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Patricia welcomes interviews and speaking engagements. The inspirational stories about Kindness shown below are excerpted from “150 Ways to Sprinkle Kindness in Your Community, 50 Uplifting Stories that Champion Kindness, and 20 Inspirational Quotations.”

The paperback and E-book are available on Amazon.

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Growing up, Patty Murphy had a neighbor who once went to the bar the Friday night before Easter, and blew his whole check on spirits– and not the Easter spirit kind. He had 7 kids. Their mother tearfully told her mother about the situation, and how she would have nothing to give her children on Easter. Patty's mother sat her four kids down and asked if they would give up their allowance for two weeks so she could buy Easter candy for the other family. They agreed, but honestly not everyone was enthusiastically on board. She took her kids to Grant's Five & Ten where they shopped for brightly-colored jelly beans, chick Pez Dispensers, Reese's Peanut Butter Eggs, chocolate bunnies, Cadbury Crème Eggs, and marshmallow Peeps. They made Easter baskets from construction paper, with pipe cleaner handles around which their mother tied extra green ribbon. They used shredded newspapers as filler, and placed the candy in the homemade baskets. Patty's father also went to the grocery store and bought two bags of food for the neighbors. On Easter morning, the Murphy kids found that Easter Bunny had brought them the same Easter Treats, but with a special addition. They each found a five dollar bill attached to the chenille pipe cleaner handles– the exact amount of the two weeks of allowance that they had a little begrudgingly agreed to give up. Mothers Know Best!

Bonnie wanted to teach her children the value of showing appreciation. One summer afternoon, she asked, "How about if we thank Fred, our mail carrier?" According to federal law, carriers are not allowed to accept cash, stocks, liquor, or anything that has value of more than 20 dollars. Bonnie and the kids purchased snacks– wrapped candy, a sport drink, a bottle of water, some Krimpets, and Peanut Butter Kandy Kakes. She kept the bottled water in the freezer so it was icy cold when she placed it in the mailbox. The kids drew pictures, and they penned a heartfelt note, and their mom encouraged them to think of all the weather conditions that carriers must endure to get the mail to their home. Putting treats in the mailbox was a little way to tell Fred that someone recognized his hard work. As the unofficial Postman's Oath reads: "Neither Rain, Nor Sleet, Nor Dark Of Night Shall Stay These Couriers From The Swift Completion Of Their Appointed Rounds."

Priscilla loves animals, especially dogs and cats. When she sees pet food on sale, she buys wet cat food, dry dog food, cat litter, and pet treats. She takes the donation to a food pantry. It is difficult for some pet owners to afford food for themselves, let alone their pets, and if not for random acts of generosity, some people would have to abandon their pets or send them to the SPCA. If you are an animal lover, this can be a great way to help both pets and owners. Even if you have a dog crate, or dog bed/blanket, don't toss it in the trash. Offer it to someone else.

Irene enjoyed visiting her elderly neighbor and would visit her often. Catherine did not have relatives living nearby, so Irene did what she could to offer her support. After Catherine passed away, her niece came from Texas to make memorial plans. Irene knew that the niece was overwhelmed with hosting the luncheon at Catherine's home following the memorial service. Irene offered to provide all of the desserts. She made Catherine's favorites— a moist chocolate cake, an apple cobbler, and Pecan Pie Bars— all easily made in 13 by 9 inch pans. Irene knew that in a small way she helped Catherine's family in their time of grief, and that Catherine was probably smiling down knowing that her friend's delectable desserts consoled her loved ones.

Edward started an animal food bank that serves people who can't afford to buy food for their pets. Grocery stores, specialty food markets, and pet food manufacturers all donate food to animal food banks, but Ed had to register as a nonprofit in order to procure free pet food. If this idea appeals to you, but you do not want to form your own 501(c)(3) entity, check to see if a church, community service chapter, or scout organization that has nonprofit status will allow you to be an outreach of their non-profit organization.

Skylar noticed some kids in her class and neighborhood were not being themselves. They pretended to be other than who they were in order to fit in. She started a group for kids her age and named the group BE ME because she wanted to let kids know they should just be themselves. She asked her grandmother to get T-shirts with a logo and the monthly program was born! A different topic is covered in each session and always includes an open discussion on kind and unkind things the children have observed in school. The discussion helps youth strengthen self-confidence, create self-acceptance, and gives them techniques to manage stress, stand up to peer pressure, and embrace kindness toward themselves and others. The kids make a craft to take home like an "I AM" placemat, a box of loving messages to themselves, a gratitude jar, and more. Skylar's goal is to have a place where kids could express their feelings, be proud of their individual personalities, and feel included.

