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OPINION EXCHANGE

New Voices: Note to self

Be kind — to others, but also to yourself.

By Jenny Kuderer | JULY 10, 2022 — 6:00PM



SHARI L. GROSS, STAR TRIBUNE

Jenny Kuderer offers some reminders on being kind to yourself, and enjoying each moment you have.

Opinion editor's note: This article, part of our New Voices collection, was written by a first-time contributor to Star Tribune Opinion. For more information about our efforts to continually expand the range of views we publish, see startribune.com/opinion/newvoices.

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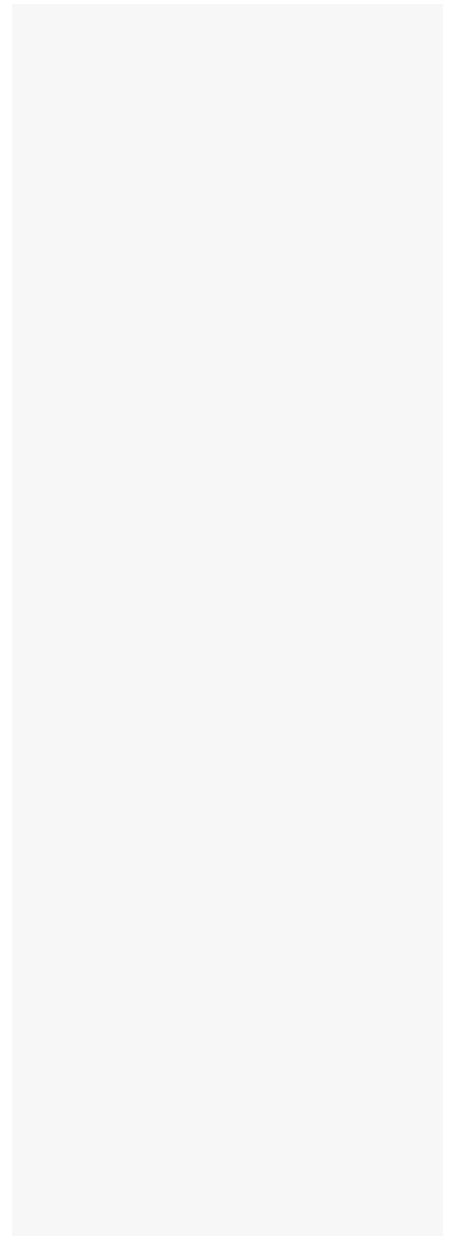
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Kindness is a good in this world that aches for more humanity, more patience, more care. Do not allow others to dissuade you from showing the depths of your compassionate heart. It is not calculating or insincere. It is your superpower.

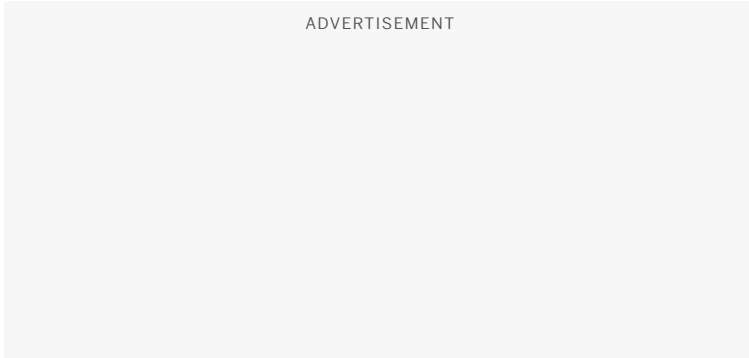
Comparing your life to another's is never fair, to you or to them. The notes of your existence are singular, never to be plucked again. Live in the magic of your own melody. It is marvelous, if only you listen closely enough to really hear.

Forgiving yourself is always a good idea, for the peccadilloes and the grave mistakes and the extra 20 pounds that will not fall away. The intensity of your incandescence can only be seen if you peel back the layer of self-doubt to allow your light to be present in all its radiance.



Delight in the natural world is healing and transformative, a state to be welcomed in the backyard and on the banks of the Mississippi and along the trails that wind and twist through the woods of pine and cedar and oak. Do not hesitate to slip off your shoes and feel Mother Earth support your blood and bone and breath.

Do not hold yourself back from being your most real, your most expressive self. The energy of your soul yearns for expression, not dilution. Let it pierce the hollow shell of apathy and leave passion for beauty in its wake.



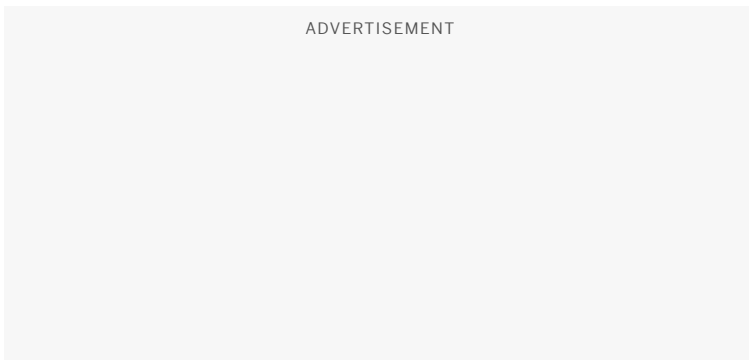
More is not always better. Rest and relaxation are natural and necessary after periods of exertion and stress. Play can be purposeful, if only to return you more joyfully to the work of your life.

Love is not the stuff of fairy tales. It needs to be cultivated: weeds of disrespect and impatience being pulled up at the root, water given generously to affection and understanding and kindness. Let it bloom organically. Holding love in your heart when another lets go is not weakness. It contains its own honest beauty.

Wasted time is a myth. You will shape and reshape your course throughout your life, but sitting on the park bench, sun warming your back, blue jays singing and flapping wings in the fountain, is a moment that grows the soul even when you do not know it.

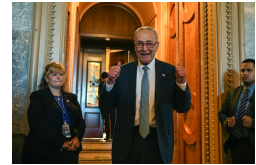
Self-celebration is underrated. It is so far from arrogance that the two are not just separate countries, but separate continents in opposing hemispheres. Quietly marvel that you exist at all and remember the basket of goodness you have already brought to the world. Then let your lips curve toward the sun.

Jenny Kuderer lives in Goodview, Minn.



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