



The Abbey

KINDNESS



Kindness playing in my ears

Jemimah, Lower V (Year 10)



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When approaching this article I thought about other music articles I have read, with lists of songs that reference joy, cities of the world or times of night. Nearly all of which mainly included songs from eras when I wasn't alive, let alone knowing the ins and outs of the top 100 charts. So for this article, I have chosen to write about songs that I know best, from an era of music I am very much aware of and interested in. As well as this I am going to navigate through it in the best way I know...

*[Presses shuffle on a Spotify playlist titled 'Kindness playing in my ears']*

*[The familiar choir sings 'maybe we can find a place to feel good' as the banner playing the song appears at the bottom of the screen.]*

Yes, you should have guessed it as soon as you saw the title of this article, I will be writing about Harry Styles' Treat People With Kindness. Not only was this song on the album that had the biggest British male artist first week since Eric Clapton in 1992, but the music video for the song has 43 million views. However, the amount of records the song broke or how many streams it has (148,874,904 - and counting) doesn't matter. What really matters is the message the song is spreading. My personal favourite lyric is 'find a place to feel good'. I think it is really important to feel good and happy where you are in life as well as physically, surrounding yourself with people who are kind and generally care for you.

This song is the musical version of Harry's message: he frequently speaks about being comfortable and happy at his concerts, understanding that not everyone feels this way in life. So wanting to create a safe space at his live

shows is really important to him. In the Fine Line era much of his merch was labelled with the phrase 'treat people with kindness' and it has continued to be a big part of his brand. Although it's not my favourite on the album (To Be So Lonely and Fine Line are, for those wondering) this song will automatically make me dance and features on my happy music playlist. If you haven't listened I recommend you should but don't get distracted by the rousing drums and major piano and try to focus on the lyrics. There are some really good lines.

*[Piano accompanied by whistling crescendos into my headphones.]*

Selena Gomez is not just a pop star and actor but a mental health advocate. She is someone who has struggled with health issues and anxiety and she is using her platform to promote this along with the importance of spreading kindness. Selena has spoken with Jill Biden on the importance of mental health at the White House. And she has brought out an Apple documentary, which features the song of the same name (and personally one of my favourite by her): My Mind & Me. It is about her journey with mental health and fame. Kill Em With Kindness, the

song I selected for this playlist, is an upbeat bop, and the main message of the song is that instead of retaliating and responding in harmful ways to bad behaviour, be kind. Best said in this lyric: 'put down the weapons you fight with, and kill 'em with kindness'. It shows people how they should be better than they are being treated, even when that is hard, and not fall to the level of others who are not being kind. Personally, this has got to be one of my favourite Selena songs and it comes from her first solo album Revival. The album has themes of moving on and improving yourself to step away from the drama and be a better person and this song is the epitome of that message.

*[The music pauses before a calmer song starts with piano chords playing over a backing track.]*

As a massive Taylor Swift fan it was essential to find a Taylor Swift song that would fit into this playlist and arjorie immediately came to mind. Compared to the two songs I have mentioned before this song doesn't have kindness in the title and it could even be argued it barely mentions kindness. However, this one lyric illustrates a beautiful thought: 'never be so kind, you forget to be clever, never



be so clever you forget to be kind'. There is something really powerful in this lyric and everytime I hear it I find myself pausing the song to reflect on it. It is about being clever enough to see who is truly there for you and is your friend but not being too clever you forget that you should be kind to everybody and I hope people resonate with this. Taylor wrote about her grandmother, someone who she admires and wishes she knew more about. Marjorie is about knowing how to be kind to others. 'Never be so polite, you forget your power' is another lyric where the listener is encouraged to find a balance so you are not self sabotaging yourself while you just please others, a message I think we all need to hear sometimes. In the end Marjorie wraps up to be a song about not just being kind to others but being kind to yourself. It is a great example of finding a deeper meaning in a song after you take the time to look. Taylor always has amazing lyrics and I recommend the album this song is on, evermore, and its sister album folklore for heart-wrenching lyrics that have more meaning than they might seem on the surface.

*[The iconic riff of many people's favourite TV show theme song starts playing.]*

The next song not only reminds us that all we want to do is hang out with the characters of FRIENDS but also reminds us what good friends do. I'll Be There For You is the iconic theme tune for one of my personal favourite TV Shows: FRIENDS. It perfectly sums up the series and is so good I rarely skip the intro as I have too much fun singing along. It's a great song about friendship and what good friends do, and while it might not necessarily explicitly refer to kindness, the idea of being there for those you care about is most definitely a kind act. The song might predate me but being from a show I love definitely means it qualifies for this list and I honestly could not miss it off. So while you are singing along and pointing out your favourite scenes in the intro, maybe also take the time to

think about the lyrics. How can we do simple acts for our friends that can lift them up and improve a bad day?

And, just as they close the episodes on FRIENDS with this song, I would also like to end my playlist with it, leaving you with some great songs that show how kindness, quite rightly, infiltrates our culture. Please take them as song recommendations, but also as constant reminders of the need for more kindness in our world.





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