

Care Capsule[®]

*Capsules of motivation to dispense
care and kindness*

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How to Become a Happy Person

— Dr. James R. Kok

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What is there in life that makes us happier people?

Researchers in recent years have carefully explored the happiness challenge and the answers they found to the question above conclude that it is not money we need. No, after basic needs are met, more money does little for happiness.

The same is true of education, I.Q. or youthfulness (older people are measurably happier). Sunny days add little or nothing. Lottery winners do not find exceptional happiness.

On the other hand religious faith, friends, and marriage all seem positive in raising our happiness levels. Children and grandchildren are happiness boosters, too.

One amazing discovery claims that 50% of our satisfaction in life

is inherited; that is, it is genetic—we are born with it. The other half, then, is circumstantial—connected to and resulting from what we come in contact with; it enters from life's circumstances.

The primary knock downs that erode or take away our happiness are the loss or death of a child or one's marriage partner. Job losses have high adversity numbers, also.

There are, however, **ways to raise our happiness score.**



One approach is to make a decision, make up our mind, to find more pleasure in the day. It involves setting aside some of our

serious concerns, our worries and perplexities. We can choose to look at the sunset, enjoy the hummingbirds, read the comics.

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Become Happy

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We can slow down a little to taste and enjoy food and drink, listen to fine music, plant flowers. These activities can elevate our spirits and make us score higher on the happiness barometer. There are countless other pleasures that can elevate happiness if we work at it a little.

Another recently researched and documented way of bringing a great deal of good feelings and basic satisfaction into one's life

Recall satisfactions in your life

is through gratitude, and recalling basic satisfactions in one's life. Regular, systematic remembering, and even listing, small and major joys, benefits, positive experiences and pleasures profoundly elevates one's sense of well-being, and contentment levels. Thankfulness, worked at, has been proven to be good for our happiness.

The care and kindness formula is another way to find happiness. It may be the most beneficial of all! Such activity can be spiritually and theologically heart-stretching. Looking at and remembering good

things that have happened, after you have done them, no matter how small they might be, are spirit lifting. A mere handful in a week can have month-long benefits in our hearts and minds. Careful research has discovered, and now emphasizes this. Just doing good, on the simplest level, is spiritually beneficial and inflates our sense of well-being and happiness.

What is emerging in all this is that we are seeing the love of Jesus, and the God of Scripture, in a wonderfully fresh way. Instead of merely being appropriately grateful people, or those who show loving kindness to please the Lord, we are seeing the phenomenal truth that God calls us to such Christ-like compassionate and care-full living for our personal happiness—for our own good. The Lord Jesus wants us to be happy people and the "love one another" formula is a basic life-enhancing prescription for our satisfied living.

It is time to change our thoughts about God.

Many of us grew up strongly

believing that we were called to good behavior to please God and that is why we should be nice, loving, fair, honest and kind people.

Consequently, our notion has been that God wants us to be good people like a parent wants her children to behave and keep the rules. It is the right thing to do, we are told, and it is God's direction for our lives. So we believe that we should live accordingly, as obedient people.

However . . . we must see God differently than that. God urges and even commands us to love one another. We are pushed, advised, urged, to deliver love and helpfulness for the brightening of lives, and the healing of brokenness, so abundant and prevalent around us. But it is not just to be good men and women. It is not just to fix the brokenness around us. Giving loving-kindness, caring for others, is prescribed by God to make us happier people.

It is time to change our thoughts about God

Let me say it again: The Lord Jesus is not simply concerned that we be obedient men and women. No, his directions are the keys to our happiness, the recipe for pleasant and even joyful hearts. This is Jesus' (God's) formula for our spirits to be lifted.

Do you have a Kindle?



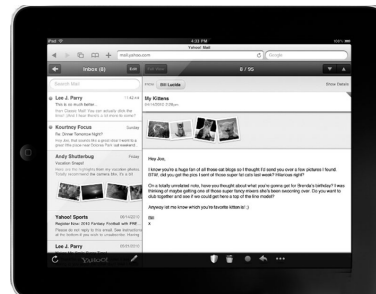
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The Miracle of Kindness is published in ebook formats that can be read on your iPad. Download your copy today!

When the Good Samaritan reaches out and helps the forsaken and injured man, Jesus says to the people around him, "Go and do likewise." The reason Jesus says this is, (1.) You will help the hurt person, and that is part of what we are here for. (2.) But also you will feel happier, and better about yourself. **Two powerful motivations: healing and encouraging others and building up our own reservoir of confidence, feeling valuable, and just plain enjoying life more.**

Behind all this is the profound truth that God is Love and that as we express and demonstrate loving kindness, in any form, we are conduits and networks of Jesus. That is, Jesus, or Love, is flowing from us into those around us and this not only brings joy, encouragement, healing and other positive qualities to others—it also activates joy, happiness, satisfaction and meaningfulness in ourselves.

