

65 Ways

To Love Our World

For the Better



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65 Ways to Love Our World for the Better

While this is certainly not an exhaustive list, each of these actions will help make your life better and our world a kinder, cleaner and more beautiful place. And each action you take will honor the spirit of Mahatma Gandhi because you will actively “be the change you want to see,” in the world.



1

Make friends with your neighbors and the people at the places where you do business such as the gym, post office, church, your children’s school. People who care for one another look out for each other, respect each other, and build united, resilient and peaceful communities. It may take time and effort but good relationships improve everyone’s life.

2

SMILE. A smile helps people feel good and it lets other people know they are seen. Smiles make you feel great too because you are giving a bit of your heart to someone.

3

Use recyclable grocery bags and cut out as much plastic as you can from daily life. We’ve got a real problem with plastic in our

oceans. Without clean oceans you and I cease to exist. Let’s not leave this challenge to our children and their children.

4

Reach out to people who are lonely. Those who feel unseen, unheard, unloved. Stop and have a conversation with someone you meet. Let people know they are cared for.



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5

Pick up trash in your neighborhood, and from parks, rivers, streams, lakes and public spaces. It may not be our trash but you and I can take the lead and do what we see needs to be done to help keep our world clean. And, we can teach children how to dispose of litter responsibly.

6

Seek out and get to know someone from a different religious, ethnic and cultural background. When you and I learn about one another we find out how similar we are. Familiarity helps end intolerance and fear of those who are different.

7

Teach someone to read. Imagine the vast possibilities you will help open for them.

8

Walk the dogs and play with the cats at your local animal shelter. You'll bring joy to the dogs and cats who are waiting for their forever home. In return you will receive tons of unconditional love.

9

If you can't make it to your local animal shelter to volunteer, seek out an elderly or



physically impaired neighbor who has a dog and offer to regularly walk their pet for them.

10

Grocery shop for an elderly or disabled neighbor. You have to go to the store anyway so make it a win-win for someone who cannot shop for themselves.

11

Donate your skills to a non-profit organization. There are countless social service organizations who can use help from professionals with invaluable expertise to offer.

12

Help build a home for others. Habitat for Humanity and other home building organizations are always looking for people who want to help put a roof over someone's

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head. And, you'll get a bit of physical exercise at the same time.

13

Use a bucket to collect the clean water that otherwise would run down the drain before the shower gets hot. Use it to water your house plants, or trees, flowers and shrubs outdoors, or to fill a birdbath. I do this every day and over the period of a month I collect and use about fifteen gallons of water.

14

Recycle everything you can from aluminum to glass to paper, cardboard and plastic. The earth does not have unlimited resources so you and I must do our part to limit waste. And yes, each thing you recycle does make a difference.

15

Think about product packaging when purchasing groceries and other products. Consider where all the waste goes from products that are packaged in non-recyclable containers.

16

Make thoughtful and informed decisions about who you support for positions of authority and power. Make certain their consistent behavior is aligned with your core values. People of integrity can easily identify those who have hidden agendas so be sure to place utmost importance on supporting people of honesty and conscientiousness.

17

Teach yourself to stop and count to ten when you encounter a stressful situation. You and I cannot think clearly when we're stressed or angry. It's been proven by science. So slow down, be patient, and stay calm.

18

Refuse to gossip - about yourself, politicians, actors, anyone. You and I can go through life without participating in this destructive pastime. We can support others as we want

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to be supported because we actually raise ourselves up by lifting one another up, NOT by tearing each other down.

19

Apologize when you mess up. You and I are not meant to be perfect. But we can admit when we're wrong, or when we make a mistake. And we can prove to ourselves and others we genuinely mean we're sorry by working hard not to make the same mistakes again.

20

Listen to others with your heart, your emotional being, to understand them. Not just hear them with your head. Listening to understand is respectful and how you and I comprehend emotionally what another person is communicating. The present moment action of receptive communication creates intimacy

and helps establish solid relationships by letting others know they are understood.

21

Communicate with others clearly and cohesively. Ninety-three percent of all communication is non-verbal which means the words you speak need to align with your body language and inflection of your voice to be emotionally understood and trusted. When words and body language differ we send confusing mixed messages which will be misinterpreted. You and I must work to communicate clearly, openly, patiently and honestly with our words, body and voice so we can be trusted and respected.

22

Refuse to get pulled into an argument with anyone while you, or he or she, is upset, angry or defensive. We cannot reason or listen to understand when we are angry. Wait to calm down before discussing sensitive topics. If you are the angry one, take three long, deep breaths and make yourself calm. Walk away if necessary because two angry people shouting at one another will never understand one another.

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23

Listen to others with a quiet mind. That means, not finishing their sentences or interrupting or thinking of a response while they are speaking. Contrary to popular belief we cannot completely focus (multitask) on two things at once. If we are thinking of a response while someone is speaking we do not comprehend their words with the emotional presence of heart necessary to understand them.

