



## Reasons To Volunteer<sup>i</sup>

**Volunteering offers vital help to people in need, worthwhile causes, and the community, but the benefits can be even greater for the volunteer. The right match can help the volunteer to find friends, connect with the community, learn new skills, and even advance their career.**

### **1. Doing good**

People who volunteer are making a difference in people's lives and impacting the world in a positive way. People who volunteer are also doing good for their own mental and physical health by being active, feeling happy about helping others, and feeling accomplished.

### **2. Meet people and make new friends**

One of the best ways to make new friends and strengthen existing relationships is to commit to a shared activity together. Volunteering is a great way to meet new people, especially if the volunteer is new to an area. It strengthens ties to the community and broadens support network, exposing to people with common interests, neighborhood resources, and fun and fulfilling activities.

### **3. A chance to socialize**

While some people are naturally outgoing, others are shy and have a hard time meeting new people. Volunteering gives the opportunity to practice and develop social skills, since volunteers meet regularly with a group of people with common interests and it's easier to branch out and make more friends and contacts.

### **4. Gain confidence and self-esteem**

Volunteers do good for others and the community, which provides a natural sense of accomplishment. Volunteering can also give to the volunteer a sense of pride and identity. And the better the volunteers feel about themselves, the more likely they are to have a positive view of their life and future goals.

### **5. Get to know the local community**

Volunteering allows to connect to a community and make it a better place. Even helping with the smallest tasks can make a real difference to the lives of people, animals, environment, and organizations in need.

### **6. Spend quality time away from work or a busy schedule**

Giving to others can also help protect volunteer's mental and physical health. It can reduce stress, combat depression, keep mentally stimulated, and provide a sense of purpose. While it's true that the more a person volunteer, the more benefits will experience, volunteering doesn't have to involve a long-term commitment or take a huge amount of time out of a busy day. Giving in even simple ways can help those in need and improve volunteer's health and happiness.

### **7. A chance to try something new that may lead to a career change**

Volunteering offers the chance to try out a new career without making a long-term commitment. It is also a great way to gain experience in a new field. In some fields, volunteers can participate directly at an organization that does the kind of work they are interested in.

### **8. Gain new skills, knowledge and experience**

Volunteering can help volunteers get experience in their area of interest and meet people in the field. Even if the volunteers are not planning on changing careers, volunteering gives the opportunity to



practice important skills used in the workplace, such as teamwork, communication, problem solving, project planning, task management, and organization. Volunteers might feel more comfortable stretching their wings at work once they have honed these skills in a volunteer position first.

Volunteers can also learn valuable knowledge and real-world skills through their volunteer opportunities. These skills can help them grow and prepare them for the workforce, and beyond. Here are some of the volunteers can learn through volunteering:

- Leadership
- Communication
- Dependability
- Dressing professionally
- Time management
- Self-esteem
- Empathy
- Long-term generosity
- Networking
- Problem-solving

Volunteer work might also expose volunteers to professional organizations or internships that could benefit their career.

### **9. Use one's skills and knowledge to benefit others**

Volunteering can also help build upon skills the volunteer already has and use them to benefit the greater community.

### **10. Volunteering as a family**

Children watch everything parents do. By giving back to the community, parents will show them firsthand how volunteering makes a difference and how good it feels to help other people and animals and enact change. It's also a valuable way for parents to get to know organizations in the community and find resources and activities for their children and family.

### **11. Other benefits of volunteering**

- Grow the network of contacts
- Improve one's employment prospects
- A route to employment
- Help the environment
- Help others less fortunate or without a voice
- Give something back to an organization that has had an impact on volunteer's life or the life of someone the volunteer knows
- Make a difference in the lives of others
- Increase social and relationship skills
- Volunteering is good for the mind and body
- Volunteering brings fun and fulfillment to the life of a volunteer



There will also be other skills volunteers will gain specific to the work they are doing at the nonprofit. Volunteers can then add their volunteering experience (and new skills) to their resume. Some nonprofits will even write reference letters, provide endorsements on LinkedIn, or include scholarships, grants opportunities for their volunteers.

Volunteering provides many benefits to both mental and physical health. Volunteering helps counteract the effects of stress, anger, and anxiety. The social contact aspect of helping and working with others can have a profound effect on the overall psychological well-being of a volunteer. Nothing relieves stress better than a meaningful connection to another person.

Volunteering keeps people in regular contact with others and helps them develop a solid support system, which in turn protects them against depression.

Volunteering makes a person happy. By measuring hormones and brain activity, researchers have discovered that being helpful to others delivers immense pleasure. Human beings are hard-wired to give to others. The more we give, the happier we feel.

### **12. Volunteering provides a sense of purpose**

Whatever the age or life situation, volunteering can help take volunteer's mind off their own worries, keep them mentally stimulated, and add more zest to their lives.

### **13. Volunteering helps to stay physically healthy**

Studies have found that those who volunteer have a lower mortality rate than those who do not. Older volunteers tend to walk more, find it easier to cope with everyday tasks, are less likely to develop high blood pressure, and have better thinking skills. Volunteering can also lessen symptoms of chronic pain and reduce the risk of heart disease.

### **14. When it comes to volunteering, passion and positivity are the only requirements**

While learning new skills can be beneficial to many, it's not a requirement for a fulfilling volunteer experience. Bear in mind that the most valuable assets a volunteer can bring to any volunteer effort are compassion, an open mind, a willingness to pitch in wherever needed, and a positive attitude.

### **15. Personal interests**

Volunteers will have a richer and more enjoyable volunteering experience if they first take some time to identify their goals and interests. Think about why you want to volunteer. What would you enjoy doing? The opportunities that match both your goals and your interests are most likely to be fun and fulfilling.

#### **a. Personal volunteering goals?**

To find a volunteer position that's right for you, look for something that matches your personality, skills, and interests. Ask yourself if there is something specific you want to do or achieve as a volunteer.

#### **b. Expand on your interests and hobbies.**

Consider several volunteers possibilities. Don't limit yourself to just one organization or one specific type of job. Try to visit different organizations and get a feel for what they are like and if you click with other staff and volunteers.



The important thing is to volunteer only the amount of time that feels comfortable to you. Volunteering should feel like a fun and rewarding hobby, not another chore on your to-do list.

### **16. Getting the most out of volunteering**

You're donating your valuable time, so it's important that you enjoy and benefit from your volunteering.

**To make sure that your volunteer position is a good fit:**

#### **a. Ask questions.**

You want to make sure that the experience is right for your skills, your goals, and the time you want to spend. Sample questions for your volunteer coordinator might address your time commitment, if there's any training involved, who you will be working with, and what to do if you have questions during your experience.

#### **b. Make sure you know what's expected.**

You should be comfortable with the organization and understand the time commitment. Consider starting small so that you don't over commit yourself at first. Give yourself some flexibility to change your focus if needed.

#### **c. Don't be afraid to make a change.**

Don't force yourself into a bad fit or feel compelled to stick with a volunteer role you dislike. Talk to the organization about changing your focus or look for a different organization that's a better fit.

#### **d. If volunteering overseas, choose carefully.**

Some volunteer programs abroad can cause more harm than good if they take much-needed paying jobs away from local workers. Look for volunteer opportunities with reputable organizations.

**If you like to volunteer with Yaguars please contact us.**



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<sup>i</sup> <https://www.helpguide.org/articles/healthy-living/volunteering-and-its-surprising-benefits.htm>  
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