



## *BE the GIFT*

*“Love is always bestowed as a gift - freely, willingly and without expectation.*

*We don't love to be loved; we love to love.”*

*~ Leo Buscaglia*

This month (and beyond) In the spirit of giving and BEing the gift, think about a gesture of kindness that you can do towards someone you know or to a complete stranger. This gift of kindness or random act of kindness can bring about a positive impact on a person’s mood or spirit. Your effort can even have a far-reaching effect beyond the person you did the act for initially. They can be inspired to pay it forward or take action on something in his or her life that positively influences others.

Here are 20 ideas to get you started:

1. Pay for the person behind you at the drive thru. Whether it be a coffee or a whole meal. Make sure to stay anonymous and relay a friendly message to the person like “Have a nice day!” or “Spread kindness and pay it forward”.
2. Leave a gift for someone in a random public place such as on a park bench, at a bus stop, the library, a coffee house, or restaurant. You can even stick around and catch them finding your gift to see their reaction!
3. Praise someone at work for a job well done when the occasion arises. Best to do this in front of other coworkers or his or her boss.
4. Tutor a younger person in reading. You can find a local literacy volunteer organization through a Google search on “Literacy Volunteers Your State.”

5. Send someone you know who is going through a difficult time a card, flowers, cookies or some thoughtful expression that lets them know that you care and are thinking of him or her.

6. Volunteer at a homeless shelter, helping serve a meal or with any organization that you feel passionate about. [www.volunteermatch.org](http://www.volunteermatch.org) is a great website where you can find many organizations in need of help and searchable by zip code, state and keywords.

7. Be compassionate for a person's situation next time he or she is rude or inconsiderate to you, instead of getting defensive. They might be having a bad day or need to hear a kind word. This doesn't mean to be a doormat, but to consider what someone may be going through and giving them a pass.

8. Organize a clothing or food drive with your neighbors for a local shelter. Your taking initiative to collect and distribute items to the shelter will not only make it easy for them to give but will also inspire them while helping others.

9. Lend an elderly person a hand, if you see them struggle to reach something in the grocery store or while doing another activity.

10. Express your gratitude to a teacher or someone who has made a difference in your life. With a letter or in person, share with them how their kindness, support or a gesture has affected you and how grateful you are to know or have known them. You can be sure that you will make their day and even move them deeply.

11. Buy a dozen donuts or bagels for a sports team at a local school, a firehouse or police station.

12. Thank a service person such as your postman, military, a police officer or fireman for their hard work and dedication to serving others. You can simply say thank **you** or even create a special surprise for them.

13. Talk to the person at the party who is struggling with socializing. You never know what incredible, life-changing conversation you may have with them.

14. Buy 10 lottery tickets and give them out to people on the street, wishing them good luck.

15. Take a child or group of children that you know on a special trip somewhere such as a zoo, the circus, a museum, or the local playground.

16. Cheer up a loved one by giving them an unexpected gift. You don't need to spend a lot; it's the thought that counts.

17. Hide notes of encouragement in your spouse's or child's lunch box or in a coat pocket, shoes or other place where he or she will receive this nice little surprise.

18. Adopt a pet from the humane society near you. You can even search for a pet locally through [www.adoptapet.com](http://www.adoptapet.com) ... This is Gracie's favorite one 

19. Call someone who you haven't talked to in a while and let them know that you've been thinking about them and that you are sorry you've been out of touch.

20. Enroll your children in going through their toys and donating the ones that they don't want. This teaches children to be of service at a young age. Bring them with you to the place where you will be making the donation so they can see the appreciation of the organization and feel good about themselves.

So, go out and make a difference in the world! I would love to hear how it goes!