24

Protect and respect the natural world and all animals. We are connected to all that is alive. We honor the God of our belief by seeing ourselves as part of all that has been created. There is a Divine design to our world and everything in it. Which means you and I must protect, care for and respect all life. And, we must teach our children to honor their inheritance of the natural world too.

25

Lead by example to demonstrate how to remain respectful to others even when people are being disrespectful to you. Respect is one of the loving actions that changes you, your life and our world for the better. Respecting



others begins by respecting ourselves.

26

Refuse to fight fire with fire in your relationships. You will get burned. That means, bring a higher level of awareness to your interactions with others. Someone is rude to you – stay polite to them. Someone is unkind – you stay kind. Someone is impatient – you stay patient. Whatever negative behavior you encounter from others bring the opposite, positive behavior from you.

27

Set healthy boundaries in all your relationships. It's okay to say no to hurtful

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behavior. People who love and respect you will honor your requests to be treated with kindness and respect. And with those who do not honor the healthy boundaries you set, rethink the true value you are receiving from the relationship.

28

Accept you cannot reason with unreasonable people. Our hearts must be open to hear other points of view. Unless you or someone or an animal is in physical danger don't get involved in the bad, rude or inconsiderate moods of others.

29

Understand violence, fear, control, domination, injustice, etc., are born from a lack of self-love, self-control and self-respect. Love is

caring and affection always displayed as positive behavior. When someone does not love, control and respect themselves it is impossible for them to love others (treat with positive behavior). That is why loving our children, their friends, our friends, our neighbors, strangers we meet (by treating them as we want to be treated) is the long-term solution to creating a peaceful planet.

30

When someone says you are a pacifist for spreading love, realize you are part of God's heart-light team. Violence, war, mistreatment of one another can be changed. The message of a peaceful world is the entire reason for the existence of every enlightened teacher.

31

Peace is possible when you and I choose to be peaceful. And even when everyone is not peaceful, the majority of us can be, when we choose to lead with love rather than fear.

32

Don't hold a grudge. Sometimes people frustrate us. Sometimes they disappoint us. Sometimes they say hurtful things. Life does not come with a guarantee we will only

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experience the very best of people. Loving ourselves and God is forgiving as we want to be forgiven.

33

There is a perception those who live a spiritual life are submissive and must turn the other cheek regardless how we are treated. While patience, cooperation, forgiveness, and peacefulness are behaviors of living aligned with soul, so is standing up for what is right. Refuse to tolerate injustice, abuse, corruption and perpetuating negative status quo.

34

Give to give, without expectation of reward. Giving with attachment is not truly giving as we really want something in return. Giving without attachment is loving unconditionally,

as God love us, and as God gives to us.

35

Remember, the homeless people you encounter are men and women just like you. Somehow they became homeless but that does not make them less than you and me, just different. So please say hello, and treat all people with the respect and kindness you want to be treated with.

36

Help conserve our beautiful forests by not littering and by conserving paper. Don't print emails. Use your phone to make notes.

37

Respect the loving, peaceful and responsible beliefs of others. Love does not feel entitled to tell others they are wrong for worshiping the God of their belief in their own way. Judgment is not love. No religion has a corner on God. Respect any practice that motivates its followers to treat others as we want to be treated. Those who live the golden rule love and honor God regardless of their religion.

38

Don't ever give up your dreams. Those who are truly successful in life know there is no such

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thing as failure; there is always something positive to be gained from an experience. When we don't succeed it's because we have encountered something about ourselves we need to change, or grow, or learn. So don't think of yourself as a failure. Rather, focus on how to make the changes necessary to yourself or your situation so you eventually get the outcome you desire.

39

Consider the positive that can be gained through differing with others. Just because we disagree with someone does not make them wrong or us right. Often truth is what we find when we stop to consider another point of view. And the intensity of our conviction that we are right does not increase the likelihood we are.

40

When you see a problem like a health hazard or unnecessary waste of resources in your community tell someone who is in the position of power to do something. Write or call the appropriate city official. Our public servants cannot be in all places to see all problems. We can help them by letting them know.



41

If you have the funds to do so, sponsor an outing for the children of a local orphanage. Maybe to the zoo or to hear a symphony concert or see a play a neighborhood theater. Expanding the opportunities children have expands their hearts and minds.

42

Volunteer at a nearby hospital, hospice or HIV organization. Visit with lonely patients at a rehabilitation center or home for the aged and let staff members know their work is appreciated and valued. These vital organizations always need friendly people

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with kind hearts to lend a helping hand.

43

Talk to your friends, children and family members about sexually transmitted diseases. Frank conversation can prevent much heartache. Sex is natural but sexual diseases can be prevented with forethought and knowledge.

44

Coordinate an effort to collect toys for a local children's hospital. Find out what type toys are suitable for the children who are patients. Then make miracles happen for little ones who are dealing with the huge physical and emotional challenge of being sick.

45

Take someone you know, who can't afford it, to get their eyes tested or their teeth checked. Giving someone the gift of good eyesight or healthy teeth is truly a wonderful and loving thing to do.

