




KOFI KINDNESS

A gratitude journal
for tough times

By Kofi Aden



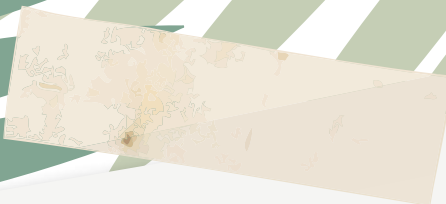
Suitable for people 13 years+



drummond
street services
wellbeing for life



THE
kindness
PANDEMIC



Edited by Dr Catherine Barrett and Abdi Aden
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Acknowledgements

Special thanks to Drummond Street Services for their support.
Thanks also to the Kindness Pandemic's volunteer project team including: Merrin Wake, Rebecca Koperu, Megan Walsh, Kathie Elliott, Melissa Williams, Rachel Shankland, Ron Van Houwelingen, Antony McManus, Louise Allwright, Amelia Arnold, Manja Briffa and Ayman Barbaresco

More information

Kindness Pandemic: thekindnesspandemic.org
Drummond Street Services: <https://ds.org.au/>

Follow Kofi on Instagram: @kofikindness



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As the CEO of Drummond Street Services, one of the longest running welfare organisations in Victoria, I am so happy to collaborate with groups such as the Kindness Pandemic and help to support projects such as Kofi Kindness. Drummond Street Services are proud to support and nurture communities and ensure people get access to opportunities, experiences and services they require, no matter where you stand on the social ladder or how marginalised you might happen to be. Nobody should fall through the cracks.

One way to show this support is to help nurture self-expression. Kofi has shown us that expressing gratitude can be healing for oneself as well as positively impact, in Kofi's case, many thousands of individuals and communities.

With a proud tradition of independence from church and state, Drummond Street Services has developed a distinctive and important role in advocating for *all*, not just the few, and in that spirit we encourage others to take inspiration from Kofi Aden who has opened his heart and shared his gratitude with the world.

Kofi reminded us of the importance of gratitude whilst we collectively navigated a global pandemic and made us realise the importance of being thankful for what we have, rather than focusing on what we don't have, and we thank him for that.

Thanks also to the incredible Catherine Barrett and Kindness Pandemic's volunteer project team including:

Merrin Wake, Rebecca Koperu, Megan Walsh, Kathie Elliott, Melissa Williams, Rachel Shankland, Ron Van Houwelingen, Antony McManus, Louise Allwright, Amelia Arnold, Manja Briffa and the late Ayman Barbaresco.

Karen Field
CEO, Drummond Street Services

HELLO

My name is Kofi Aden, I am 13 years old and I live in Melbourne, Australia. I am so happy you have my Gratitude Journal and will be using it.

To get you started, I want to tell you about myself, the Kindness Pandemic and why I made my Gratitude Journal.

ABOUT ME

My family is my mother, father and two brothers. I am lucky and I love them all; they encourage me at school and in my sport. Although we are a family of mixed and big personalities, they always allow me to be heard and express my feelings. I feel blessed that they support me to pursue my passions.

I am in year 7, the first year of high school. I like school because I am able to interact with my friends and I enjoy learning. I also love playing basketball. If you know me, you know I always have a basketball close by. I play with two clubs and train at representative and domestic levels. My favourite basketball player is Giannis Antetokounmpo, he plays for the Milwaukee Bucks and he inspires me to train hard and play at my best every time. I am very competitive. I give 100% to everything I do, but I do not get upset if I do not win. I think it is important to enjoy every game.

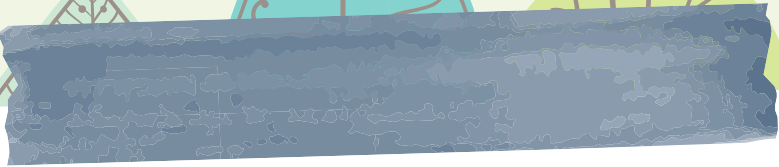
ABOUT THE KINDNESS PANDEMIC

In April 2020, I made my first post to the Kindness Pandemic Facebook Group. My post was about the COVID19 Pandemic and the importance of wearing a mask when interacting with people, especially outside of your family group. Many people liked my post. This encouraged my dad and me to discuss further acts of kindness during these Covid19 times. We decided it was important to be thankful for the moments, small acts of kindness or everyday events that I could and should show gratitude for each day. I read the comments people left on my post and I felt a connection with the people who wanted to share happy moments from their day.

