

Dearest Kindness Ambassadors,

April 2021

First off, thank you so much for all you do and who you are in the world. This project would not be even remotely as awesome without the wonderful people that you all are. I am so grateful for your friendship, your kind hearts, and your assistance in distributing the lotus. I really hope it brings you as much joy as it brings me when you give a lotus to someone.

I wanted to give you a quick update of what is going on. Since we have started the scope of our kindness, well-being, and suicide prevention and awareness project has grown significantly. I started off just wanting to target the flight attendant community and very quickly that grew to encompass all those in the airline industry, and then the hospitality and service industries, and now it's grown to anyone and everyone. That is super exciting! And, also a little overwhelming, which is why this distribution is so late.

So, things that are happening:

- I am in the process of filing for a 501c3 designation, that's the designation for a registered nonprofit organization.
- We now have a functional website, which is still very bare-bones. I am working on it though and hope to have all the content I want on there by May 15th. If you haven't checked it out, I would love it if you'd pop on there and have a look. I added an About Us section with the project's "origin story" about my inspiration for taking on this project.
- We also have a Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter account now (all the social media names are at the bottom of the letter). I'll be adding more content to those as well. Please let me know if you have any thoughts, ideas, or pictures for the websites or social media accounts.

Things that are coming up:

- I am playing with the idea of a "Meet our Kindness Ambassadors" with a picture of each of you and a little paragraph or so of who you are, why the project matters to you, and anything else you would like to share. Please let me know how you feel about that.
- I will be adding a lotus count to the website that will tally how many lives we have touched with the lotus.
- QR codes that will link people directly to a page on the website where they can get involved, either through a monetary donation or by becoming a Kindness Ambassador and helping us with the lotus sharing. My intention is to have the QR codes in the May distribution of lotus.
- I will be soliciting for funds to help keep the project going. It's not super expensive right now to self-fund, but as we grow we will likely need some monetary support. If you come across anyone this month who loves the idea of the project and wants to help, please direct them to the website, I have links there for people to become a Kindness Ambassador and to donate to our project.
- I'm playing with the idea of a "Fold-a-thon" as a fundraiser for June. One of those things where people will donate like a nickel or something for every lotus you fold. Let me know your thoughts on that, or any other fundraiser ideas you may have.

In this month's distribution I included some of the origami papers I have used to fold the lotus, some of you have expressed interest in making your own. There is a video/pictorial hybrid instruction set posted on the Instagram and Facebook pages if you want to try to make your own. You can also schedule a time to do a video chat with me and I'll show you how to make them personally. Please don't feel pressured to fold, I completely understand if it's not for you, I just didn't want to stop those who want to make their own. If you make your own, my request is that you keep the messages gender-neutral and also non-religious. I want you to write what speaks to your heart while also being as inclusive as possible and respectful to all belief systems, cultures, and faiths. I'll be posting the month's messages I use on the social media sites and the website, I also have a Pinterest board with an accumulation of all the quotes that I have found. I have found a metallic gel rollerball pen works best for the writing of the messages. If you decide you want to fold your own, let me know and I will ship you the materials directly. Also, let me know how many you fold and distribute so that I can update the "Lives Touched" count on the website.

Finally, this project is meant to be fun for you. If you are ever feeling overwhelmed, anxious, stressed, or just plain meh about it, please let me know and I will stop sending you lotus. I will not be offended in any way. I am grateful for your help, and also understand that you all have busy lives and what worked last month may not work this month.

Honestly, thank you all from the bottom of my heart, you have helped me create something more beautiful than I could ever have imagined. I am honored to know you and grateful to have you in my life.

Michelle

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