



Our Plymouth

Seven Benefits of Volunteering

Whilst you won't get paid for volunteering, it does come with a host of other benefits. Donating your time, energy, and possibly resources can be just as rewarding for you as for those you are helping. Here are some ways volunteering can affect you positively:

1. Meet New People and Build Community

Everyone loves new friends! Being a part of a team with a common goal will help you form bonds with strangers that can be life changing. Volunteering inherently means helping people, and that means you will be creating meaningful relationships with others and increasing your social interactions.

Volunteering provides a unique opportunity: it connects people with very specific shared values. And the values may not be what you think. In addition to likely having shared concerns for children, sustainable living, healthy eating, or whatever project you're working on, volunteers are also people who also share things like a willingness to step outside their comfort zone, an openness to spending time on a community effort, a proclivity for engaging in team-oriented activities, and a desire to contribute to the well-being of others.

You're sure to meet people and make new friends that share common interests, values, and outlooks. Building a community in which you are all working together towards common future goals

will nurture your sense of belonging and purpose and expand your support system. This social benefit of volunteering grows into a bunch of other benefits that we'll continue to explore in this list!



2. Gain Knowledge and Understanding of Other Ways of Life

Volunteering might take you to a new part of your community you have never been to before. Volunteer programs can give you the opportunity to bring people into your social network you otherwise wouldn't get to meet and learn from those who come from different walks of life. This experience can expand your understanding of others who are different from you.

Learning about cultures and ways of life that are different from one of your up-bringing will increase your social flexibility and expand your world-view. It will also raise awareness of the issues that other people deal with and will increase important social skills like empathy and teamwork.

3. Gain a Sense of Purpose and Become Happier

What an amazing reason to do something. Volunteering has been shown to give you a sense of accomplishment and to increase feelings of happiness. During your life you've developed social and

professional skills that promote your personal achievement. Using those skills for a wider, communal impact can be even more fulfilling.

Volunteering will enrich your life and give you a broader purpose and can give you a boost of motivation.

Volunteering is recognised as proven to help fight all sorts of mental issues like depression, anxiety, stress, and anger.



4. Boost Your Self-Esteem

That's right! Spending time as a volunteer has been shown to improve your self-esteem!

The more opportunities you take to learn new skills and gain knowledge, the more fully you will develop as a person. And what safer space to develop those skills than in a context of service? Stepping out of your comfort zone and building new skills is the best way to develop your self-esteem. Volunteering will increase your sense of pride and thus, your self-confidence! When you challenge yourself through volunteering and receive appreciation from others, it can make you feel better emotionally and mentally.

Plus, who has time to think negative thoughts about yourself when you're out saving the world?

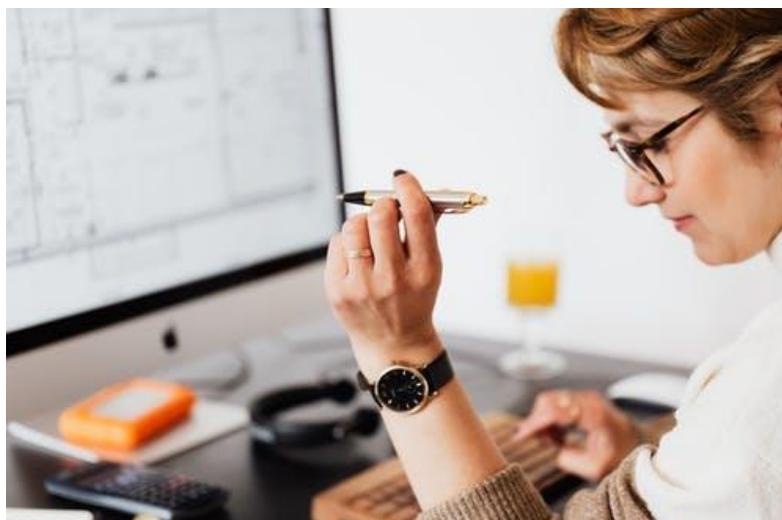
5. Advance Your Career by Improving Job Prospects

Gear up! This one's a big one! Volunteering will offer you skills that can be used throughout your career development. If you are wanting to change to a new career, volunteering in that new field can help you develop the skills and knowledge you will need.

When you have a volunteering experience to add to your resume, you stand out over job candidates who don't take the time to give back to society. Volunteering highlights your character, passion, and determination!

Through your volunteer experiences, you have a chance to show that you're interested in things bigger than yourself, and you are willing to take action to make the changes you want in the world—and that will always help you shine through the competition.

Plus, volunteering can also give you a better understanding of the issues you are working with and discover where there are gaps in the field. This knowledge can prepare you to enter a new field of work or, for those with an entrepreneurial spirit, volunteering may lead to developing your next business idea or inspire you to start a non-profit organisation yourself!



6. Accrue the Health Benefits of Volunteering

It's true! There are many physical benefits that come from volunteering, and most important is that it can help reduce stress! Spending meaningful time with others can reduce stress and the health effects it has on our bodies. Reduced stress translates into several physical health benefits. You will sleep better, get sick less often, and even prevent heart disease! In fact, some studies have even found lower mortality rates in volunteers vs non-volunteers in older adults.

This makes sense because as we give our attention to others, we take our attention away from our own problems and concerns. It can also put our stresses into perspective and feel more gratitude in our day-to-day lives.

Volunteer work can also be an outlet for the frustrations you feel about certain issues and will leave you with a sense of agency and empowerment. Worried about climate change or food poverty? Do something about it!



7. Increase Your Brain Functioning

Every volunteer opportunity has its own set of tasks, and some of those might require you to learn new skill sets and challenge yourself. This means you will be keeping your brain busy and gaining new skills!

Volunteering has been shown to increase your ability for problem solving, increase your long-term and short-term memory, and reduce your risk of developing age-related diseases such as Alzheimer's. So, it's time to get started, but where? Check out the range of Volunteering opportunities at

<https://ourplymouth.co.uk/volunteer-opportunity>



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