From the post, Dr Catherine Barrett, founder of the Kindness Pandemic, contacted my dad and me and asked if I wanted to participate in a gratitude challenge within the Kindness Pandemic Group. The gratitude challenge was to post about daily events, thoughts, or acts that I felt grateful for every day for 60 days.

After 60 days of expressing gratitude consciously, you can make gratitude a part of your daily routine; it becomes a habit to express thankfulness during your day.

To me, this sounded like a great idea. I hoped that if I could apply this one habit to my day that it would continue to inspire me to explore other positive habits and thoughts throughout other parts of my life. Most importantly, how I interact with my family and friends and how I play and participate on and around the basketball court.



I am grateful for my family first and then basketball and sport in general. I am also grateful for my school, and the teachers who are supporting me during the remote learning that is a challenge in Melbourne due to Covid19 restrictions. I am also grateful for my friends and the internet so we can keep in contact. My mum is a health care worker and I am very grateful to all the people working in the hospitals and aged care homes during this time.

I write about my gratitude every night at 6pm when I come inside from practising basketball. Then, before I go to bed, I talk to mum and dad, and we discuss my feelings about my day. Writing at 6 pm is a habit that participating in the gratitude challenge has taught me.

Posting daily to the Kindness Pandemic has been amazing and I have felt encouraged by people's comments. I loved to see all the people reaching out and talking about what was good about their lives – even when things were difficult for them. People have said that reading my short gratitude notes each day has encouraged them to stop and remember to be grateful and share gratitude every day too.

COVID19 was the spark that led to my first post and I understand that my journal on gratitude will not make Coronavirus go away,, but it can inspire us to pause in our day and reflect on what we do have.

HOW GRATITUDE WORKS

Gratitude for me is about appreciating what I have. Participating in the gratitude challenge helped me to really concentrate on those things I may have taken for granted before. I really looked at my day and realised all of the things that made my day happier, easier, and more fun - or taught me something. I became more aware of my feelings and my gratitude grew.

The reflection made me stop and enjoy what I have. I also was able to talk to mum and dad easier about my feelings and I have started to sleep better.

Research on gratitude shows it can make people feel better physically and that is good for my basketball. The mental benefits include making me happier. I feel stronger and I can express myself more often without fear of judgement.

Research also shows that practicing gratitude can reduce stress, anxiety and depression. It can also help us to cope with life challenges. Forming such a positive habit also spins through to all aspects of my life. This includes encouraging healthy eating and exercise and encouraging me to speak and pay forward my positive feelings.



HOW THE JOURNAL WORKS

This journal gives you 60 blank pages to think and write about what you are grateful for each day. I encourage you to set a time in your day to write and keep this up for 60 days. I have also included some of my reflections and messages to encourage you. Here are my tips:

1. Write in your journal every day for 60 days
2. Use a texta, crayon or pencil and draw on the page if you like, for example trace out your hand and write your thoughts inside the tracing
3. Write at the same time every day
4. If you miss a day – try to write about two things you are grateful for the next day
5. On days you find it difficult to think of something you are grateful for; talk to your family or a friend and they may be able to help you think of a small moment that you may have missed
6. Invite a friend to do the journal with you and check in with them each day
7. Celebrate each time you write
8. Celebrate when you get to 60 days.

On the following pages, there are spaces for you to write in your gratitude journal. There is a blank page for every day and I have added in some of the things I am grateful for and have included messages on the bottom of some of the pages, to encourage you.

I want to express gratitude for being able to pass on my thoughts and provide you with this journal. Good luck with your writing, and I hope we all remember to express gratitude for kindness in our days.

THINKING OF ALL OF YOU

KOFI XX



DAY 1

Today's a good
day and that's
because you
have started your
journal today.

DAY 2



DAY 3

DAY 4

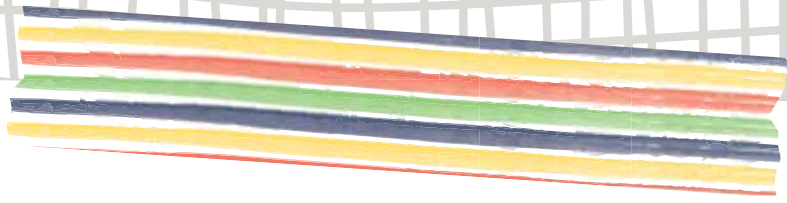


DAY 5

Day #50

Today is a special day and that's not because I have 10 days left of gratitude. It is because it is RUOK day. I am grateful that I have the ability to seek out for help if I ever need it. And I'll never take for granted my ability to ask others RUOK. Especially those with disadvantages.

