

Holiday Random Acts of Kindness

the More the Merrier!

Patricia Gallagher, the author of *150 Ways to Sprinkle Kindness in Your Community*, offers ideas for Joy to the World Random Acts of Kindness.

- Fill a *merry and bright* bag with laundry detergent, soap, toothpaste, deodorant, feminine products, paper towels, toilet paper, candy canes, and festive dollar store decorations. *Dash Through the Snow and Jingle All the Way* to a family in need.
- Send someone a mystery Holiday card. Put a five-dollar bill inside. Write a message in the card: "The Holidays are in the air. Buy yourself a *Comfort and Joy* hot chocolate at Starbucks."
- Offer to read *Twas the Night Before Christmas* to children in a shelter or group home or to nursing home residents.
- 'Tis the season to be a friend to a single parent. Offer to babysit while they do their Holiday shopping.
- Bring some *Fa La La La La* fast-food restaurant meals to people who are homeless; they have no *Home for the Holidays*.
- Share holiday and craft magazines with someone.
- Volunteer to watch a pet while someone is on a holiday vacation.
- Contact a senior center and ask what good deed your family can do to brighten the holiday for a senior. (Offer to pay an electric bill, buy a pair of warm pajamas.)
- Give a festive snack pack to your mail carrier. Tape a *Have Yourself a Happy Holiday* treat with an appreciative note to the top of your trash can for waste disposal workers.
- Buy a pretty teacup and saucer at a thrift or dollar store. Cut out holiday shapes such as stars/Christmas trees. Write an inspirational message on each one. Give the teacup to someone who needs cheering up.
- Leave notes in the mailboxes of people who "go all out" to decorate the exterior of their homes for the Holidays. Tell them how much you love driving by and seeing their display.
- Make a big pot of soup. Buy individual serving dishes and plastic utensils. Call a homeless shelter and ask if they would like soup for their clients.
- Pay for someone's layaway purchase at a store. Explain to the manager what you would like to do.
- Pay for a doctor's appointment for someone who needs financial help. Offer to drive the person to their appointment if they don't have a mode of transportation.
- Take festive treats to community helpers (crossing guards, custodians, police and fire stations, ER medical staff): Peppermint Patties, Snowball cupcakes, store-bought gingerbread men, reindeer and Santa Claus cookies, and candy canes.
- Invite someone over for a cup of holiday tea or coffee. Not everybody has family who live in the area.
- Schedule a day of the week that you and your friends will do a *Deck the Halls* random act of kindness together.
- Let go of a grudge you have with someone. Do something kind to show you want to move forward with the relationship.
- Fill a holiday mug with "I love you because..." messages and give it to a family member as a Holiday gift.
- Call a children's hospital or nursing home and ask if they would like to receive handmade cards or store-bought cards. Ask for an approximate number of cards desired.
- Do you know how to play soothing music on an instrument? Volunteer to play for someone in hospice or palliative care.
- Think of someone who needs cheering up. Leave a Holiday gift at their door to help them *feel all aglow* again.
- Anonymously pay for a restaurant meal when you see someone in uniform or a veteran wearing a hat that identifies their branch of service.
- Contact a college or military base and invite someone who can't go home for the Holidays to come to your home for dinner.
- How can you use your eyes, hands, ears and feet to *Make Spirits Bright* in your neighborhood? Brainstorm ideas at your dinner table.
- Contact a local bakery and ask if they have treats to share at closing time. Offer to pick up the donations and take them to a shelter, food pantry, or neighbor. You will make someone's day a little sweeter.

