

Week 4 Transcript

Brook: Hey guys, I'm Brook Olson.

Spencer: And I'm Spencer Olson and together we want to welcome you to Week 4 of The Kindness Project here at Central. We're glad to have you join us today as we talk about 'Kindness Blindness'.

Brook: In the Kindness Challenge by Shaunti Feldhahn we learn most of us think we are already kind. At the very least, we certainly don't think of ourselves as unkind. Yet research shows we are usually a bit deluded~ We're not nearly as kind as we think we are.

It's like my tendency to say, "I got the car's oil changed just three or four months ago," and then I check and discover that, yeah...no, it's been a year! My perception, and my reality, are a bit skewed.

Spencer: Wait do we need to change the oil again...already? (Brooke shakes head no) Whew!

Brook: It's crazy how we can become blind to things. You know the old expression: out of sight out of mind? If we're not careful we can become blind to our own behaviors and actions. There are two common blindspots when it comes to Kindness

Spencer: The first common Blindspot is negativity. We are all way more negative than we think we are. Even those of us who already care about being kind and positive have no idea just how often we are unkind, negative, unengaged, or distracted. So how do we check these blind spots?

In the letter Paul wrote to the Church in Ephesus he says:

Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen.

As we interact with those around us we should be focused on saying things that build up those around us, according to what they need and will encourage them and help them grow.

I remember being at a church one time. And there was a great leader but at staff meetings. He would belittle and ridicule every little detail rather celebrating the victories and staff members would walk out so defeated. And I guarantee that the leader didn't know how he was being so negative and nit-picky. So let's check that blind spot.

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Brook:

The second common blindspot is that we are too often blind to how the other person feels. We often simply don't recognize what is going on inside the other person. How can we respond in a healthy and productive way if we only consider our feelings, our perspective? It's like when the eye doctor asks you, which one of these is better. A or B. The doctor is literally asking you for your perspective, which one is better. It's a dialogue, a conversation to find your best prescription. He might have a guess but it's not up to him to decide. So how do we check this blind spot? Don't just guess what the other person is feeling, ask them about it, check in on them.

Spencer: If we regularly check these blindspots, suddenly we become aware of where we are kind, and more importantly where we are not kind. We learn how to avoid various unkind words and actions that we didn't even know we were doing before. And we begin to have conversations about positive actions we can take next. Remember, kindness can impact others but it can change you.

Brook: Nothing changes if nothing changes. The cause and the cure of kindness blindness is your own awareness. Don't coast through a relationship, look at it, look at them, and become aware of how you can best be kind to them in that moment.

Spencer: Only then, can we begin to incorporate the tool of kindness more effectively, bringing light to those areas of blindness and making everything a bit more clear. By using our new found awareness and taking action we can fight our own kindness blindness. When we can see the problem, we can choose to avoid it.

Brook: Thanks for joining us today! And this week, remember to look around you, I mean really look around to see where you might have gone blind and where you could be kind. God bless and we hope to see you again soon!

Both: Bye!

Week 4: Kindness Blindness

IT'S NOT YOU IT'S ME

Description: Sharing enough stories of kindness to fill in the puzzle.

