# Engaging in Volunteer Activities to Contribute to Mental Well-being

Engaging in volunteer activities can significantly contribute to mental well-being by fostering a sense of purpose, connection, and personal fulfilment. Volunteering provides individuals with opportunities to positively impact their communities while simultaneously benefiting their own mental health in the following ways.

## Feeling of belonging

Volunteer activities facilitate social connections and the development of a supportive community. Humans are inherently social beings, and meaningful connections play a crucial role in mental well-being. Volunteering offers an opportunity to meet like-minded individuals, build friendships, and create a sense of belonging. These social interactions can help combat feelings of loneliness and isolation, promoting a positive mental state.

## Benefits of volunteering: 4 ways to feel healthier and happier

1. Volunteering connects to others.
2. Volunteering is good for the mind and body.
3. Volunteering can advance career.
4. Volunteering brings fun and fulfilment to life.

## Boosting happiness

Studies show a link between volunteering and happiness. A 2020 study in the UK revealed that volunteers reported higher life satisfaction and better overall health. Those who volunteered for at least a month also reported improved mental well-being compared to non-volunteers.

## Building self-assurance

Volunteering offers a chance to build confidence and self-esteem. Your volunteer role can give you a sense of pride and identity, especially valuable for those with mental health challenges. Feeling better about yourself can lead to a more positive outlook on life and the future. Additionally, the sense of achievement from helping others can boost self-esteem and confidence.

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## Discovering purpose

Volunteering can provide a sense of purpose during uncertain times. Devoting time to a cause can offer new direction and meaning unexpectedly. It can also distract from personal troubles while keeping your mind engaged.

**In conclusion**, engaging in volunteer activities is a multifaceted approach to enhancing mental well-being. The sense of purpose, social connections, personal growth, and stress relief that volunteering provides can significantly contribute to a positive mental state. As individuals invest their time and energy into making a difference in their communities, they often find themselves reaping the mental health benefits of altruistic engagement.

## European Solidarity Corps Programme

European Solidarity Corps volunteering activities are open to 18-30 year old people who reside in programme and partner countries.

**Individual volunteering**:

- can last from 2 months up to 12 months
- is full-time (between 30 and 38 hours a week)
- allows a young person to contribute to the daily work of an organisation that is actively benefiting the local community
- is usually 'cross-border' – i.e. in a different country
- in some cases, young people can take part for a shorter time (from 2 weeks to 2 months) – for example for participants with fewer opportunities, or disabilities

For more information please visit: https://youth.europa.eu/solidarity/young-people/volunteering_en

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