

Benefits of volunteering

Gallup surveys in 130 countries show people with higher personal well-being are more likely to say they give time, money, or help to others in their communities.

In general, volunteers reported higher levels of happiness, life-satisfaction, self-esteem, and a sense of control over life. Volunteering provides a sense of purpose, as well as social and physical activities. Also, studies have shown a strong link between volunteering and health benefits. Two hours a week, about 100 hours a year, is the number that is associated with these benefits:

- Less chronic pain
- Lower rates of heart disease
- Lower rates of depression, especially for volunteers age 60 and older
- Lower mortality rates

One study of alcoholics going through the Alcoholics Anonymous program, found that those who helped others were nearly twice as likely to stay dry a year later. Their levels of depression were lower, too.

