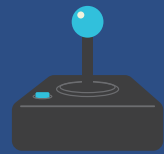


# KINDNESS

Being friendly, generous, and considerate towards others.

## KINDNESS IN GAMES

Kindness towards others is a choice. It's a muscle we exercise as we look for and act on opportunities to make life a little brighter for someone else. To be kind, we need to notice others and think about what they might want or need. Kindness means treating others in a friendly, generous, and considerate way. Genuine kindness means doing so without expecting anything in return. But it's hard not to benefit from being kind. Research shows being kind to others boosts our own happiness and well-being. Having true empathy for others – understanding their point of view and caring about them – enhances the benefits of doing kind things (over and above “going through the motions”). But kindness doesn't have to be selflessly motivated (i.e., without expecting anything in return). Kind acts can be done for social rewards (such as being liked), feelings of pride or satisfaction, or out of a concern for justice and fairness.. How would your game encourage players to be kind to others?



### ELEMENTS TO ADD

- Meaningful story arcs and player agency to emphasize how kind/unkind behavior impacts game outcomes.
- Power and influence that come from a series of kind choices.
- Opportunities to help others, including at a cost to the player.
- Samaritan play (healing, buffing and de-buffing, sharing resources).
- Companion quest lines.
- NPCs who are kind to players when they have reasons not to be.
- Dialogue options that are kind, thoughtful, complimentary of other characters, etc.
- Art/graphics that inspire awe support feelings of connectedness, which helps inspire kindness.

### ELEMENTS TO LEAVE OUT

- Kindness just for the sake of earning points or currency (emotional rewards may be more powerful).
- Forcing players to do unkind things with no alternative.
- Offensive, exclusionary, or discriminatory dialogue and themes.
- Games that ALWAYS or ONLY reward good behavior, giving no meaningful kind choices.



## GAME GENRES & TYPES



Story



MMO's and MOBA's



Social Simulation



Cooperative Play

## NOTES



Multiple horizontal lines for taking notes.



## SPECIFIC MECHANICAL REFERENCES

- In the *Pokémon* series, how you **level up and look out for** your Pokémon determines the level of their bond with you (“friendship”). Also, other characters are kind to you even after you’ve beaten them in a battle, saying, “Good battle.”
- In *Super Mario Sunshine*, your goal is to **clean up the island** that’s been covered in graffiti and toxic waste, and you can **help NPCs** by cleaning them off with your water cannon.
- In *Lemmings*, a game used in several scientific studies of prosocial games, you **guide characters to safety**, saving as many as you can as you navigate the different levels.
- In *Animal Crossing*, you can choose to **gift fruit, flowers, and other items** to players to help them or “just because.”
- In *Eco*, you make a series of **meaningful choices** that either **help animals and the environment** or hurt them, and you see the consequences of those choices play out in vivid detail.
- In *This War of Mine*, while trying to survive the destruction and deprivation of war, you can practice kindness by **making sacrifices for your fellow citizens**, like **choosing to leave precious medicine or supplies for someone who needs it**, even when you could use it yourself.
- In *Life is Strange*, you use your ability to rewind time to show kindness by **saying and doing things that match the interest and feelings** of the different students at your school.
- In *Undertale*, characters are kind to you even when they have a good reason not to be. You can **choose to help and befriend other characters** rather than fighting or killing them.
- In MMOs like *World of Warcraft* you can **share loot, help less experienced players level up, answer other players’ questions** in chat, and use crafting skills to **build items for others**.
- In *Papers, Please*, you meet immigrating characters with really sad stories and have the chance to **help them by risking your own job**.
- In interactive novel or story-driven games (like Telltale titles), you can make the choice to **say or do something kind or mean and experience the consequences of that choice**.