RUOK



DAY 6

DAY 7

DAY 8



DAY 9



DAY 10

Today I am grateful for the nice weather we had today. Which can bring more happiness to our day because I'm sure we all need it.

Today I am grateful for the nice weather that we had. Which can bring that bit more happiness to our day because I'm sure we all need it.



I am grateful for my brothers because they are always there for me and I can't imagine a life without them, even when they ~~can~~^{are} be annoying sometimes. Especially when I can't win in a game of basketball. That's where my competitive nature kicks in.

In the photo my two older brothers and me in the green.



DAY 11



DAY 12



DAY 13



DAY 14

A white sheet of paper with a torn top edge, held by a blue paper strip, on a patterned background. The background features a repeating pattern of black dots connected by thin black lines, set against a light beige background. The white paper is slightly offset to the right and bottom, creating a layered effect. The blue paper strip is torn and layered over the top edge of the white paper.

DAY 15

Day #28
I am grateful for the amazing environment that surrounds me. One of my favorite things to do is to help my grandma with her vegetable garden and I can't wait until the lockdown is over so I can help my grandma with her vegetable garden.



Day #31
I am grateful that my mum feels safe to go to work when most people aren't going anywhere. I don't particularly know what corona virus is and how it works but at the moment I know my mum feels safer ~~for~~ and happier to be able to go to work while most people are at home.

DAY 16



DAY 17



DAY 18



DAY 19

DAY 20

You are $\frac{1}{3}$ of the
way there - well done

Day #16
I am grateful for the health care workers, they are doing a great job and probably deserve more credit. So to all of the health care workers reading this I say great job and keep doing what your doing.



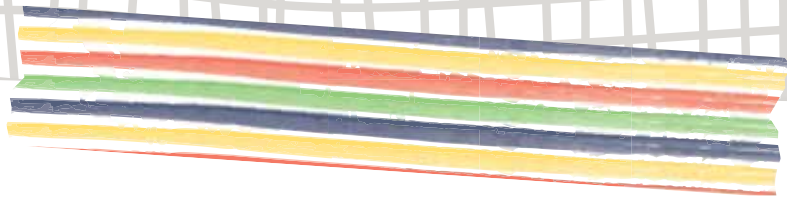
Day #23
I am grateful that I still stay in contact with my old school classmates. I miss playing with them on Saturday playing basketball, we created (me and my dad) this team because there's nothing better than being able to play the thing you like with the people you like to be around. And I will say that we were definitely good and worked well together.

DAY 21



DAY 22


DAY 23



DAY 24



DAY 25



It isn't always easy,
but think about how
happy you will be
when you reach the
finish line.

Day #14
I am grateful for the pets I have. To be more specific the two cats I have. They bring joy to me. They are apart of my family. One of there names are 'Merka' the oldest one shes been with me for 12 years. And then there is 'Simba' who is 1 and a half.





DAY 26



DAY 27

DAY 28



DAY 29



DAY 30

You are $\frac{1}{2}$ way
there – which
means 50%.
Great job!



Day #8
I am grateful for my friends and all the fun experiences I have had. They are a big part of my life. And I have had great relationships with them.

Day #30
I've hit the thirty-day mark a month, again I would like to say thank you to all the people that read my grateful letters. It definitely brightens my day and I hope it brightens yours. It gives me a whole different mindset and way of seeing things. And again I encourage you to hop on board and have a go. I have tried to encourage a few people in my household but none of them hoped on board.

DAY 31



DAY 32



DAY 33



DAY 34

DAY 35

Day #17

I am grateful for my teachers especially during this time. If I had to learn how to do things during Remote learning without them, I don't know how well I would be going. Whether that they are answering my emails or it's simply asking how my day is going.