Jennifer loves dogs and cats but she is not able to have animals in her apartment. So she does what she can to help fellow pet lovers. For one friend, she offered to cover the expense of sterilization for her golden retriever. She reached out to the pastor of her church and asked if she could set up a bin for people to donate pet supplies: food, shampoo, leashes, toys, accessories, and animal biscuits and treats. She researched information about Food Banks for Pets in her immediate area. Her friends responded to her social media post to collect pet items and Jennifer was able to donate quite a bounty to a shelter, pet charity, and food pantry, so people who are experiencing financial hardship can access what they need to keep their pets healthy.

In March 2002, while having lunch at a diner in Bucks County, PA, Cass Forkin noticed several elderly women counting change to pay for their dinner bill. She anonymously paid the bill for

them. Their gratitude for her simple gesture inspired her to found Twilight Wish Foundation on July 1st, 2003, the first national wish granting organization dedicated to serving the needs of the elderly. She started a national movement with just \$711 and a small, but dedicated group of people who believed in the cause. Since its inception, Twilight Wish has granted approximately one wish every other day in our country, honoring and enriching the lives of seniors. Through wish granting celebrations that connect generations and treat the elderly with compassion, she restores their dignity and brings them hope. Her good works also teach younger generations the importance of respect and caring for those that paved the path for them.

Gert met a senior citizen at the gym. The lady introduced herself as Anna May: "Please do not call me just Anna." She shared a little about her life and Gert said, "I think you should be called 'Feisty Anna May!'" She laughed and said that she had actually given herself the nickname Sparkle because that is how she approaches her interaction with others; she wants to bring Sparkle into every relationship. She even had a necklace and bracelet that remind her to Sparkle. Gert felt her positive attitude and sparkle for the rest of the day.

Wanda loved her neighborhood. She lived there for her whole life— 90 years. Sadly, for the last decade, there was no longer any community spirit. People came and went, and nobody mixed or mingled anymore. There was mistrust and animosity. Even people sharing the same steps on the row houses did not speak to each other except to yell about taking a parking space or noisy children playing on the sidewalk. Despite the tension, Wanda did what she could to make a difference. She had a small table in front of her house that she dubbed "the sharing table." When canned goods were on sale, or hygiene products, diapers or holiday items, she would purchase them, and leave them on the table for passersby to help themselves. She was stunned when a man in his 20's passed by and said, "You take good care of this neighborhood." She was so moved by his words, and shocked by him speaking to her. For Mother's Day, her son had given her a 50-dollar Amazon gift. She doubted that she would ever use the card. She did not own a computer, and did not know anything about Amazon. When she saw the young man a few days later, she said, "That meant so much to me when you told me that I take good care of the neighborhood. It moved me to tears to know that I was appreciated." He said, "I just thought it when I saw you." She reached into her purse and handed him the \$50 gift card. Now he had tears in his eyes. "Thank you so much, Ma'am. Today is my 30th birthday." They chatted for a few more minutes. And she felt that a tiny bit of community spirit was infused back into her childhood neighborhood.

Karla's son passed away from cancer in December. She felt so lonely without him. Five months later, feeling like she had to recover a sense of meaning, she walked into the regional radiation and oncology treatment center and asked if she could apply to be a volunteer driver. The staff knew her because she had been her son's primary "driver" for appointments. Her sister had told her not to go back there. "Karla, it will be too hard for you to go back to where you spent so much time with Eddie. I know you want to volunteer but I think you should volunteer somewhere else." Karla thought about what her sister had said but she knew that this radiation center was where she was needed, and where she wanted to spend her Friday afternoons. She knew it would stir all of her emotions to pull into that parking lot. "Mary, I was the only one who had a car and time to drive Eddie. If I hadn't been available to help him, he would have had to pay for a cab to transport himself there. I want to be able to drive someone else who is in the

same situation." The center was thrilled by her offer, and asked her to provide rides for Judy, a 28-year-old woman. "I have off from work every Friday. When I am home alone on my day off, I have no peace. My mind thinks about Eddie every minute. Volunteering to drive a patient to and from treatment makes me feel close to Eddie. I know he would want me to do this. I am doing this for the Love of Eddie."

