**Be kind**

*Three things in human life are important. The first is to be kind. The second is to be kind. The third is to be kind.” Henry James*

In these unprecedented times, it is as important as ever that we show each other – and ourselves – kindness and compassion.

It is only natural that we may be feeling anxious and uncertain, whether that be due to concern for friends and family, changing routines, or other reasons. Neuroscience provides the evidence for what we already know instinctively - being kind and compassionate can make a big difference to how we are feeling – it can help us to feel supported, included, trusted and can alleviate anxieties. Kindness is key in valuing each other and valuing ourselves

**Ways we can be kind**

Here are some suggestions of ways that you can practice kindness- what follows is based partly on what’s worked in other organisations and settings and partly on material provided by MoJ colleagues

***Self-kindness***

Take the time to take care of yourself - whether that is a rest break, daily exercise, calling your friends or family, doing something you enjoy can help you feel positive

Be non-judgemental of yourself – show yourself the same kindness that you would show to others

Be aware of how you feel - If you are feeling anxious or uncertain, recognise that this only human and is perfectly normal to feel this way

Show others kindness – helping someone else out, whether a colleague, vulnerable neighbour or whoever, can boost your own sense of wellbeing

Practice [mindfulness](https://intranet.justice.gov.uk/guidance/security/emergencies/coronavirus-guidance/keeping-well/mindfulness/) – this can help you to take control of how you are feeling

***Interact with kindness***

Send an encouraging email - simple way to boost someone’s spirits is by sending good vibes to someone’s inbox

Lend your ear – check in with a colleague and ask how they’re doing, finding the change in routine etc.

Walk in others’ shoes -people may feel overwhelmed or facing extra pressures so imagine what the other person's concerns or needs might be. Do what you can to take them into account and support them, without any blame.

Show gratitude and appreciation for each other -

***Lead with kindness***

Demonstrating care and concern for others and checking in with people shows that it is normal to show compassion in the workplace

Encourage your team to take rest breaks and take time to [maintain social connections with their colleagues](https://intranet.justice.gov.uk/guidance/security/emergencies/coronavirus-guidance/keeping-well/bringing-the-social-into-work/). Taking breaks and bringing the social into work yourself can also make it feel easier for your teams to do the same.

Recognise and celebrate the acts of compassion and kindness that people demonstrate each other.