X		
Regulatory compliance							
Workplace culture/ Other?							

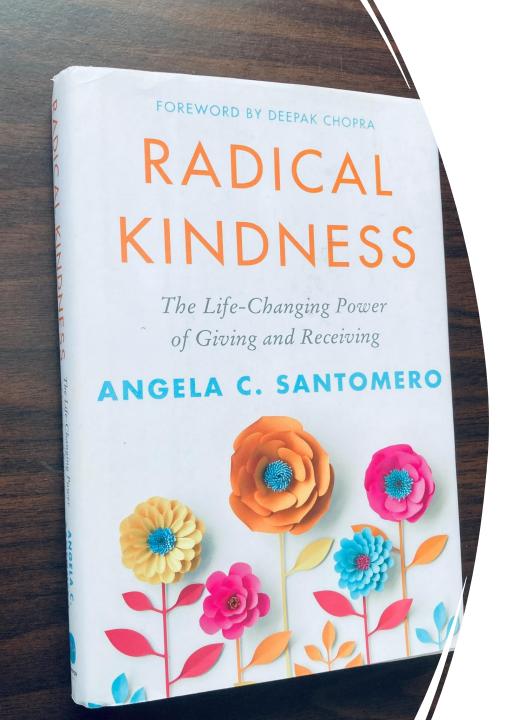
### SIMPLE STEPS WITHIN DEPARTMENT

- Have thank-you cards always available.
- Have a kindness board.
- Form a kindness team.
- Open meetings with \_\_\_\_ minutes of acknowledgment of a fellow team member or someone outside the team or of the institution. Ask if anyone has a kindness story since the last meeting.
- Lunchtime book club Power of Kindness, Radical Kindness,
   Compassionate Leadership.
- Communication Mondays
- Kindness Mondays.



#### The Power of Kindness

- The Unexpected Benefits of Leading a Compassionate Life
- Piero Ferrucci



#### **RADICAL KINDNESS**

The Life-Changing Power of Giving and Receiving

Angela C. Santomero

## **INSTITUTION-WIDE INITIATIVES**

Opportunistic vs. Systematic

# THANK YOU!!!

Contact us at <a href="mailto:aokmaine@gmail.com">aokmaine@gmail.com</a> www.aokmaine.org