

## What Works? Small Acts of Kindness!

**Research note:** In studies, people who received short, supportive and non-demanding notes or acts of kindness after feeling suicidal and low were much more likely to seek help, not attempt or die by suicide, when compared to people who didn't get these (Motto & Bostrom, 2001; Ranney, Pisani, & Chernick, 2018; Reger, et. al. 2017).

**What does 'non-demanding' mean?** It means to do something without expecting the other person to do anything. For example:

∅ **Demanding act:**

*"Call me if you want to talk."*

⇒ **Better to do Non-demanding:**

*"I am thinking of you and want you to know I care."*

*"I really appreciate the way you \_\_\_\_\_."*

*"I baked some cookies and wanted you to have some."*

Suicide prevention can mean making sure to send someone who is having a hard time random, small, non-demanding notes and acts of kindness over a long time. And, research shows that **you don't need to be close to the person to make a big difference to someone.**

*"Whatever it is you want from young people, you must give them."*

*- Anonymous Alaskan*

*"Kindness is a gift everyone can afford to give."*

*-Unknown*

*"Love is what makes you smile when you're tired."*

*- Terri, age 4 (From Helping Little Kids Succeed - Alaska Style).*

*"A healthy village is a circle whose people are safe within its fold. Love, understanding, kindness, culture, history, goals, and truth make the circle strong..."*

*- Harold Napoleon, Yu'pik author and activist*

*"Love and kindness are never wasted. They always make a difference. They bless the one who receives them, and they bless you, the giver."*

*- Barbara De Angelis*

## Small Acts of Kindness

### Discussion Questions

- *What is your reaction to this information?*
- *What makes small acts so meaningful?*
- *Please share a story from your experience when you were supported or comforted by someone in a small way.*
- *Share an example of when you showed small acts of comfort and support to someone.*
- *Can you think of ways in your family or job where you could do these kinds of small acts of kindness and support, particularly for people who especially need support?*