

ENVISION KINDNESS

Background:

Envision Kindness is a non-profit that has taken a novel approach to the promotion of kindness, empathy, and compassion on a population level through the use of images. We are developing visually and emotionally engaging presentations to inspire viewers directly in health care settings as well as promote wellness. Our intended viewers are both provider staff AND patients.

Co-founded and led by a physician, we are a crowd-sourced, advertising agency for kindness that also has a research arm. Envision's research has shown how powerful these images are to induce joy, optimism, gratitude, and compassion in people who simply view the images, which have been seen over 1.2 million times.

Envision's objective is to help awaken the innate drive towards kindness on a population basis. There is a deep science behind this, which briefly includes that:

- the brain is wired to recognize and replicate what it sees (including acts of kindness), and
- the innate predisposition of (most) humans is to be kind—i.e., the default mode

Through the use of engaging imagery depicting kindness and compassion, we can activate that inborn predisposition, similarly as seeing images of food make people hungry. As people receive negative input on a daily basis, to rebalance their visual/experiential "diet" we need to provide inspirational content daily. That content will uplift people, allow them to feel more connected to others, experience joy, optimism, and gratitude, and commit acts of kindness. One sample image can be seen below and more at <http://www.envisionkindness.org/photocontest/#> although not the final presentations (available separately), in which we briefly tell the story behind the image.



Two children sharing breakfast in Manila, Philippines
Photo by R. Aparente

Inspiring Kindness, Compassion, and Empathy in Health Care settings:

It is recognized that heightened empathy is critical for better health care outcomes. Increased empathy by practitioners yields better patient satisfaction, compliance and outcomes, fewer adverse events, and, as a result, fewer malpractice claims. Although the connection between care giver empathy and clinical outcomes is known, how to increase (and sustain) empathy remains a challenge in a resource constrained environment. Burnout (and resilience), of course, is connected to the ability to generate empathy.

Envision's program for clinical settings is different from a training program as it does not require concentrated time or refresher sessions. In small aliquots, viewers see visually engaging content that in addition to inspiring photography includes quotes, humanistic concepts, and materials to spur wellness, like mindfulness. If coupled to a training program, it can reinforce teachings quickly and regularly and without distraction. And by sharing inspiring content with both providers AND patients, a synergistic interaction can be achieved. The displayed images will be shown in hospital corridors, waiting rooms, cafeterias, etc.

Based on our research, it is anticipated that regular viewing of Envision's content will uplift the staff and increase expression of empathy, kindness, and compassion. In turn, that will likely translate into better staff engagement, care (and satisfaction) of the patients, and purpose, altogether potentially reducing staff turnover.

We are currently exploring collaborations to place these presentations and document benefit.