

The Importance of Volunteerism

Posted [April 20, 2021](#)

When it comes to volunteering, passion, positivity, compassion, an open mind, a willingness to pitch in wherever needed, and a positive attitude are the key requirements. It also gives you an opportunity to change people's lives, including your own and brings you satisfaction of playing a role in someone else's life by helping people who may not be able to help themselves. Volunteering is a way of giving back to your community while developing important social skills. It is also a selfless act and a sacrifice but when you start doing it, you usually discover the benefits outweigh all things you're giving up yourself.

Your children also watch everything you do so by giving back to the community, you are showing them firsthand how volunteering makes a difference and how good it feels to help others. It is also a valuable way for you to get to know organizations in your community and find resources and activities for your children and family. Most of us want to do good in the world and have a desire to help others which is a good enough reason to start volunteering. However, finding the time or motivation can sometimes overpower our commitment to doing good.

Doing things voluntarily without being asked to do them or having to be forced to do them, without it being directly for your own benefit, is an act of volunteerism. Doing it simply because you are happy to do so, knowing it will make others happy, helps to develop subconsciously a sense of responsibility for making a positive impact. Life in and of itself is not about accumulation of properties or having so much money but about your contribution to the world around you.

Because volunteering means choosing to work without receiving monetary compensation, people often choose to give their time to issues or organisations they feel are important or have a special connection to. For example, if you're a big animal lover you may want to volunteer at a pet shelter. Or, perhaps you have been living with or have recovered from an illness and want to dedicate some of your spare time to a charity that helps others living with the same condition. Volunteering like this helps address a social problem that is meaningful to you and provides fulfillment.

You can try volunteering at any age to help build a sense of purpose, but it's often particularly common in older adults, particularly those that have retired or maybe lost a partner or friends. Whatever your age of life story, volunteering can be an important technique to help give your life new meaning and direction. People with disabilities or chronic health conditions can still benefit greatly from volunteering. In fact, research has shown that adults with disabilities or health conditions ranging from hearing and vision loss to heart disease, diabetes or digestive disorders all show improvement after volunteering.

Feeling that you are doing something to benefit others is a great thing for your brain. Because volunteer work tends to make people feel more socially connected, it wards off feelings of depression and loneliness. Well-rounded resumes include volunteer work and because employers know the benefits volunteerism has on their employees, they

know volunteer work says a lot about a person. Volunteering can open up more opportunities to have a shared experience with someone, which is often where the best friendships blossom.

If you've recently moved to a new city or country, it is an important and easy way to meet new people, strengthen your ties to that local community and broaden your support network. Furthermore, it connects you to people, from different age groups, ethnicities or social groups, who have common interests and passions and who could go on to become great friends. Because it is open to everyone, it allows you to give back to something you feel passionate about whilst simultaneously cultivating meaningful relationships.

And of course, the greatest benefit of volunteering is the reason we do it at all, because it makes a difference. If you are considering volunteering, the key is to find a position that you would enjoy and are capable of doing. It's also important to make sure that your commitment matches the organization's needs. So ask yourself a few questions before taking the plunge. Firstly, really think about which causes you're passionate about since it means you're more likely to enjoy and stay committed to the work. Secondly, are you looking for regular volunteering opportunities or would you prefer a one-off project? Thirdly, what skill set can you offer and what can you hope to gain from volunteering? Good luck when you finally get going, and make sure you have fun because volunteering is important and the benefits are clear, but it's also important to enjoy it.

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