

# Volunteering and Happiness: The Facts

## (September 2016)

Volunteering has the potential for improving the quality of life for people in our community. There are lots of benefits associated with volunteering – including happiness! Here are some key facts:

1. International research suggests that volunteers are more likely to be happier, healthier and sleep better. Researchers in the preventative medicine have found that volunteers are happier compared to those who do no unpaid work. These findings have been consistent in over 50 separate investigative research projects.
2. 96% of Americans surveyed (in a study of 4,500 individuals) felt that volunteering “makes people happier”.
3. When asked, 95% of volunteers in the Australian Capital Territory (ACT) agreed that volunteering is related to feelings of wellbeing.
4. Volunteering results in a “helper’s high,” a powerful physical and emotional feeling experienced when directly helping others.
5. Just a few hours of volunteer work makes a difference in happiness and mood
6. Altruistic emotions and behaviours are associated with greater well-being, health, and longevity
7. A strong correlation exists between the well-being, happiness, health, and longevity of people who are emotionally kind and compassionate in their charitable helping activities.
8. The experience of helping others provides meaning, a sense of self-worth, a social role and health enhancement.
9. Volunteering is highly associated with greater health and happiness.

## References

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