

## Week 2 Transcript

Hey there! Welcome back to the Kindness Project! My name is Marcus Lade, and I am part of the Spiritual formation team here at Central.

Let me ask you, do you want a better life? Want a better relationship with someone? Are you wishing for a little more peace in your life?

What if I told you there was one thing you could do that could help you?

Shaunti Feldhahn says in her book *The Kindness Challenge*, that kindness is a superpower. It is explosive, supernatural, and transformational. True kindness always strengthens and empowers, never weakens.

It changes you, not just others. It melts hardness and makes gentleness immensely powerful.

I don't know about you, but that is exactly the kind of superpower my life needs right now.

Shaunti uses this great analogy - she says that whatever pushes your buttons is an emotional bullet; it hits you right where it hurts.

Think about the words we use when someone does something mean or hurtful to us - we say things like "that was a slap in the face, or a punch to the gut" - and the feeling we get is sharp and real.

What if instead of shooting back, we chose to act in kindness? Especially when they don't deserve it - suddenly you have control of your feelings. You have taken away their power to make you crazy.

Proverbs tells us A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.

So what happens when you choose kindness?

Well, let me tell you a story. It wasn't too long ago that I was a 7th grade history teacher, the year was 2014 and I had a student who was quiet, closed off, and sleepy. He struggled being tired - every - single- day. Different teachers would respond in different ways. Some were negative, some were overwhelmed, and a few wanted answers. I decided that the student, let's call him James, was far more important than his most recent quiz score. As the teacher in the room it was important for me to handle this situation with kindness. Not just for James, but for the 30 other students who were watching, watching how I treated James. As a class we gave James grace, care, and kindness. Fast forward to March, James is still tired, still sleepy, and as it turns out, still getting his 3 younger siblings ready for school in the morning, cooking them breakfast and serving them dinner, and basically being the 'man of the house'. He had one A on his report card, 2nd period, History. Thanks to me, NO! Thanks to a pair of girls who felt no shame helping him every single day, thanks to a group of boys who included him, laughed with him, made him feel like a 12 year old kid again. The same boys who invited him to a prayer group on Wednesdays, during lunch, where the truth about James' home life came into full view. James had some superheroes in his life, his mom, his friends, and a team of teachers whose greatest power was their kindness.

By creating a culture of kindness we didn't change James' circumstances, but we changed people's view of James and his view of himself.

Now, to be clear, we cannot actually change someone else's mind or heart. But God can.

And I believe the great and mysterious superpower of kindness, to soften a hard word or angry heart is actually the outward evidence of God working behind the scenes.

James not only became a regular at Wednesday prayer group, but by the end of 8th grade he had all As, he was quiet, mature, and sweet, and one of the kindest boys you will ever meet

Don't let this next point slip by you, we've sort of joked about kindness being a superpower, but in truth I do think something deeply supernatural happens through it.

In fact - A study by the National Academy of Sciences revealed that happier people live 35% longer. Kindness is your ticket to health and happiness.

I don't know about you, but I've always wanted a superpower. So this week, let's set out to use our superpower of kindness and love those around us like Jesus did. Let's be kind, because kindness is a superpower!

**Week 2: Kindness is a Superpower**

**THE LEAGUE OF EXTRAORDINARY KINDNESS (A LITTLE KINDNESS GOES A LONG WAY)**

**Description:** : A group discussion about the several superpowers described in “The Kindness Challenge” by Shaunti Felhahn. Each age group will be asked to create an illustration or describe these powers in the real world.

**Objective:** Dive deeper into the sermon and give people a chance to describe what they think, see, and experience.

**DIRECTIONS:** “WHEN OPPORTUNITY COMES, IT'S TOO LATE TO PREPARE,” -JOHN WOODEN

When people are at their lowest they need you to be at your kindest. Often, crises enter your orbit unannounced. To offer the right prescription of hope and encouragement, you need to be emotionally and spiritually prepared. Jesus readily gives us love and kindness, acting as both our shield and sword. God also gives us the strength to wield these powers with grace and boldness.

In this week’s activity we will discuss 5 of the Kindness Superpowers, described in Shaunti Feldhahn’s book “The Kindness Challenge”. Below is a drawing of a superhero and a brief description of each superpower. Your job is to match each superpower to the drawing (ex. What description goes with X-Ray Vision, #2). After you have matched all five, share stories or create examples of what these superpowers would look like in the real world.

**To be a true superhero it requires self-sacrifice, not self-protection!**

- X-Ray Vision
- Melts through Walls
- Opens Locked Doors
- Makes the invisible visible
- Bulletproof

**Central Kids** - Draw, color and create your own superhero of kindness. Share it with Central.

**Students** - Do an act of kindness today, record it and post it if possible, share it with Central.

**Adults** - Discuss what the superpowers look like in the real world.

1	Deciding in advance that you will react kindly, causes the anxiety and emotional blows to bounce right off.
2	Allows you to see into someone, their heart, and know their actions or mistakes are not who they are.
3	Can help people who are locked in bitterness, hostility, or shame by giving them a new opportunity.
4	Difficult people often have barriers to protect themselves, kindness takes time but this power can erode those walls down allowing you to jump in and gain their trust.
5	Being intentionally kind focuses on the positive things about a person. Allowing you to see what has always been there, it's just been hidden or shadowed by your irritation with them.

1. Which of the following would you “want” the most: a better life, a better relationship with someone, a more profitable business, a happier mind-set, a meaningful impact, or for people to enjoy and respect you? What might that look like for you?
2. Read 1 Corinthians 13 4-8. Have you seen kindness like this from people around you? When and how? Was it transforming? In what ways? If you were on the receiving end of that kindness, what did it mean to you?
3. If you choose, share some things that can be emotional bullets in your life...things that hit you right where it hurts in your heart.
4. Shauntil says “Kindness has the power to make those emotional bullets bounce off. By your predetermination to be kind to your ex-wife, classmate, or the people you come across - especially when they don’t deserve it - suddenly you have control of your feelings. You have taken away their power to make you crazy.” Have you experienced this firsthand? How did that impact you? How do you think it might have impacted the person you responded with kindness toward? Are there other situations in your life that need to be handled in a similar way?
5. .If you had more time each day, what are some of the things you would do for others? Share your wish list.

1. Which of the following do you want more; the ability to make other people happy or the ability to make lots of money. Why?
2. Read 1 Corinthians 13 4-8. Have you seen kindness like this from people around you? When and how?
3. Being kind can make you bulletproof. But in a world full of ammunition, what sort of things seem to hit you right where it hurts?
4. In the book "The Kindness Project", the author says being kind to someone takes away their power to make you crazy. Have you ever experienced this? If not, share a story of what it might be like.
5. If you had more time each day, what are some of the things you would do for others? Share your wish list.

1. What makes you happy? What makes your parents happy? Is there a way both can happen at the same time?
2. What makes you happy? What makes your parents happy? Is there a way both can happen at the same time?
3. Not everything someone says is kind. What are some unkind things you've heard? As a kindness superhero, how would you fight against unkindness?
4. If you had more time each day, what are some of the things you would do for others? Share your wish list.