Tammy was in the grocery store and was in a rush to pick her kids up at their school dismissal time. She knew they were waiting in the gym, but needed groceries and decided to make a mad dash into Pathmark. She didn't have time to compare food labels or food prices, just tossed everything into her cart. When Tammy got to the register, the clerk began tallying up her groceries but then the register broke down. She wrote a check for the amount of the bill, but still had half of the cart that needed to be rung up at the next register. It seemed like it took forever to ring up the balance. The clerk gave her the total for the second part, but when Tammy looked at her checkbook, she was out of checks. She panicked. She knew the kids were waiting, the groceries had been rung up, but she did not have a check. The man in line behind her looked like he understood, and said, "Go pick up the kids. Drive safely. I've got your bill covered."

Charlotte pulled her car over to the side of the road. She wanted to check her phone messages, and open a cellophane package containing a delicious brownie treat. She didn't want to get a ticket for "distracted driving." She was surprised when a car pulled up behind her. A lady asked, "Are you okay? We drove past and then turned around to come back to check on you." How nice of people to care so much. Charlotte cried as they drove away. It touched her heart that perfect strangers would go out of their way just to make sure another person was not in trouble.

During the lonely winter months of the pandemic, Michele thought about family more than usual— how important they are and how she would never take them for granted. She had been growing lavender and had a large bag of it that she had dried. She took the lavender and chopped it up, filling sachet bags. Michele mailed them to all of the women in her family with a note saying, "I am thinking of you during these challenging days and hope the smell of the lavender helps you feel calm." Everyone reached out to say it made their day. Who knew that a little plant and some padded envelopes would bring so much joy!

Sally had begun a project collecting the day-old flowers that Trader Joe's threw away and passing them out all around her city to brighten people's days. One day, a lady asked if she could take the three potted yellow daffodil plants. Though Sally had been thinking of throwing them away because they looked a little wilted, she responded, "Of course! They will look nice in your garden - so nice and bright." The lady explained, "I am going to take them to the cemetery. My son died in January. He had three sons. He was 41. He lived a healthy lifestyle, never drank or smoked or did drugs. And he was athletic like his boys. He always brightened my life. He respected everyone and was always ready to help. Cancer. I was the first one to see his face when he was born, and I was the last one to see his face. When he took his last breath, I was holding his hand."

When Maureen volunteered at a COVID-19 vaccine clinic, the only thing she expected in return was a dose of the vaccine at the end of her shift. After gratefully receiving her shot, the manager came up to her and gave her a Starbucks gift out of a stack he had in his hand. He said they had

been donated anonymously by a person who was being vaccinated to thank all the volunteers for their service to the community.

On Easter 2013, Anne's mother Leah withdrew \$300 from an ATM— fifteen \$20 bills. She was eighty-seven years old and wanted Anne to take her to a laundromat in a low-income area of Norristown. She was particularly looking for mothers with young children. Leah went in and handed out the fifteen \$20 bills to the customers who were doing their laundry. She smiled and said, "Happy Easter!" Then they drove home. Leah asked Anne to withdraw the same amount on the following day. This time she wanted to go to Philadelphia. Leah walked down the street, holding onto Anne's arm for balance. While passing out the twenty-dollar bills, she said, "Happy Easter!" to another fifteen people. Maybe she was the "real" Easter Bunny! Thirty people in Norristown and Philadelphia probably thought so too. Leah wanted to make sure that the mothers in low-income neighborhoods had enough money to fill Easter baskets for their kids.

Basketball legend Shaquille O'Neal was in Zales jewelry store. He overheard a young man making a layaway payment for an engagement ring. Shaq handed the clerk his credit card and paid for the ring.

A big box arrived on Alice's porch delivered by FedEx. She could only imagine how costly it was to ship a heavy box from Saint Paul, Minnesota to Worcester, PA. The contents of the box contained pink, purple, pastel green and other sweet-colored outfits including tops, denim jeans, sweaters, pants and shorts. They had been gathered by an online friend and her 13-year-old niece, whom she had never met. Alice had put out an SOS call to her Facebook friends about Dee Dee, a local grandmother who needed play clothes and school clothes in sizes 10-12. Dee Dee's adult daughter was no longer able to care for her child and Dee Dee couldn't let the little girl be placed in the foster care system, even though she was struggling financially. It looks like a forever placement. So, a team of angels from the Midwest teamed up to help a Montgomery County grandma with a random act of kindness that spanned many miles.