Few, if any of us, have literally helped someone who has been beaten up and injured by robbers, thieves or thugs. So, obviously, what Jesus is talking about when he says "go and do likewise" is something bigger, more diverse. It is a principle he was presenting—that we should demonstrate and activate compassion, helpfulness, tender-heartedness and loving-kindness in any form it might take. The community in which we live needs that kind of behavior. But there is more to it than just helpfulness. This call from God is the key for finding meaning in life and happiness for ourselves.

We should demonstrate active compassion

It can be so simple or it can be complicated and difficult:

- This week a car-full of older women drove about 80 miles, round trip, on busy highways to visit a slowly recovering cancer surgery patient.
- Last week my neighbor swept the leaves and grass and whatever else was there away from the curb in front of his house. Then he came over and did it in front of our house.
- An older single woman missed her Sunday School class two weeks in a row. Linda did her utmost to get in touch with her to see if she is okay.
- A new habit I have started is my reply to employees, and clerks, in all sorts of businesses. When they say, "Have a good day," I always reply, "Your niceness just made it better."

Being cheerful makes you healthy

Here are a few gems from the Biblical book of Proverbs (taken from a variety of translations) that encourage living lovingly toward those around us:

- Proverbs 15:13** - Kind words bring life....
- Proverbs 15:30** - Smiling faces make you happy, and good news makes you feel better.
- Proverbs 16:24** - Kind words are like honey, sweet to the taste and good for your health.
- Proverbs 17:22** - Being cheerful keeps you healthy. It is slow death to be gloomy all the time.

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Partnering for a Care Conference in your area !

We would like to work with your team to schedule a local mini-conference that would make it easy for people in your area to attend.



We are working with churches in various parts of the United States to present weekend conferences. **How would you like to help host one in your community?**

We will offer as much help as you would like, drawing upon our past experience. You can determine the topics, speakers, schedule any way you want — or we can work alongside your people in developing those things.

And . . . Dr. Jim Kok will come to speak to share the Care and Kindness vision.

Drop us a line at: ShowUp@careandkindness.org to let us know of your interest. Then we can begin planning together!



NEW!

Transform Belief Into Behavior

What God Wants From His People

Dr. James Kok (*known affectionately to all our **Care Capsule** readers as Jim*) has written another book that is expected to be released before the end of the year. Published by Winters Publishing Group, and bearing the title above, it is an exciting read. It goes hand-in-hand with his book, [The Miracle of Kindness](#), and he states in the Preface that “in addition to moving folks into lives of care and kindness, this book intends to put a little more meat on the bones.” He goes on to say that in it “you will find the biblical foundation for what we might call the theology of care and kindness.”

Here is the [Introduction](#) from the book:

I am looking forward to leading you through the thought processes and the biblical teachings that have convinced me that God wants us to be active in our faith — that believing is more than a mental and spiritual condition; it is about the way we live each day. I believe that God wants more than our worship; He wants us to transform our belief into behavior that blesses all of His creation.

My conclusions are based on the Bible. The Bible story is about people. They were lovingly created. They made enormous mistakes. They had to be salvaged by their loving Creator. The Bible is primarily about how much the Creator loves the human race.

Much of our traditional thought about God has drifted in the direction of how we must please Him. Part of this thinking has included a pervasive concern with living and behaving in a God-pleasing way. It has been wrapped around our concern with proper behavior in order to receive the blessing and good will of God.

We cannot cajole, encourage, or entice God into loving us and into giving us earthly gifts and eternal rewards for our behavior. This is off-target thinking. God is not longing for anything more than our thoughtful, prayerful partnership and for us to live sensibly in this world. Devotions and worship are right, and they are appropriate, but they must generate life changes and goodness. Worship is for our benefit—it is a way to generate well-being in us. God’s teachings and His guidance are for our benefit, not His. Devotions and worship are not actions that will make God love us more; they are not an end in themselves. They are a

means to an end. They are to make us better people and brighter lights in this world.

God is not a needy personage. There is no emptiness in Him that can be assuaged or filled by our attention. It is good for us to adore the Lord God, and He does indeed want a loving relationship with us. It is helpful to think of Him as a selfless parent. A wise, loving parent guides his child, and even when the child falters, his love never wavers. God’s Word is all about His loving compassion for us. The rules and laws that God has prescribed for us are not to meet His needs. They are for our well-being, which is the goal of God’s love and which brings Him satisfaction and joy.

