

# Care Capsule<sup>®</sup>

*Capsules of motivation to dispense care and kindness*

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## Let's Get Serious about Joyful Occasions

— Dr. James R. Kok

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**Life needs more celebration! Is that really such a profound statement? Doesn't everyone appreciate a celebration?**

**Let me ask it more personally?** Do you really like to celebrate your birthday? Can you openly enjoy a success you have had, without worrying that people will think you are proud? When someone congratulates you, do you just shrug it off with appropriate 'modesty'?

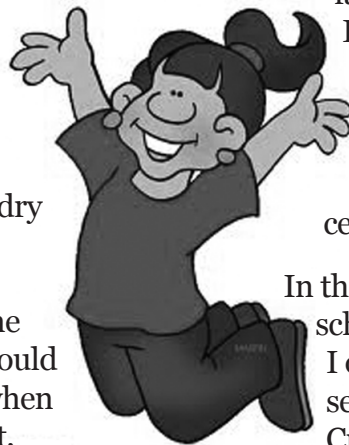
Accomplishment without celebration, thanksgiving, and joyful noisemaking can dry the soul. True — hard work, industriousness, and single-minded productivity bless the world enormously (where would we be without them?), but when they lead to accomplishment, they should be celebrated.

Even the Creator stepped back and enjoyed the good world he had brought into existence. We must copy the patterns God shows us. One way is

to clap and to dance with full-hearted thanksgiving in celebration of the events, people, and productions God has let us be a part of.

"Another birthday party," I sighed. I was reading an inter-office memo inviting me to eat, drink, and be merry on behalf of one of my colleagues. My mind quickly scanned possible conflicts that would enable me to legitimately be absent. I looked for an excuse to go on with my work, which, of course, was more important.

Celebration is not a comfortable or familiar activity for me. It represents a gap in my response system—a gap I want to bridge. I am beginning to realize that God calls us to be celebrative people.



In the fifties, when I played high school and college basketball, I occasionally pulled off a sensational pass or shot. Crowds would cheer. But I, the momentary hero, was constrained by stunted ideas of modesty. I exhibited no joy. No smile, no exchange of high fives or low fives, no happiness, no fist in the air. Just a straight face, a business-as-

*(continued on page 3)*

**You Can Help  
Keep the  
Ripple Effect Going !**

**You can be a part of this!**

Dr. Kok's most outstanding book, **The Miracle of Kindness**, has been republished by WestBow Press, a division of Thomas Nelson.

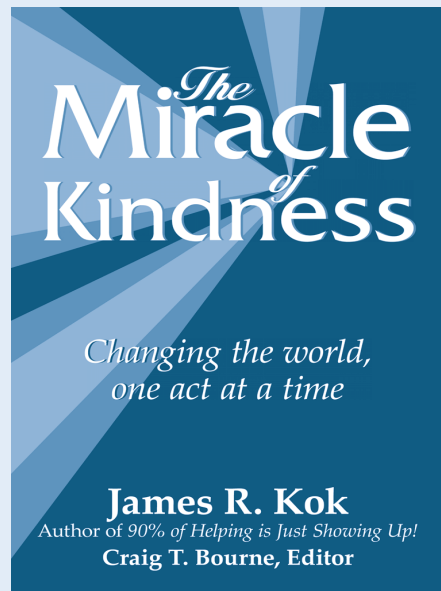
Here are ways you can help spread his vision of Care and Kindness:

1. Order your own copy from WestBow Press. ([www.westbowpress.com](http://www.westbowpress.com))
2. Better yet! Go to your local bookstore to order a copy and also ask them to put a few copies in stock on their shelves.
3. Ask us for bookmarks that you can pass out to your reading friends and to members of your church. To request bookmarks, send an email to [ShowUp@careandkindness.org](mailto:ShowUp@careandkindness.org)

*(The two sides of the bookmark have been reproduced on the right, though they are larger here than the actual size.)*

**By the way:** This book is also available in ebook format at Amazon.com for the Kindle and at Barnes&Noble for the Nook.