When Arlene's children were young her daughter had a friend that lived on the same street. For a few winters the neighboring family often did not have enough to pay for oil to heat their home, and had to rely on their kerosene heater. After finding out, whenever Arlene put in an order for her own oil, she would also order a delivery for them. They never knew who paid for the oil, but it didn't matter because they were warm.

Betty's family could not pay the fees for her to play softball with her friends. Beatrice, another parent, told Betty not to worry because there was a sunshine fund set up that paid for players who did not have the means. In truth there was no sunshine fund, but Beatrice acted as the sunshine when she herself paid the fees for Betty to play.

Patti sent a card to family friend who just had a baby. When filling out the address, she accidentally wrote "Court" instead of "Place" on the envelope. It was delivered to the wrong house. The homeowner looked up Patti's name on Google and found her phone number. She called Patti and Patti explained it was supposed to read "Place" not "Court." The lady knew the house where it had been meant to go, and said she would hand deliver the card to the family for

whom it was intended. After a slight detour, and the kindness of a stranger, the well wishes made it to their destination.

For decades, Sue and her five sisters exchanged Christmas ornaments. During the holiday season of 2016, the siblings agreed that they had way too many keepsake and novelty ornaments. They decided to start a new tradition. Sue suggested that each sister do a random act of kindness during the holiday season. For her part, Sue, her daughter, and grandkids bought Pillsbury cookie dough and baked dozens of cookies. They bought 20 Christmas-themed treat bags and filled the goodie bags with cookies, candy canes, toothpaste, Hershey Bars, Life Savers, non-perishable food items and travel-sized personal hygiene items, along with a snow globe and ornament. Into each bag they tucked a handwritten note: "God bless our homeless neighbors...always." The family went to a park nearby where homeless people gathered. They donned reindeer antler hats and offered bags to twenty people. After all the bags had been given out, and they were driving home, Sue's grandson Brendan reflected, "I am glad we gave them food. They are nice people just like us." When Valentines Day came around, the grandsons asked if they could return to the park with "Love Bags." They filled bags with Valentine heart candy, marshmallow hearts, beef jerky, peanut butter crackers, tissues, wet wipes, dried fruit, bottled water and a flashlight. What a great lesson to teach youngsters— helping people to get back in their feet is kindness in action.

When Linda had a stroke at age 62 and prepared to leave the hospital, reality set in for her daughter Amy. Linda needed full-time caregiving. How would Amy ever be her mother's caregiver, helping with toileting, bathing, and medication management? She was a struggling single mother who had to work to support her little boys. And the list of the things that would help her mother recover was extensive— slip resistant bath mat, button and zipper aides, shower chair, adjustable eating utensils, weighted blanket, and a long list of essentials that were not covered by insurance. The items needed were extensive, but even if they were provided, who would give her moral support for such an undertaking? Amy's cousin set up a Go Fund Me Page. Friends and family donated what they could but the funds fell short of what was needed. One young man shared the Go Fund Me page with his boss, who owned a business in a distant state. The man's heart went out to Amy. This generous man wrote monthly checks and covered all of the family's living expenses for several years, completely anonymously. He even gave Amy the money to buy a vehicle so she could take her mother to medical appointments. Amy quit her job, cared for her mother and her sons, and with love and support, she was able to help Linda regain partial independence, and cope with the residual challenges.

Evelyn was fiercely independent both at home and at work. She was perceived as strong and competent, and also the family "Giver." She hosted all of the family celebrations and did so with flair. But when she was incapacitated due to an accident, and had to be on the receiving end of kindness, she was not used to it, and it felt uncomfortable. One evening, there was a knock on the door. An acquaintance stood there with a cooler containing a complete meal of a salmon dinner for her and her husband. Evelyn was bowled away. All her life she had loved the feeling of being the giver of kindness, and now she appreciated so much being the receiver. As she reflected on her own joy from giving, she was able to better receive the help people offered, because she knew how both the giver and the receiver benefit!

Lena had a beautiful dog— a Labradoodle. She wanted to share her pet with residents of a nursing home. She talked to the administrator of a small assisted living facility and provided proof that her dog had up-to-date immunizations. The first visit was short— just 15 minutes. Two residents were selected for trial run of "Pet the Dog." By keeping the visit short and gradually adding more time and more residents, she was able to monitor if Samson enjoyed spreading his furry good cheer. As it turned out, he was a natural! Gradually Lena tailored their program to be private room visits to scheduled "clients," so that residents with allergies wouldn't be affected. Samson and Lena were a hit and booked out for weeks in advance!

