

Benefits of Volunteering

Dogs with Wings Assistance Dog Society | June 2014

Many people don't feel like they have the time to volunteer, but volunteering offers many benefits. Some people volunteer to advance their career and others simply wish to make their community a better place to live.

Volunteering is Good for Your Health

One of the best reasons to volunteer is for your own health. Not only does volunteering increase life satisfaction, it makes you feel good about yourself. In fact, the effects of volunteering are so profound that social scientists say that it eliminates the ingredients of depression. Being around people and doing meaningful work also serves to alleviate negative stress.

In the realm of physical health, volunteering can provide an avenue to stay active. Older adults can especially benefit from the physical aspects of volunteering. Not only do study participants who volunteer have lower mortality rates than those who don't, but they showed a decrease in levels of chronic pain and certain heart disease symptoms.

Volunteering Forms Connections

Volunteering also has a positive impact on your immediate community. Volunteers are often the gears that keep the community machine running. They have the satisfaction of knowing that they are making their world a better place to live and strengthen existing relational ties to their community through various social avenues.

Volunteering Can Help Your Career

If you are considering a career change, volunteering can be a great way to explore your options. You can obtain experience in your field of interest and find out what it's like to work in that field on a daily basis. Essentially, volunteering can afford you the opportunity to try your new career on for size and see if it really is something you want to pursue. Even if you are not changing careers, volunteering can be an important way to build important career skills such as teamwork, communication, organization, and project management.

Questions to Ask Yourself

Volunteering is a great way to enrich your life. Start by identifying why you want to volunteer and what kinds of things you might want to do. Here are a few questions to ask:

- What causes are important to me?
- Am I exploring new career options?
- Do I want to learn a new skill?
- What am I good at?
- How can I help my community?
- How much time do I have to volunteer?

In order to find the best volunteer position to suit your individual needs and goals, it's best to visit a number of organizations, meet the people in charge, and be sure to ask questions about the work to be done.

Volunteering can be an enjoyable and rewarding endeavor that has many benefits. Enhance your life by finding a place to volunteer in your community.

About Dogs with Wings:

Dogs with Wings is a leader in the international community of assistance dog training schools. The organization exists to serve people with disabilities. They work collaboratively, and in partnership with other organizations that provide assistance dogs to people with disabilities.

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