

Conversations for Kindness

The role of kindness in the British Red Cross

18 April 2024

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About the movement

Conversations for Kindness is a monthly virtual meeting that was set up in the summer of 2020 by eight colleagues and friends working in healthcare across Sweden, the UK and the USA: Bob Klaber, Dominique Allwood, Maureen Bisognano, Goran Henriks, Suzie Bailey, Anette Nilsson, Gabby Matthews and James Mountford. The purpose of the meeting was to have some time together to continue some initial conversations around kindness, and its role at the 'business end' of healthcare, and to plan interactive workshops on this topic.

Conversations for Kindness

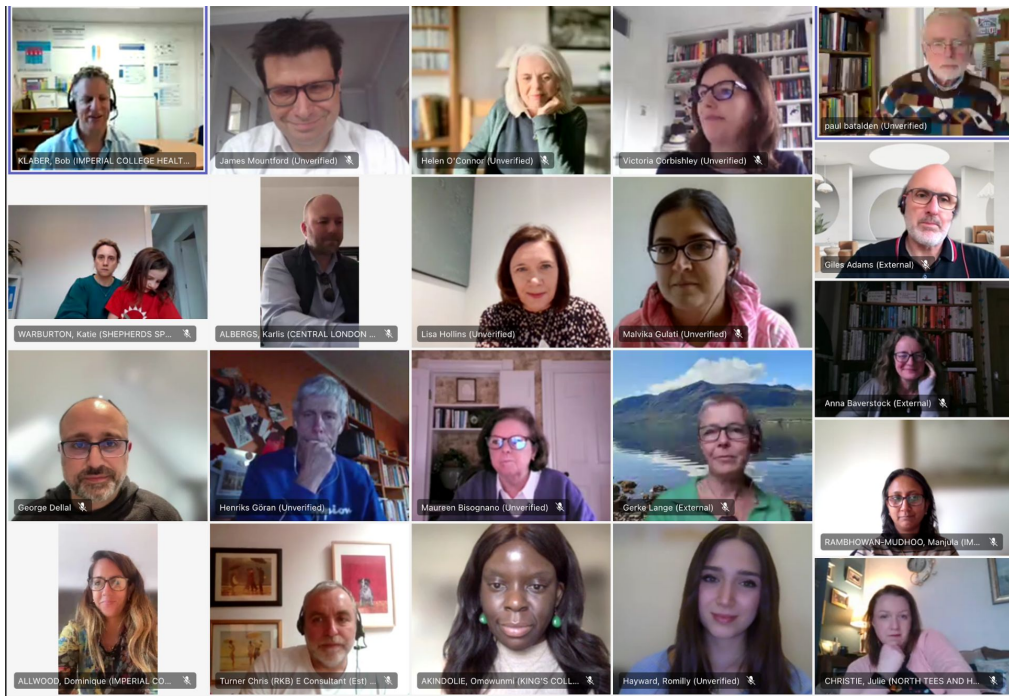
- Monthly Zoom call on the third Thursday of every month (6-7pm UK time)
- A focus on listening, learning, thinking differently and mobilising for action
- An open culture of sharing of resources, energy and ideas

If you would like to join the conversation for kindness, please complete this **[contact form](#)**

Joining the Conversation from across the world

Kindness in Healthcare community members came together from all over the world for this Conversation for Kindness. Once again, we had new faces join us for the first time!

A few of the hellos from around the world...



Hello from Mayo Clinic Rochester, Minnesota.

Hello from Sunderland.

Hi there from Vancouver.

Who did we hear from? British Red Cross

The British Red Cross works disaster and conflict zones across the world. In the UK, they work with those who are in crisis (for example, refugees). Their work centres around three fundamental principles: humanitarian, neutrality, universality.

We were joined by:

- Lisa Hollins, Executive Director, UK services
- Victoria Corbishley, Director for Health
- Helen O'Connor, Head of Community Education

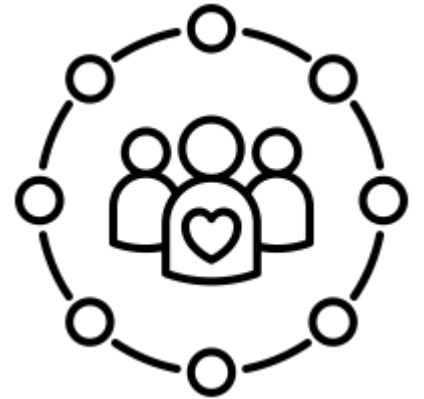


This insights pack summarises the session, but you can also [watch the event on YouTube](#)

What did we hear? Insights from Lisa Hollins

Lisa illustrated the many links between humanitarian work in organisations like the BRC and working in healthcare, such as supporting people through challenging experiences.