When Marge's father Herb moved out of his own home and went to live with her brother, he felt lonely. Marge's brother worked a lot, and while Herb loved to talk on the phone, at age 90, he did not have many friends with whom to have friendly chats. Marge decided to ask her community of friends if they would "volunteer" to call him once a week. She was surprised when eight people replied, "Yes." Now, every day, Herb hears a friendly voice. It is usually just a simple check-in call. The volunteers who responded were: a woman with a visual impairment, a retired man, another 90 year old, a pastor, a man who was home on sick leave from his job, a person who worked from home, a retired librarian, a college student who was doing a project on Aging for a psychology course, and a teen who needed community service hours. Each person brought a different type of conversation— such a variety of volunteers! They offered a friendly and reassuring voice to Herb. And not surprisingly, Herb no longer felt isolated!

One of Susan's classmates had passed away when they were in high school, 40 years before. Susan always regretted that she had never expressed her sympathy to his mother. She had not known Dean well, but she remembered that he was the star of her high school plays. When Susan moved back to the area, one day she happened to pass by his mother's house. She noted the address. She bought a greeting card and penned a message to his mother who was now in her mid-80's. Susan simply wrote of his wonderful singing performance in the school play of "Oklahoma." She was surprised when his mother immediately wrote back to her with a very warm message of gratitude: "It is never too late to express your condolences to someone who has lost a loved one." It was 40 years late, but her kindness surely meant a lot to his mother.

When Ellen's son struggled with reading, she invented a game of having him read to his dog. They all sat on a rug in the living room— a parent, Mark, and Doobie. The first night, Mark selected the book to read. The next night he spread the books on the floor, and let Doobie select the book by using his nose or paw. Ellen saw that they were both enjoying the experience and the nightly assigned required reading became less stressful for the whole family. She contacted his teacher and asked if she would like Doobie to come in as a guest so the other children could read to the new student— a furry pet. Doobie was a wonderful gift to the classroom for the rest of first grade. He loved being in the audience with all of the kids. Everyone looked forward to "Doobie Day."

Can you imagine spending Christmas alone? Bette witnessed this 14 years ago at a nursing home where she volunteered. It broke her heart to see the sorrow in the eyes of the patients, instead of the joy of the holiday season. She decided then to ask the principals at several Philadelphia elementary schools, if she could bring Christmas cards for the children to sign and add a personal message for these sad people. They agreed. She took the signed cards to nursing homes, and they

put the name of a different resident on each of the envelopes. The responses were overwhelming. They were so touched by the thoughtfulness of the children. Bette decided to make this a yearly occasion, and over the years, thousands of cards have been signed by children who participated in the “Caring Kids Christmas Card Program.” For Bette, this project has become a life-long commitment as she saw not only the joy of the residents, but also how caring kids often become caring adults when supported in their efforts of kindness. Many of the children, who sent cards to the elderly in the past, have gone on to participate in volunteer programs in the community. Their acts of caring continue to make a big difference to so many lonely hearts.

Sam’s mother passed away recently. He and his wife had to fly from Philadelphia down to Florida to make arrangements. Elise found a local pizzeria who claimed to have the best Philly Cheese Steaks in Florida and had them deliver lunch to them on the day they were cleaning out his mother's condo. They said the greasy cheese steaks beat sympathy flowers any day!

Christie Neeld is teaching her children and others about the Power of Kindness. She and her family host Monthly Kindness Projects where they invite the community to bring donations and to work together to assemble goody bags for all different charities. She also helps schools, churches, scout troops, and companies host their own events. Here's a sample of her favorite Kindness Projects:

- ~Sunshine Bags - yellow gift bags filled with snacks, juice, hand lotion, crossword puzzles, and other items to occupy patients while they are receiving chemotherapy.
- ~Birthday Bags - bags filled with cake mix, icing, candles, decorations, plates, napkins which are donated to food pantries for families experiencing food insecurities.
- ~Bags of Hope - welcoming bags filled with hygiene items for teens entering fostering care.
- ~Cookie Exchange - attendees bring a variety of goodies, cookie trays and plastic wrap, and they wrap up trays for community helpers.
- ~School Supply Bags - book bags are filled with school supplies and given to food pantries, shelters and guidance counselors.