**If 75% of accidents  
happen within 5  
miles of home,  
why not move 10  
miles away?**



**The Miracle of  
Kindness**

*Changing the world,  
one act at a time*

by

**James R. Kok**

Available now from  
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[www.westbowpress.com](http://www.westbowpress.com)

This title is also available through  
your local bookseller or preferred  
on-line retailer.

**The Miracle of  
Kindness**

*Changing the world,  
one act at a time*

by

**James R. Kok**

**The Miracle of Kindness** is more than a book. It is a zealous prayer to ignite people with a passion to brighten the world—that indispensable ingredient that changes things so positively by connecting to God. Miracles of Kindness are happening all around you. If you look for them, you will see them— to your left or right, or even right in front of you.

**The Miracle of Kindness** is a comprehensive illumination of Dr. Kok's entire vision for the Care and Kindness movement. This is not only a "handbook" that you will enjoy reading, but one which will continue to serve as a reference and a valuable resource for you as you become an 'Ambassador of Kindness'. It is a passionate and thoughtfully presented menu of fresh perspectives for living a life of love and kindness towards others. All warm-hearted persons will be encouraged about their potential for lifting spirits and they will be moved to act. The practical tips provided will equip them to increase their sensitivity to the joys, the hurts, the grief, the needs, and the cares of the people they meet every day. The book is full of care and kindness anecdotes illustrating how small acts delivered daily can brighten the world. These touching stories show compassionate responses to tough situations faced by people as they offered support to friends and neighbors. Such behavior is the Spirit of Christ flowing through ordinary souls.

A Discussion Guide in the back draws out the key concepts of each chapter and stimulates thoughts on how to apply Dr. Jim's concepts to everyday living.

**Available now from**



## Let's Get Serious

*Continued from page 1*

usual, back-to-work, this-is-serious demeanor. In my catalog, 'exulting' approached pride and was certainly a deadly fault.

Today, expressions of joy and satisfaction abound in the arena of sports. Handstands, high fives, body hugs, ball spiking, prancing, and dancing provide a hilarious creative ritual following touchdowns and goals in football and soccer. Some teams, however, now ban such demonstrations. They claim they take too much time and easily spill over into taunting the opposition.

Early in life, a celebration-inhibiting message infiltrated my brain. It said, "Do not make a big deal of your accomplishments." The ramifications of this creed were that one did not talk about successes, and if one did say anything, it should be only with dispassionate brevity. Overstepping these folkways meant receiving a light, verbal-slap warning, "Now don't get a big head." Celebrating victory was a dangerous activity in which one flirted with despicable arrogance. Humility, "the godly virtue", required subduing nearly all happy dances connected with achievements.

One perennial festival most people enjoy is academic graduation. My own graduation ceremonies were less than joyous events. They were unforgettable events, but they were not the kind one usually wants to remember. Only the passing decades have moved these memories from disappointments to comedies.

I was motherless at the end of my high school career. Lacking a

mother's guidance, I showed up at the church for the commencement ceremony with my robe still tightly, but handily, packed inside the paper wrapper it had arrived in. To my horror, and the shocked gasps of my classmates when I opened the package, the robe emerged as a totally wrinkled crumple of synthetic cloth. I had no choice but to wear it. That's the kind of thing mothers know about—the robe needed to be ironed before wearing it. I blushed then; I laugh now.

College graduation was another landmark embarrassment. This grand occasion was held in the expansive Civic Auditorium in Grand Rapids, Michigan, with a massive crowd of families and friends in

attendance. The mistress of ceremonies directed us to walk in, two by two. The pairing occurred randomly as two single lines coming from opposite directions merged at

the rear of the hall. Fate was unkind to me. I found myself, a skinny, 6'6", 179-pound geek, side by side with the most petite 4'11" woman in the class. As we slowly strolled, it dawned on me that the ripple of giggles and laughter running through the crowd was about us. A tide of warm, red self-consciousness surged through my entire upper body as I slunk to my seat.