The heart of Christian living is to live out the love of Jesus that is in us. Jesus said to the people, “You are the light of the world!” I want to motivate people to take seriously this responsibility to bring light into the darkness felt by people around us. Each of us must celebrate being chosen and blessed with this task.

We, too, are sometimes broken. But we are deepened, healed, and enriched by seeing people everywhere needing loving kindness. We must spill, sprinkle, splash, and soak people with loving-kindness. When we do that, it is God. God is love, and when we love anybody, even a tiny little bit, we are giving them God. Our kindness nourishes their souls with the most life-giving nutrition there is—love!

I hope and pray that you will catch this vision—that you will be awakened to see the man, the woman, the

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Transform Belief

Continued from page 4

stranger, the neighbor, the greeter at Walmart, the cashier at the bank, the worker at the carwash, the clerk at Walgreens, and everybody else, as candidates for a kind word, a smile, a compliment, a warm greeting. That is love! I pray you will see every human being as one of the ‘walking wounded’ to whom you can give a lifting, healing touch. That is letting your light shine and being a light in the world.

You are a reservoir of soul-nourishing goodness, heart-warming love, and spirit-lifting care, because that is the spirit of Jesus. The Holy Spirit is in you, waiting to be released, shared, and spread to people. And it is so simple.

I will lead you through the reasoning behind my passionate belief that God, though He loves our praise, adoration, and our personal relationship with Him, receives even greater joy when He sees us spreading love, kindness, helpfulness, and honest care for one another.



Thoughts from Jim

Dr. Jim Kok maintained a blog named **Kok’s Korner** on the Crystal Cathedral website until his retirement from the Cathedral at the end of June.

He has now moved his comments to the Care and Kindness website, www.careandkindness.org, where they are archived as **Thoughts from Jim**. The most recent posting is displayed on the Home Page, but the menu link above it takes you to the archives, so that you can go back to read earlier ones you may have not yet read. www.careandkindness.org/ThoughtsIndex.htm

Become Happy

Continued from page 3

Many additional verses could be added that point us toward the enormous varieties of ways in which we must “love one another”. And the bottom line is to raise and deepen the health and well-being of ourselves and those around us. That is the good Lord’s plan and intention for all of us—happier living. Not that happiness is always a feeling.

It can be described in many ways. It can be peace, satisfaction, feeling needed, having a purpose in life, or meaning, and a sense of well-being or hopefulness, and an awareness of being safe in the arms of Jesus in this life and the life to come.

That is what we are here for. That is the good Lord’s hope for this world—happier people and a more beautiful world.

Our life prescription is that we must die for others. The ultimate form of this is Jesus literally giving his life on the cross for us. We must see that anytime we interrupt our personal agenda to help someone else, no matter how small, we are dying for them. When we stop doing what we are consciously doing and reach out to assist, encourage, appreciate, care for someone else we are dying for them. That is ultimate goodness. It lifts the hurting and creates well-being in the giver’s heart.

We must trust that every one of us is a treasury of love, Jesus’ love, even if we don’t know about him, or know him. We are all created in the image of God. Since Jesus is God, we all are reservoirs of Jesus’ love. Inasmuch as that is our true nature, our personal well-being and happiness is enhanced when we express ourselves in deliberate compassionate deeds, attitudes and actions of loving kindness, in any form imaginable.

Everyone is an eligible recipient of our love. No matter who they are, how they live, what they believe. They must receive our love. As far as we know everyone we meet, someday will be in the arms of Jesus in heaven. We must treat everybody that way here and now, no matter what their future might be.



**“When I was young, I admired clever people.
Now that I am old, I admire kind people.”**

— Abraham Joshua Heschel

A Choice of Locations

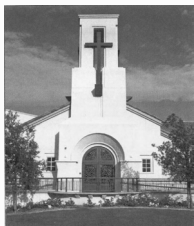
Refresh. Revitalize. Review. Re-energize. Renew.

Hear Dr. Jim Kok speak in person, sharing his heart-felt passion.

Designed to teach, inspire, convince and motivate Christian people to offer intentional acts of kindness more regularly, every day, and everywhere they go.

February 7 – 8, 2014 **Mission Viejo, California**

Presbyterian Church of the Master,



in Mission Viejo, California, (southern Orange County) is conveniently located to area attractions in both Los Angeles and San Diego that you can include on your trip.

Late-breaking news: We just received some details. Go to

www.careandkindness.org/MissionViejo/indexMV.php to see information about the schedule, speakers, registration, etc.