She reflected on how the pandemic showed the huge inequality people lived with and brought into stark reality not only how unequal the impact was of the pandemic but also how powerful communities can be when they mobilise.



The Power of Kindness: Insights from Victoria Corbishley

Victoria talked to us about her work in the UK and told us a story about Mr P, who was living with COPD and was accessing healthcare via a virtual ward. He needed help with using technology but was also struggling with loneliness after losing his wife.

The Red Cross helped him to connect with other people, looked at what practical support might help, and linked him with neighbours who could help him.

This is not a dramatic story

It is a story about the power of kindness

BRC went above and beyond and saved a life

He accessed the clinical care and connection he needs

The Power of Kindness: Insights from Victoria Corbishley

The power of kindness drives everything we do at BRC. We ask 'can kindness increase health activation?' The outcomes from our support tell us that they can:

Reduction in ED attendances

Improved wellbeing at the end of support

Reduction in ambulance conveyances

Increased confidence in looking after their health

Reduction in Liaison Psychiatry attends

Reduction in loneliness

Discussion

Our question: What is the role of kindness in building community resilience, in relation to coping with crisis?

We talked about the importance of links with health professionals training and integrated care

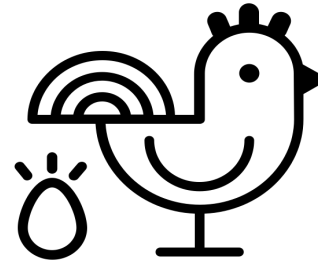
We also discussed the strength of communities in disasters

Chicken and egg - what comes first: resilience or kindness?

We talked about kindness at scale - it's not just about being nice but can also be being challenging and bold. We discussed everyday acts of kindness such as active listening.

We think we should celebrate every positive step to build hope

Lisa's group



Helen's group

Discussion

Trust and confidence are key for health activation. Which is more important: length of time or number of touch points?

We need to activate the team of people activating the patients as well as the patients themselves

We think “Even constipation can be sexy!” Listen to find out what matters most

Victoria's group

We talked about the word kind being related to the word kin. Where are the boundaries and what are the implications?

In the moments of greatest adversity communities seem to pull together e.g. Grenfell and Covid

James's group

Discussion: participants also shared view in the chat

SS I think we underestimate this in person connection. In this technologically connected world, loneliness is at its highest. is this because technology hinders in person connections



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S Agree with the eclipse impact - noticed on social media a softening of the way people presented their perspective/thoughts. I am curious as to why, after the worst of COVID when kindness was huge that we then experienced a big drop of kindness...

LK I wanted to mention - a musical i saw recently called Come from away - a musical about 9/11 - which is about the kindness a community showed to hundreds of passengers from all over the world who were grounded in Newfoundland during 9/11- and the spirit of kindness and community which ensued was incredible.... An unusual subject for a musical - it was excellent



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JM another point in our group was about how much easier these connections are to make **in person**.

[and as the video highlights, in COVID UK & most societies forced people by law to not connect]



2

S
Jam... 4/18/2024, 6:54 PM
another point in our group was about how...

Had a discussion today about whether social clubs in hospitals should be brought back (in a modern concept) - connections in person..no hierarchy...



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‘Nowhere else to turn:’ we watched a video by the British Red Cross



Further resources to check out

A number of recommended readings and resources were shared in the chat during the Conversation. They are listed below:

- [Patient Activation: Judith H. Hibbard and Jocelyn Cornwell](#) - a short video introducing the concept of Patient Activation and Patient Activation Measures (PAM).
- [Restoring Sanity by Margaret J. Wheatley](#) - a book that “gives visionary leaders the tools to create organisations that foster generosity, creativity, and kindness in a chaotic world.”
- [Compassionate Communities](#) - an organisation that supports health and care professionals to recognise and embrace the roles of compassion and community in times of illness.
- [The Frome Model: Compassionate Communities](#) - a short article exploring an example of a Compassionate Communities approach and its impact.

[Check out resources from our previous sessions on our website](#)

Acknowledgements

This insights pack has been co-produced by
Nicki Macklin and the team at **Kaleidoscope Health and Care**

For all enquiries please contact us [via the Kindness in Healthcare website](#) or email
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See you next month for another great Conversation.

Thank you for joining, thank you for reading.

We'll see you next month!