Subsequent graduations—my own and others—nearly always churned up some uneasy feelings dating, no doubt, from these events of old. Contaminated with embarrassment, these celebrations remained a chore for a long time. Now, fortunately, they finally trigger great chuckles.

*(continued on page 4)*

## I've realized that life needs more celebration

## 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 easier for people in your area to attend.



We have had a number of wonderful events in Garden Grove, California (13 so far!) but not everyone can make the trip to California.

So, we are working on several smaller conferences in various parts of the United States.

**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 (*no honorarium required*) to share the Care and Kindness vision.

Drop us a line at: [ShowUp@careandkindness.org](mailto:ShowUp@careandkindness.org) to let us know of your interest. Then we can begin planning together.



## Let's Get Serious

*Continued from page 3*

Graduations were not my only problem. Birthdays, anniversaries, Father's Day, Valentine's Day, and most of the other special days, with the exception of Christmas, have for unknown reasons loomed as burdensome necessities rather than exciting events.

The point of sharing these 'horrors' in my past is to tell you I've changed my mind. I've finally realized **life needs more celebration**, and celebrating is fully as important as hard work. I'm certain the Lord gets bored with all our somber industriousness and He dances joyfully with us when we dance.

Remember the wedding in Cana that Jesus attended? He joined in with energetic concern for the success of the party, rather than spending the day teaching or healing. Clearly, the celebration of special events is consistent with the life and spirit of Jesus. Remember how He endorsed the palm-waving, praise-shouting crowds on that day we call Palm Sunday? Long-faced seriousness is certainly not our full-time duty. Joy must break through conspicuously and frequently—God's people have reason for joy.

Birthdays, anniversaries, graduations, and the like are measurable evidence of God's blessings. Another year of life is a gift worth pausing over and a time for firing up some candles of thanksgiving. Marriage can be fraught with pitfalls and challenges, but it also provides satisfactions and rewards. Marriage deserves

fireworks of congratulations for each anniversary year of growth and deepening.

Properly, most of these celebrations focus on the birthday boy, the married couple, the mother, the graduate, or an individual marking a special achievement.

That's how it should be. **Mostly.** But

if focus on the star is all there is to it, motivation for perpetuating the traditions may run out of gas. Everyone else must also join in the thrill and fun of the occasion! The electricity for joyous partying should come from being tickled or nudged by the profound daily surprise of God's gifts streaming steadily into our reservoirs. We must share in the delight of it all, join the dance and light the fireworks.

Spending a little money and energy, even with occasional exorbitance is a fitting act of thanksgiving to the Giver of it all. He wants us to be joyful people. Dancing, singing, shouting (and spending) with excitement over anything great or small is blessed exuberance.

I skipped a couple of my later graduations, writing them off as unimportant. How wrong I was! I have missed birthdays of dear ones because I

didn't regard the event as important enough. For other special days, I have begrudgingly gotten around at the last minute to doing something. I am sorry. I'm trying to do better. All of this connects to an erroneous value system—one that is too lean with reason and practicality, too

*(continued on page 6)*

## Life needs more celebration



**Dr. James R. Kok** has written a definitive resource detailing the key essentials in becoming a more caring person in his latest book, "**The Miracle of Kindness**" (available at major bookstores, in either paperback or eBook editions.) 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 has been a pastor at the Crystal Cathedral for the past 28 years and heads the Care Ministry department of the church. He is the author of six books and numerous articles, and he is the founder of the Conference on Care and Kindness.

### Have you sent us your email address?

To receive your future issues of the **Care Capsule** as a PDF attachment to an email, please send us your email address.