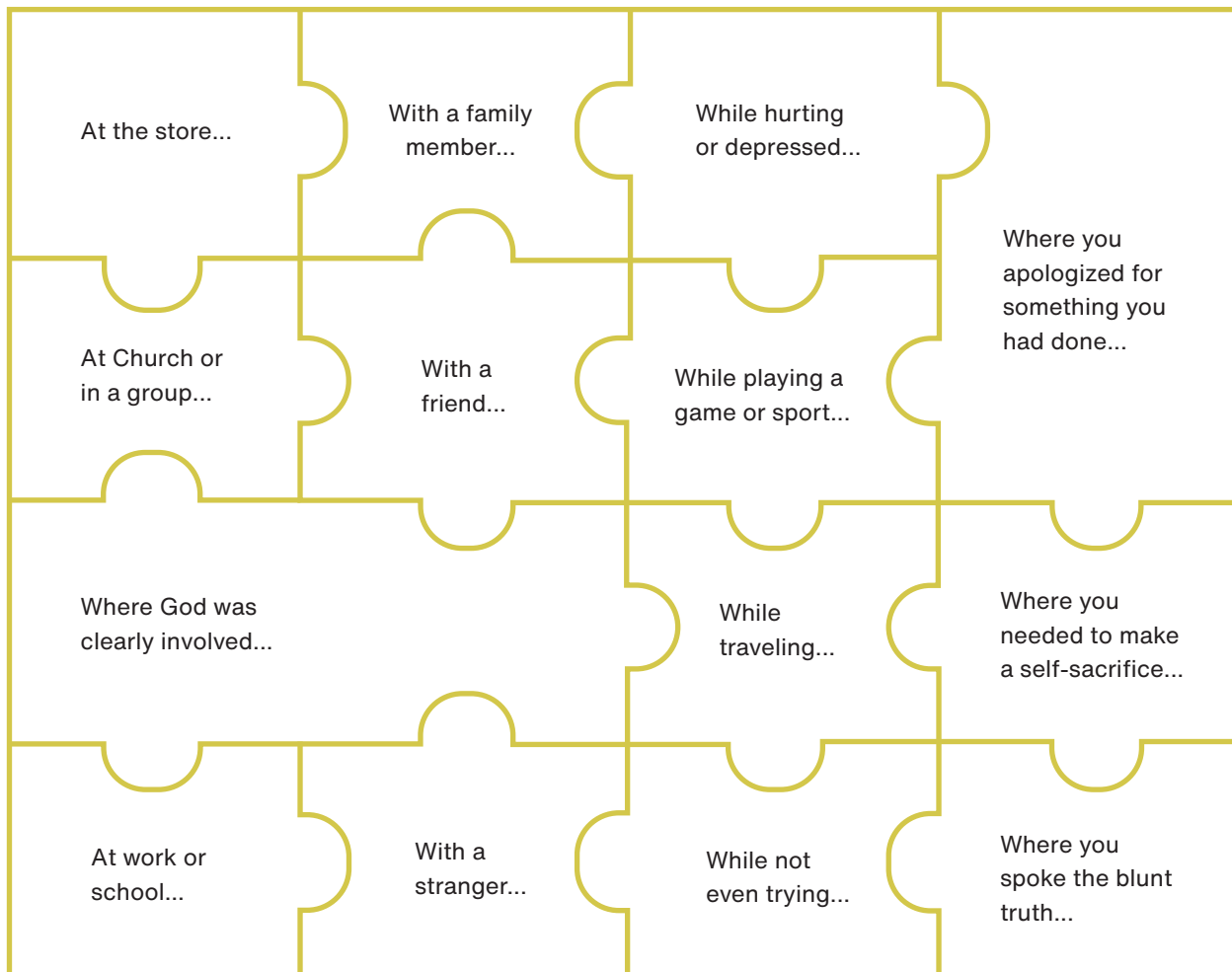
Objective: The group will have to hear from everyone to complete the activity, each member should share in 90 seconds or less.

DIRECTIONS:

It's not you, it's me; is a common expression in many broken relationships. But it is also the beginning of self-awareness. All of us probably need to have our eyes opened. All of us need to figure out how to better implement kindness in our relationships. It takes awareness and action to be truly kind, and the reality is almost no one has both all the time. But maybe if we work as one, we can begin to put the pieces back together.

In this activity your goal is to share a story for each prompt found on the puzzle. Mark off each puzzle piece completed if you can. If your group is really small, maybe try one each, but the more stories you share the more open everyone's eyes will become. They can be stories of a time you were kind or when someone else was kind to you and some prompts are harder than others. If memories of kindness are holding you or your group back, maybe it's time to create new ones. Try taking action in one of these areas in your life, then share it with the group. (Warning: Kindness Blindness may make this activity difficult.)

An Example of Kindness



1. Share a time when you realized your perception, and your reality, differed greatly. (Similar to thinking you had changed your oil three months ago, and upon checking, found out it had actually been changed a year ago.) Perception vs reality is a real thing...even when it comes to kindness.
2. When has someone else exhibited “kindness blindness” toward you? What did that look like? Was there another way they could have been appropriately kind toward you....and what would that have looked like? (Please be respectful and don’t share the other person’s identity).
3. The Latin root of the word “compassion” means “to suffer with”. How have you extended compassion (kindness) toward someone and suffered with them? How did that make you feel? When has someone shown you compassion and kindness by “suffering with” you?
4. How might our world today look different - for the better - if more of us extended true kindness?
5. In this season where you can be anything - be kind! What might it look like for you to be kind in the season you are in?

1. There is our perception and then there is reality. And those two things don't always match. When it comes to kindness what we think is kind might not be. Share a time someone thought they were being kind and it just made things worse.
2. When you hear the phrase "Kindness Blindness" what do you think it means? Are people really blind to how unkind they actually are or are more people blind to kind acts?
3. The Latin root of the word "compassion" means "to suffer with". When has someone shown you compassion by "suffering with" you?
4. In a life where you can be anything, be kind! What might being kind look like for you right now, in this season?

1. Was there ever a time you thought you were doing the right thing, only to find out you were doing wrong the whole time? Have you ever thought you were being kind, and found out later you weren't?
2. What does it mean to be blind? With that in mind, what might the phrase "kindness blindness" mean? Can we be blind to our own kindness?
3. No matter what age you are, most people would agree, when they are sad or hurt, they wish someone cared. Think about the people who care about you. What are some ways you could be kind to them today?
4. In a life where you can be anything, be kind! Think about your dream job or your plans for your future. What kind things can you do?