



# Professional Kindness

## 1 Professional kindness is first of all *kind*

Kindness is benevolent, gentle, hospitable, and slow to anger. It accepts people as they are and where they are and seeks to do no harm.

## 2 Secondly, professional kindness is *professional*

It is held to a higher standard than ordinary kindness. It is done with the seriousness and thoughtfulness of work. Professional also means it is not personal. So try to keep yourself out of it. Keep a little distance. Not too much distance, but a little. Think of yourself as a kindness practitioner, perfecting the skill of kindness.

## 3 Professional kindness is *objective*

Practicing professional kindness strips out ulterior or personal motives. The kindness practitioner is objective and shows the same level of kindness towards all clients, without favouritism or investment in a particular client's outcome.

## 4 Not just for clients

Professional kindness is for everyone you work with, including fellow employees, health authority workers, and anyone else you come in contact while on the job.

## 5 What it is Not

It is impossible to be kind and sarcastic at the same time. You can't insult someone kindly. Neither can you be kind and unfair at the same time. It isn't kind to embarrass someone in front of others, or to humiliate someone.

### Historical Note

Professional Kindness is a term first introduced to ICCS by a social worker who regularly referred clients to Crescent House and noticed that some support workers complicated client's stabilization with good intentioned advice and sympathy. The social worker encouraged these staff members to step back from offering advice and counsel and focus on kindness instead. We have found the practice to compliment motivational interviewing and other empathy based techniques for helping clients find their own inner wisdom.