February 21 – 22, 2014 **Des Moines, Iowa**

Westminster Presbyterian Church,



located in Des Moines, Iowa, has announced the dates for the conference they will be hosting in February.

With the other conferences scheduled for next spring being on the east and west coasts, this one is closer and more conveniently located for all those living in the Midwest.

March 21 – 22, 2014 **Bellflower, California**

Bethany Christian Reformed Church

is located conveniently near the intersection of two major freeways near the Los Angeles / Orange county border.



This means there are lots of area attractions in both Los Angeles and Orange counties that can be easily reached.

May 2 – 3, 2014 **Pompton Plains, New Jersey**

First Reformed Church of Pompton



Plains is located 26 miles northwest of Manhattan. The church dates back to 1736 and you can discover Revolutionary War history in the area. Combine your trip with Broadway plays, along with all that New York City has to offer, as well as beach resorts.

Each of these conferences are in their early planning stages, so details are not available as this edition of the **Care Capsule** goes to the printer.

If you recheck our website as each conference draws closer, details will be posted, including speakers, topics, registration information, driving directions, etc. Go to www.careandkindness.org.

Helpful Hint: Bookmark www.careandkindness.org in your browser; it will be easy to visit again and again.



Light Notes

Now that I'm older, here's what I've discovered:

1. I started out with nothing, and I still have most of it.
2. My wild oats have turned into prunes and all-bran.
3. I finally get my head together, and now my body is falling apart.
4. Funny, I don't remember being absent-minded.
5. If all is not lost, where is it?
6. It is easier to get older than it is to get wiser.
7. Its not hard to meet expenses . . . they're everywhere.
8. These days, I spend a lot of time thinking about the hereafter . . . I go somewhere to get something, and then wonder what I'm hereafter.
9. If God wanted me to touch my toes, he'd have put them on my knees.
10. Funny, I don't remember being absent-minded.

This happens all the time

A speaker delivers a helpful lecture, a colleague contributes a meaningful personal devotion, a musician or singer presents an inspiring performance, but virtually no one bothers to stay around and put their gratitude into words. **Why is this?**

Your Assignment

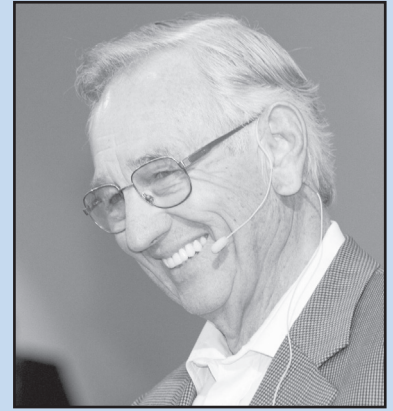
In the next twelve months, whenever you are at a lecture, recital, or chapel talk, spend an extra three minutes thanking the one who spoke, played or shared.

You will bless them.

Guaranteed!

They need your words, no matter who you are.

**I used to be
indecisive.
Now I'm not
so sure.**



Dr. James R. Kok's definitive resource book, "**The Miracle of Kindness**" (available at major bookstores, in either paperback or eBook editions.) details the key essentials in becoming a more caring person. A handful of basic tools —wrapped in courage— are the secret to changing the world through intentional acts of kindness.

As the **Koach Of Kare**, Dr. Kok was pastor at the Crystal Cathedral for 29 years and headed the Care Ministry department. The author of seven books and numerous articles, and founder of the Care and Kindness Campaign, he officially retired in 2013, but continues to write, speak and serve as volunteer pastor at Shepherd's Grove.

Have you sent us your email address?

Many people have sent us an email at ShowUp@careandkindness.org to provide us with their email address so that we can send the **Care Capsule** to them online.

With all the new technology that surrounds people today (email, Facebook, Twitter, texting, iPads, iPhones, etc.), we have heard occasional remarks that printed material is a bit behind the times.

On the other hand, if you are one who enjoys holding a publication or a book in your hands, we are happy to continue sending printed copies to you.

What do you think? If you would like to receive future issues as an attachment to your email, please send us your email address. Send it to – ShowUp@careandkindness.org



Josh's Ideas

A Sunday school teacher asked, *'Josh, do you think Noah did a lot of fishing when he was on the Ark?'*

"Naw . . .," replied Josh. *"How could he, with just two worms?"*

The Sunday School teacher was describing how Lot's wife looked back and turned into a pillar of salt, when little Josh interrupted, *"My Mommy looked back once while she was driving,"* he announced triumphantly, *"and she turned into a telephone pole!"*

A Rabbi said to Joshua, *"So your mother says your prayers for you each night? That's very commendable. What does she say?"*

Josh replied, *"Thank God he's in bed!"*

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