



PAYING IT FORWARD WITH RANDOM ACTS OF KINDNESS

By paying it forward, you can make quite an important difference in this world. Not only will you brighten another person's mood, but you will also set a chain reaction in motion. Affecting change doesn't take much. You don't have to be rich, powerful or influential. Every ordinary person can help to make this world a better place by paying it forward.

But what is the concept of paying it forward all about? What does it mean to pay something forward? The idea behind paying it forward is that whenever you benefit from a good deed, you then participate by doing a (random) good deed to another (instead of repaying the benefactor). However, you don't necessarily have to wait until

someone does you a good deed. You can also be the one who starts paying it forward, the one who sets it all in motion.

The thrill of paying it forward is that you do something really good for someone who did not at all expect this kind act. You don't necessarily have to pay it forward only to people you know. Quite the contrary, you can pay it forward to any individual that you can somehow get in touch with. Doing a good deed to an unsuspecting stranger is a beautifully selfless act. Not only will it remind them that this world is full of selflessness, generosity, and kindness, it will also encourage that person to be kinder and more compassionate to others.

How to Pay it Forward?

- Look out for the opportunities. Life will provide you with numerous opportunities to pay it forward. You only have to be attentive.
- Be willing to help complete strangers. There may not always be an opportunity to do your family or friends a good deed. But you can always help those who are in need, even if they are complete strangers.
- Give freely without expecting anything in return. Many people will ask you how they can reimburse you for your kindness. You can introduce these people to the idea of paying it forward. Tell them that you don't expect anything in return, but that you would greatly appreciate it if they could pay the good deed forward.
- Even small acts count. It doesn't matter so much how much you give. All that matters is that you are willing to give and to spread the word.

IDEAS TO PAY IT FORWARD

- 1 Pay for someone's coffee or lunch. When buying a coffee, you can casually pay for the coffee of the person behind you. It's a fantastic way to brighten their mood. You can even do it when you go through the drive-through of cafes and restaurants.
- 2 Participate in a cleanup day. Cleanup days are a fantastic way to contribute your part in helping to preserve our environment. If this isn't happening in your area in an organised way (like Clean Up Australia Day) you can always take a rubbish bag with you on a walk around your local neighbourhood and collect rubbish you find.
- 3 Donate some of your clothes. Have a look in your wardrobe. If there are any items you haven't worn for awhile or have outgrown, consider donating them.
- 4 Run for a good cause. Numerous charity runs (or walks and bicycle rides) are held each year. Sign-up for the next one and participate in raising funds for a good cause.
- 5 Ask for donations instead of gifts. Many people wonder how they can do something good without having to spend money. Well, by asking people to donate for a good cause instead of buying you a birthday or Christmas, you can do a good deed without having to spend anything.

- 6** Donate your books. There are two types of books. The first type consists of really good books that you pick up again and again. The second type consists of books that were interesting to read but no longer serve a purpose. You could donate all the books you no longer need to your local street library or op shop. Or ask your friends and family if they want to do a book exchange.
- 7** Smile at someone. Give someone a smile. You'll see that many people will quickly loosen up and return the smile.
- 8** Donate blood. By donating your blood (if you are over 18), you can potentially help another person to live. What could be more beautiful than doing something that helps someone else to stay alive?
- 9** Donate to a charity. Chose a charity that is close to your heart, or one you think deserves your support. There are numerous local, national and international charities that you can donate any amount, small or large, to a good cause.
- 10** Listen to someone's story. Many people don't have someone who listens to them, someone who cares about them. You could be that someone. You don't even have to find a solution to all their problems, sometimes it simply takes someone who is willing to listen.
- 11** Encourage others with Post-it notes. There are many places where people could greatly use some encouragement. If you have the time, consider posting some motivating or encouraging notes in places where others will find them. You could get inspiring messages from searching online or make up your own.
- 12** Pray for someone in need. Many people consider praying as something that is incredibly powerful. If there is someone you know who is in need, you cannot lose much by including them in your prayers. Sent them some love and wish them the necessary strength it takes to see things through.
- 13** Pay someone an honest compliment. If you see someone doing something really great, don't shy away from giving them a competent. You can give out compliments for basically everything, you only need to seize the opportunity.
- 14** Let others in the line go in front of you. If you're standing in the line at the supermarket and you see that the person behind you is buying only a couple of things, let them go in front of you.
- 15** Write a positive review of good businesses. Local business owners can need all the support they can get. If you've come across a business whose owner does an incredible job, it's time to spread the word.
- 16** Tell someone they made a difference in your life. There are many kindhearted people out there who give without asking for anything in return. If you've ever benefited greatly from someone's kind actions, writing a letter is a fantastic way to thank them. Doing so will encourage them to continue giving freely.
- 17** Make a food donation to your local food bank. Your local food bank or food share often needs the generous support from donation to support those less fortunate. Look in your pantry or go shopping for essentials that can help others get the basics they need.
- 18** Give away extra veggies or flowers from your garden. There's nothing like fresh local garden vegetables. Those of us with gardens love sharing. And those who don't have gardens, love the tasty gift.
- 19** Make a phone call or send a card to a friend you don't usually call. Let them know you're thinking of them and what a blessing they are to your life. Because, if you've ever received one of these calls, you know how special they are.
- 20** Buy a plant and pot. Write positive words that describe a friend on the pot. Give it to that friend!
- 21** Send a 'Thank you' card or note. Let officers at your local police or fire station, health workers at the hospital, your GP, teachers or local shop owner know your appreciate what they do for the community.

Even Simpler Ideas to Pay it Forward

- 1** Compliment the first three people you talk to today.
- 2** Send a positive text message to five different people right now.
- 3** Say hi to the next person you walk past.
- 4** Surprise a neighbour with some treats – homemade or not.
- 5** Leave a note on someone's car telling them how awesome they parked or wishing them a good day.
- 6** Write a kind message on your mirror with a dry erase marker for a family member.
- 7** Send a gratitude email to a friend or co-worker who deserves more recognition.
- 8** Hold up positive signs for traffic or in a park for people exercising outside!
- 9** Leave a box of goodies in your mailbox for your postie.
- 10** When you hear that discouraging voice in your head, tell yourself something positive — you deserve kindness too!