Kindness:

Aristotle has defined kindness as being helpful, friendly, and considerate towards others without asking anything in return. It is the quality of *being gentle, generous, and understanding* in our interactions with those around us. Kindness is not a standalone virtue. It is one big cluster of closely related values that encompasses love, mercy, altruism, and benevolence.

Every religion has considered Kindness to be the central tenet of human existence. While Christian thoughts point towards charity, *Hinduism weighs on Daya or Anukampa*. The non violent philosophy of Buddhism and Jainism asks us to be considerate of everything around us with respect.

Examples of Kindness:

A kind person shows genuine care for others. He or she offers her unwavering support, courtesy, or something as small as a simple smile.

- *Buddha* has been shown to be kind to his worst enemies such as Mara. *Mara Vijay* speaks of kindness as a conquering virtue.

- *King Ashoka* turned from the butcher of Kalinga to a very kind and compassionate king.

- Ancient Greek view *Kindness or Xenia* to be a sacrosanct virtue.

- *Mahatma Gandhi* became the voice of reason and compassion in a country that was torn by riots.

- *Oskar Schindler*, a member of Nazi party, was the only non Jew person who was *buried on Mount Zion*, because he saved thousands of Jews during the Holocaust.

Kindness doesn't have to be these great acts alone. Something *as small as holding the door* for others or giving the bus seat to the elderly is an equally important act of kindness which we can perform daily. The modern discourse on environment ethics is also inspired by the philosophy of kindness towards the millions of creatures whose life is jeopardized by human action.

Need of Kindness in Modern World:

Nietzsche has called Kindness and Love to be the *most curative herbs* in human intercourse. Today's rapid paced society has multiple points of conflict, involving poverty, hunger, social disharmony, civil war, and an active hostile war between Russia and Ukraine.

The philosophy of kindness recognizes the ***interconnectedness and interdependence*** of all living beings. Whether it is the principles of utilitarianism, promoted by Locke and Bentham, or the virtues of humanism, they all ***converge on the ideas of kindness*** and love for improving the lives of others.

Kindness toward our own self:

For our own self, it is very important to be kind to ourselves. Whether it is financial struggles or our academic issues, we all can do a bit better by being kind to ourselves. The world is seeing a rapid rise in the level of depression and mental health issues among individuals. As per WHO, ***one in every eight individuals*** is suffering from mental health issues. This is an outcome of social pressure as well as internal strife.

Albert Camus, while being a staunch existentialist who denies the inherent meaning of life, asks us to love our own self. Therefore kindness is seen as an authentic and ***meaningful response to the inherent existential struggles*** and suffering.

Kindness is an essential aspect of our emotional buildup and social behavior. It's a central aspect of religious thoughts and philosophical reasoning. No matter the circumstances, we can be a bit better by being kind. If we go by the ***words of Goethe***, Kindness is the golden chain that can bind this society together again.