Send it to:

[ShowUp@careandkindness.org](mailto>ShowUp@careandkindness.org)

We would really like to continue sending a copy to you.

# Words Make <sup>the</sup> A Difference

— Craig Bourne

We somehow feel that if we can remind another person of how to look at an issue positively, or that if we can help them get their mind off it for a short time, we will have been helpful. So we change the subject, make a joke of the situation, or provide a pat answer or cliché. But by doing this, **we fail to acknowledge the feelings of the hurting person.**

You have undoubtedly heard many of the remarks in the left column below, or perhaps you have said them yourself, but they are commonly made. Though probably offered with the best of intentions, they are not the best way to “walk with people” in their pain. In the right column, read a much better response that can be offered by a caring person.

<u>Easy Answers</u>	<u>Caring Responses</u>
<i>On the death of a child:</i> “God must have wanted her in heaven.” or “At least you have other children.”	“I’m so sorry for your loss. You must really miss her.”
<i>To a man who has just lost his job:</i> “So you’re retired now, huh? Man, what a deal!”	“That’s terrible. I know you really liked working for that company.”
<i>To a woman who has just divorced:</i> “You’re lucky to finally be rid of that bum.”	“You’re facing a lot of new challenges. This must be a difficult time for you.”
<i>To someone who has crashed their car:</i> “Well, that’s one way to get a new car!”	“Wow! That must have been frightening... Are you OK?”
<i>To a man who has lost his spouse:</i> “She’s in a better place now. At least she’s out of her pain.”	“I’m sorry that she’s gone. We are all missing her.”
<i>After the sudden death of someone in an accident:</i> “Don’t worry. You’ll get through it.”	(You don’t need to worry about saying much at all. Just being there with them will be comforting.)
<i>A man is worried about the challenge of high blood pressure. He says, “I hope I don’t die of an aneurysm.”:</i> “Gosh, I hope not. I know a man who had an aneurysm . . .” and proceed to tell the story of another man who died from it.	(This attempt to “identify” with the man’s problem leads to an unhappy ending. Don’t tell your own story—listen to his.)

## Do you have a Kindle?



**The Miracle of Kindness** is published in ebook format for the Kindle. Download your copy today!

## Do you have a Nook?



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## Do you have an iPad?



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

## Let's Get Serious

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weak on heart and feelings.

Celebration is God's idea: "Blow the trumpet ... strike a tambourine ... raise a song ... have a party ... shout joyfully." God's people of old twisted, skipped, and leaped in their enthusiastic dancing and merrymaking. I'm afraid I'm not up to that level yet—but I'm working on it. **Seriously.**



**P.U.S.H.—pray  
until something happens**

### Here's an idea !

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.

We have a large mailing list for the **Care Capsule** and the printing and postage to send each issue is a considerable item in our budget. Sending them electronically would certainly save those costs.

So . . . if you are one of those people who would prefer to receive your issue in an email, we can do that.

On the other hand, we know there are many people who enjoy holding a publication or a book in their hands. For those, we can continue to send the printed copies.

**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](mailto:ShowUp@careandkindness.org)

## Sample Excerpt

The following excerpt is taken from the opening pages of Dr. James Kok's **The Miracle of Kindness**.

The traditional church has one last opportunity to win the world. Winning is possible if every individual follower of Jesus sees it as his personal responsibility to boldly let the love of Jesus within spill out everywhere he goes.

Christianity is not appealing to the rank and file unchurched American: they do not like Christians. We must change that! And we can—if every pulpit and Bible Study, Small Group and writer includes the mandate we stress again and again in this book: "*You are the light of the world...let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.*"

The bottom line of each message of every Christian gathering must be to motivate each other toward sparkling living: encouraging, appreciating, cheering, listening, and so much more—all of which we speak in this book.

Talking is almost over for Christians. We have not lived up to our words. Actions, exemplary behavior, and Care and Kindness are desperately needed. Every man, woman and child is a qualified deliverer of Jesus' love. Even if you are 103 years old or a person with Down syndrome, you can give a smile or a hug. Everybody is able.