DAY 36




DAY 37

DAY 38



DAY 39

DAY 40

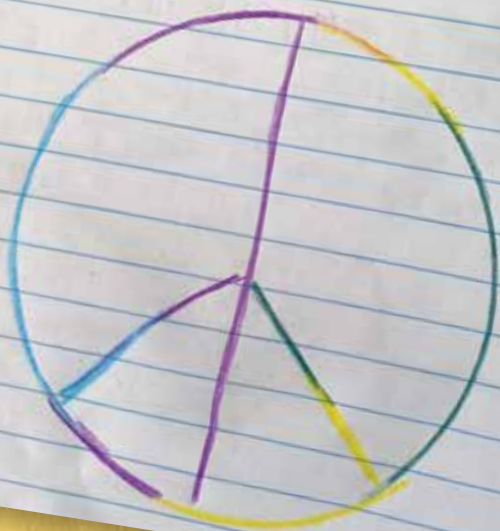


YOU ARE $\frac{2}{3}$ OF THE
WAY THERE - TAKE IT
STEP BY STEP

25 Feb 2020

Day # 27

I am grateful for the challenges I approach every day, week, month, year and so on. And as a society we are facing a really big challenge that at the end of all of this will bring us together. The challenges that help me grow into the person I am today.



Dear kids of the lockdown these past few months have been a struggle, frustrating and stressful. Not being able to do the things we ~~want~~ love and will be more grateful for is truly disappointing. But we are not in control of that

The one thing we can all connect and focus to strive on is education. Even if it is in front of your device. So keep on concentrating at school and soon we will be out of this outbreak/pandemic.

Back at the park, playing whatever sport you play, at the library, public events, and in general socialising.

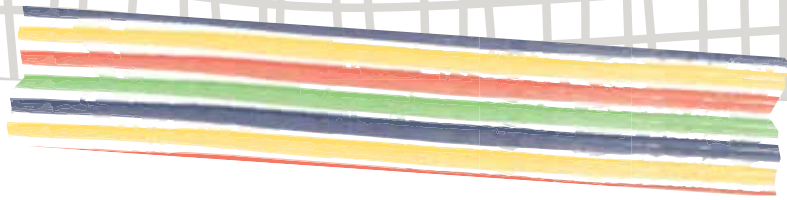
DAY 41



DAY 42



DAY 43

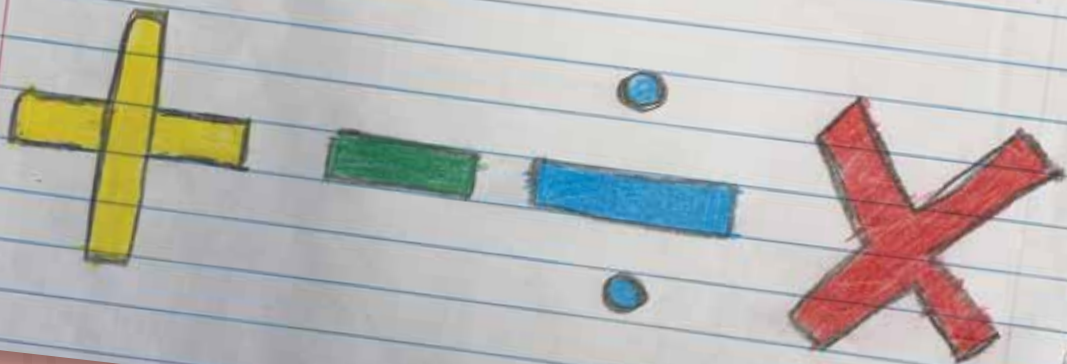


DAY 44

DAY 45

Day #2

I am grateful for the shelter I have, the food and water I get provided with each day. And a education that should every kid get no matter the circumstances.





DAY 46



DAY 47


DAY 48



DAY 49




DAY 50



I am grateful that I have good genes
from my parents, which make me taller
with the help of milk, I am five-
nine and nearly as tall as my dad.
It doesn't matter what size you are,
it matters who you are.

LIKE YOURSELF!



