

## **NIAGARA WELLNESS COUNCIL RAK WEEK**

### **RANDOM ACTS OF KINDNESS™ WEEK:**

**November 11-17, 2001**

Initiated in Niagara County by the Niagara Wellness Council

#### **GOALS:**

1. During September 2001 - November 2001, provide education as to the origins of the RAK Movement and the national and international emphasis to create and strengthen communities.
2. Establish an annual recognition of RAK Week during November 2001 and each subsequent year.
3. Prior to and during the week of November 11-17, 2001, educated Niagara County citizens as to the wellness benefits of Random Acts of Kindness.
4. According to the established RAK timeline, mail relevant idea sheets to identified groups and individuals.
5. By October 25, 2001, establish a Community Calendar based on submitted activities.
6. Develop a media campaign, as per RAK timetable.
7. Promote RAK on "Wellness Works" (a television program) on October 1, 2001.
8. Conduct a RAK recipe contest, to be completed by November 26, 2001.
9. Record all RAK community activities and compile a RAK outcome report by December 10, 2001.
10. Continue to promote RAK activities and community change monthly through membership and media.

**RANDOM ACTS OF KINDNESS™ WEEK**  
**Niagara Wellness Council's**  
**Community Activity Calendar for Niagara County**

**Sunday, November 11, 2001** **ARMED FORCED, VETERANS, & HEROES DAY**

...a day to remember those in the armed forces, our veterans, and other heroes who have given and continue to sacrifice so much to protect others.

**Monday, November 12, 2001** **SPECIAL PEOPLE DAY**

...a day to be kind to the special people in our lives – loved ones, mentors, friends, and family of all ages – those who have made an impact in our lives.

**Tuesday, November 13, 2001** **WORLD KINDNESS DAY**

...a day to celebrate our role as a world citizen, a member of the global village, to discover the many similarities between ourselves and people of different nations and cultures; a day to tear down the walls that separate, and build bridges that join.

**Wednesday, November 14, 2001** **PERSONAL KINDNESS DAY**

...a day to be kind to ourselves, to pamper and forgive ourselves; a day to recharge our own kindness batteries.

**Thursday, November 15, 2001** **YOUTH KINDNESS DAY**

...a day to honor youth, a day to concentrate on their many positive aspects, such as their energy, creativity, honesty of expression, and idealistic endeavors to right the wrongs of the world.

**Friday, November 16, 2001** **KINDNESS @ WORK DAY**

...a day to be kind to our managers, colleagues, friends, associates at work, customers, clients, and suppliers.

**Saturday, November 17, 2001** **FORGIVENESS DAY**

...a day to forgive and mend any disputes and misunderstandings; a day to right past wrongs among ourselves, other individuals, groups, and nations; a day to make a resolution to instill the spirit of kindness in our journey of life.

# Wellness Benefits of Random Acts of Kindness™

Numerous scientific studies show that acts of kindness result in significant health benefits, both physical and mental. Here are some key points:

- 🌍 Helping contributes to the maintenance of good health, and it can diminish the effect of diseases and disorders serious and minor, psychological and physical.
- 🌍 A rush of euphoria, followed by a longer period of calm, after performing a kind act is often referred to as a "helper's high," involving physical sensations and the release of the body's natural painkillers, the endorphins. This initial rush is then followed by a longer-lasting period of improved emotional well-being.
- 🌍 Stress-related health problems improve after performing kind acts. Helping reverses feelings of depression, supplies social contact, and decreases feelings of hostility and isolation that can cause stress, overeating, ulcers, etc. A drop in stress may, for some people, decrease the constriction within the lungs that leads to asthma attacks.
- 🌍 Helping can enhance our feelings of joyfulness, emotional resilience, and vigor, and can reduce the unhealthy sense of isolation.
- 🌍 A decrease in both the intensity and the awareness of physical pain can occur.
- 🌍 The incidence of attitudes, such as chronic hostility, that negatively arouse and damage the body is reduced.
- 🌍 The health benefits and sense of well-being return for hours or even days whenever the helping act is remembered.
- 🌍 An increased sense of self-worth, greater happiness, and optimism, as well as a decrease in feelings of helplessness and depression, is achieved.
- 🌍 Once we establish an "affiliative connection" with someone - a relationship of friendship, love, or some sort of positive bonding - we feel emotions that can strengthen the immune system.
- 🌍 Adopting an altruistic lifestyle is a critical component of mental health.
- 🌍 The practice of caring for strangers translates to immense immune and healing benefits.

- 🌐 Regular club attendance, volunteering, entertaining, or faith group attendance is the happiness equivalent of getting a college degree or more than doubling your income.

Source: Luks, Allan. *The Healing Power of Doing Good: The Health and Spiritual Benefits of Helping Others*. New York: iUniverse.com, 2001.

Our thanks to the Niagara Wellness Council, Niagara Fall, NY, for compiling this list from Luks' book. The Niagara Wellness Council may be reached at (716)284-9091 or by email at [niagwellness@vplp.net](mailto:niagwellness@vplp.net).

The Random Acts of Kindness™ Foundation ♦ 1727 Tremont Place ♦ Denver, CO 80202  
(800) 660-2811 ♦ [www.actsofkindness.org](http://www.actsofkindness.org)