46

If you like to bake, make something special for a homeless shelter in your community. Contact a local organization to arrange a time for you to deliver your cake, brownies,

or homemade cookies. You'll feel fantastic by sharing what you enjoy baking with those in need. And, they will really appreciate your thoughtfulness.

47

Investigate the possibility of starting a community garden. It's a wonderful way to bring people together and to encourage healthy eating in your neighborhood. A little patch of green space is not only good for the environment, it also is good for our heart.

48

Volunteer at your local school to mentor a student in your field of expertise. Or be a tutor for a subject at which you excel, like math or computers, reading or science. Children are the future of this world and investing in them is one of the best ways to make our world a better place.

49

If you play an instrument, visit an old-age home. Spend an hour or so playing for the residents and staff. Imagine what joy you will bring. And, it will help you stay in practice.

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50

Find every opportunity to walk rather than use your car. Car pool, ride a bicycle or take public transportation as much as possible. Each time you and I leave the car at home we make a positive impact. Imagine the results if millions of us just did this one thing.

51

Stay mindful of the amount of water you use in the shower, while brushing your teeth, washing the car, or washing dishes. Use as little water as possible. Not everyone has access to clean water. So let's do what we can to conserve by turning off the tap.

52

Gratitude is a very powerful positive emotion. So be genuinely grateful for what you already have in life and tearing up the list of what you do not have will be gratifying.

53

Practice anonymous acts of caring and kindness. Put a quarter in an almost expired parking meter. Pay for the order of the person behind you in line at the drive-thru. There are so many ways to spread kindness. Each one makes life better for the giver and receiver.

54

Carefully choose what you allow into your mind and heart on a regular basis. Stay aware of music and lyrics, news and television programs, and the movies you watch. The more positive you allow in, the more you express positive. Remember life is filled with negative things but that does not mean life is negative. We are surrounded by positive when that is what we focus on finding.

55

Write a letter to the editor of your local newspaper. Pick an issue (politics, environment, justice, etc.) you are passionate about and share your heart with the intent to educate and motivate others to become passionate about it too.

56

Make time each day to meditate, by calming your thoughts and emotions so you stay present in the now moment. The goal of meditation is to give you a feeling of calm and peace, which requires training yourself to master your thoughts rather than your thoughts to master you.

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57

Live as eco-friendly as you can. Think about what you put on your lawn, or down your drains, and on your head to dye your hair. Try plant based hair dyes and vinegar, baking soda and environmentally friendly household cleaners. Know that some products designed to kill weeds also kill bees that are VITAL to pollinating our food plants. Do research and care, and you will make a huge positive impact.

58

Think about what you eat and be aware of where your food comes from. Don't purchase products that come from companies or restaurants who don't adhere to humane treatment of animals. Know how veal is made. Know if your eggs are from chickens humanely treated and free to roam, not crammed into tiny cages. God made all life and to treat all life respectfully is one way to honor God. Care about what you eat and the people involved in getting it to your local market.

59

Remember not everyone is at the same level of emotional awareness and empathy. Just because you stay mindful of how your words and behavior may negatively impact yourself or others does not mean everyone is as mindful. This awareness will allow you to let go of "they should have" known better." You cannot control or change anyone but yourself. Think about others as you want them to think about you. Some people will do that and others are still learning the importance of this valuable life-lesson.

60

Forgiveness does not mean we accept negative, hurtful, unjust, behavior as okay. Forgiveness is releasing the resentment we hold because we think someone should have done better than they did. Because they did not do better, they did not know better. (Maya Angelou).

61

Opinion is not fact! Opinion is: (1) a belief or judgment that rests on grounds insufficient to produce complete certainty, and (2) a personal view, attitude, or appraisal. Seek fact.

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62

Accept each of life's challenges holds the gift of making us smarter, kinder, and more flexible – when we choose to let them.

63

One of the most thoughtful actions we take is being in charge of technology instead of being a slave to it. The interactions we have with people and our pets are vastly more important than those we have with technology. So, it's polite to turn off the television at dinner with family. We love others by putting the iPad down when relatives come to visit. We don't use our cell phone when with friends or while on a walk with our pet. We love by enjoying the company of other people and our pets without distraction. We love by being fully present with them. To love deeply we take charge of being in charge of technology that is intended to be a tool, not a substitute for quality time and personal, face to face communication.

64

You only get one body. To ensure it stays healthy and fit requires taking care of it on a daily basis. Watching what you eat and

getting regular exercise and adequate sleep are a few of the ways to nurture your body. Spending time in the natural world helps you eliminate stress and deepens your connection to all life. Since your outer environment is a reflection of your inner life, it is vital to maintain clean spaces to limit distractions and the unnecessary anxiety that comes from clutter. And making time to play gives your mind, body, and spirit some much-needed downtime to relax and refresh.

65

Remember, love does not ever hurt. Broken promises, egocentric pride and unmet expectations hurt. But love is caring and affection that is always expressed as positive action like patience, forgiveness, kindness, and honesty. Love is positive even when it is necessary to set strong boundaries against non-loving behavior.