Only 10 days
to go - you
are almost there,
keep going

DAY 51



DAY 52

DAY 53



DAY 54



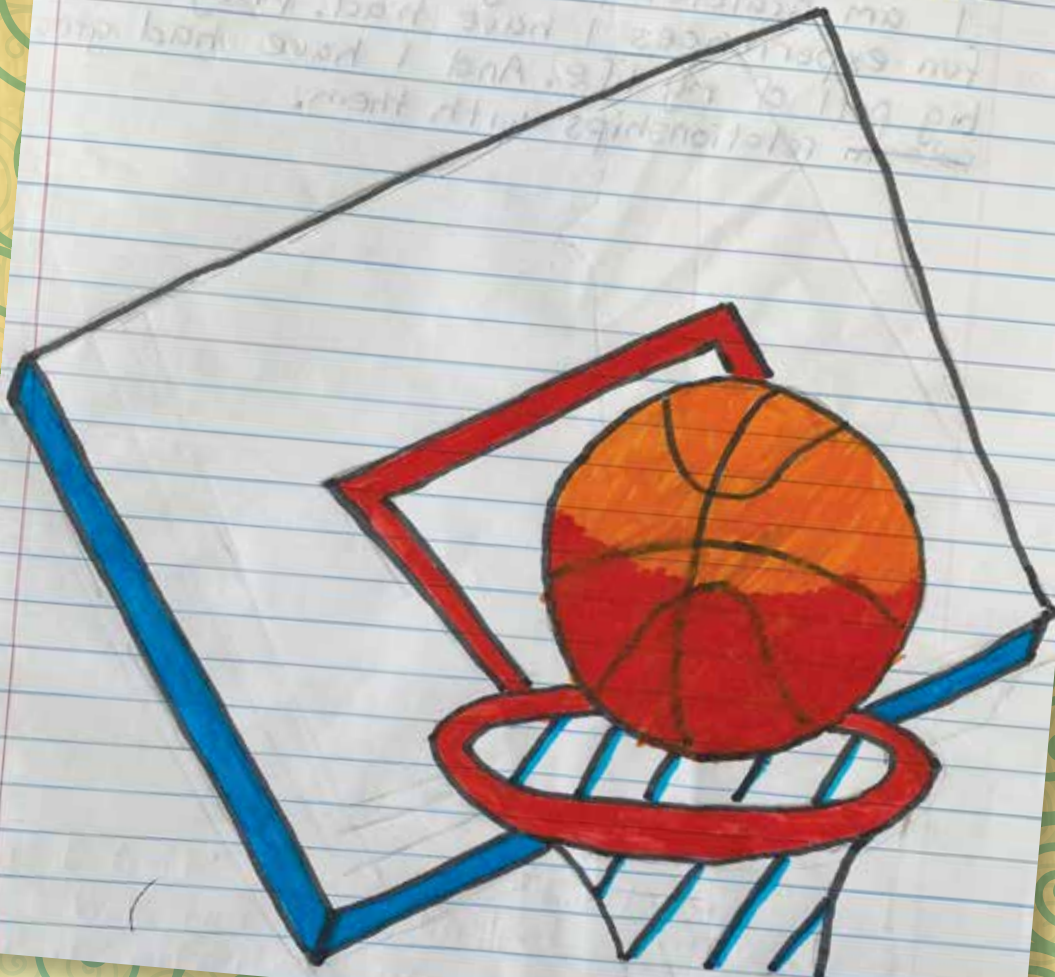
DAY 55

Day #38

I am grateful that it was a sunny day today. Today I went on a bike ride when I got swooped by a magpie. I am also grateful that I wasn't injured.

Day #7

I am grateful that the NBA (National Basketball Association) is coming back on July 30, because I believe sport spreads happiness. Whether you like AFL, Cricket, Hockey, Soccer whatever sport you like. I like and am grateful the NBA is coming back.



DAY 56



DAY 57



DAY 58



DAY 59

DAY 60





Well done!

Awesome!

Congratulations!

You did it!



WHAT'S NEXT?

Great job – you finished it all. Be proud of yourself and reflect on the past 60 days, the downs and the ups and everything. Did you notice anything different? Did you find you were thinking about things to be grateful for more often?

No one said you have to stop. Make a plan now – will you keep going? If you will, how will you do it? Write your ideas in the boxes below

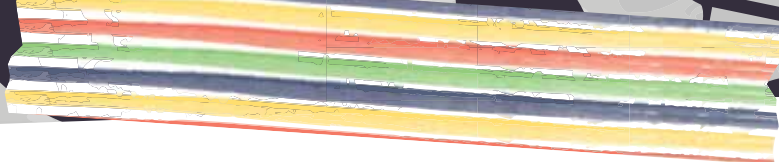
In this box write down some of the things that changed



In this box write your plan for keeping gratitude practice going



I am grateful to live in Australia with my family. And I couldn't imagine a childhood in any other country. And I have experienced a lot in the past 13 years.