This book is intended to help make it happen. It is designed to inspire you and motivate you in *The Miracle of Kindness*; to help unleash the Spirit of Jesus so "They will know we are Christians by our love."



**If you see someone  
without a smile, give  
them one of yours**



# Light Notes

## I Have Questions . . .

Why does a round pizza come in a square box?

Why do you have to 'put your two cents in'... but it's only a 'penny for your thoughts'? Where's that extra penny going to?

If a deaf person has to go to court, is it still called a hearing?

Why do toasters always have a setting that burns the toast to a horrible crisp, which no decent human being would eat?

Do the Alphabet song and Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star have the same tune?

*(Why did you just try singing the two songs above?)*

Why does Goofy stand erect while Pluto remains on all fours? They're both dogs!

How is it that we put man on the moon before we figured out it would be a good idea to put wheels on luggage?

Why is it that people say they 'slept like a baby' when babies wake up like every two hours?

If electricity comes from electrons, does morality come from morons?

Save the Earth... it's the only planet with chocolate!!!!

## Ask Jim . . .

**Question:** *Why are children so insensitive to lonely parents, widows, and widowers? When my friends get together that is all I hear, "The kids? Oh, they're so busy! No time for Mom."*

**Answer:** Married children who don't have time for their parents are a common problem, causing pain to many parents—especially widows and widowers. The feelings of neglect and rejection are deep hurts for those who have invested so much in their children while bringing them up.

One of the underlying causes of neglect of older parents by their married children is failure to see their parents as needing something from them. Parents continue to be seen as the strong ones who are able to take care of themselves and who need nothing from the children. Adults, however, often still see themselves as children in this context. Even if the parent is a widow or widower, the natural reaction of the child is to be in the role of receiver, not a giver.

Married children may avoid their parents because mother and/or father still continue to "parent them" in a way they find upsetting.

Ideally, parents and children should gradually evolve a relationship of mutuality, where each one can give and take from the other. The focus, then, is no longer so much on the parent/child relationship, which may have been the problem, and they can work on their friendship.



**Stan and Joan Carpenter** are retired and have a motor home that they use for their trips out of state to work on building projects with MMAP, Mobile Ministry Assistance Program. Recently, they made use of it in a different way.

Two people they knew (*let's identify them as P. and R.*) were in a difficult situation. The husband, P., had only recently been diagnosed with cancer, but now was home from the hospital for his final months or weeks of life. The wife, R., had been trying to care for him, but it had been so hard for her that she now also needed medical attention and was in no condition to adequately care for her husband.

Although Stan and Joan were acquainted with the couple, they did not have a personal friendship with them. Nevertheless, hearing of their plight, Stan and Joan decided to "move" to the their home by driving the motor home over and parking it in the couple's driveway. They lived with P. and R. for nine days, providing all the care and help needed, until R. was strong enough to again take up the task of caring for her husband.

Stan and Joan are in our spotlight because they demonstrated so clearly the vision of the Care and Kindness movement. They saw a need they could do something about and they did it with loving kindness.

## A Child's View of Thunderstorms



A little girl walked to and from school daily.

Though the weather that morning was questionable and clouds were forming, she made her daily trek to school. As the afternoon progressed, the winds whipped up, along with lightning.

The mother of the little girl felt concerned that her daughter would be frightened as she walked home from school. She also feared the electrical storm might harm her child.

Full of concern, the mother got into her car and quickly drove along the route to her child's school. As she did, she saw her little girl walking along. At each flash of lightning, the child would stop, look up, and smile.

More lighting followed quickly and with each, the little girl would look at the streak of light and smile.

When the mother drew up beside the child, she lowered the window and called, "What are you doing?"

The child answered, "I am trying to look pretty because God keeps taking my picture."

### Care Capsule

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