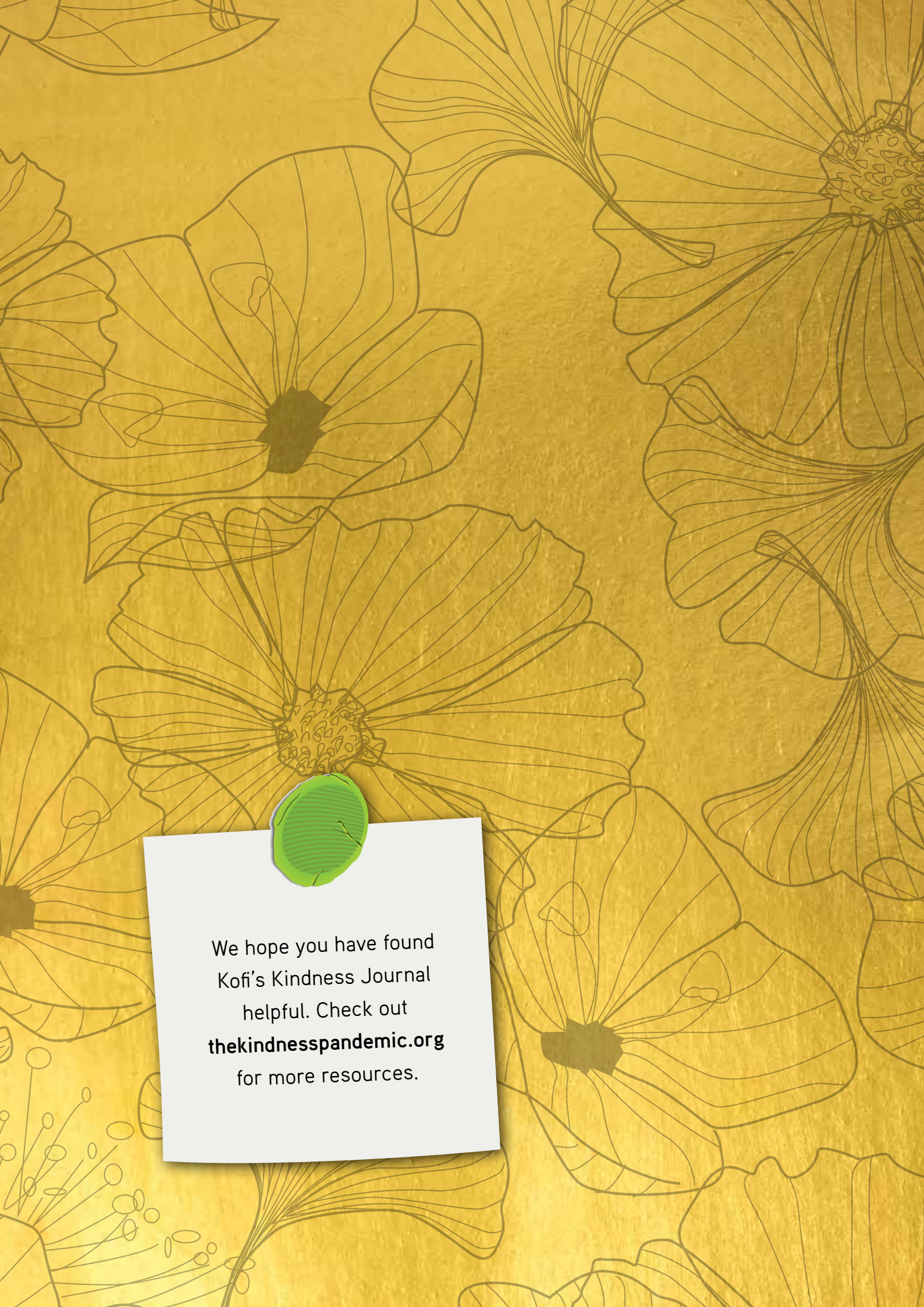


Day #58

Today I am grateful that it is now holi-
days and although I like school. I am really
happy that it is the holidays, because I
needed it and this term was pretty stress-
ful and I think that alot of students
would agree with me.

HAPPY HOLIDAYS

HAPPY HOLIDAYS



We hope you have found
Kofi's Kindness Journal
helpful. Check out
thekindnesspandemic.org
for more resources.