

Practice Generosity



CHALLENGE

Reach out to help others

Requirements to complete this HEALTH CHALLENGE™

1. Read “Practice Generosity.”
2. Practice generosity and help other people on at least 22 days this month.
3. Keep a record of your completed challenge in case your organization requires documentation.



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When New York police officer Aaron Page spotted a homeless man roaming the streets, he stopped to talk. The man named “Bobby” said he was down on his luck. And it looked like it.

His hair was long and matted. His clothes were filthy and worn. And he couldn’t remember the last time he’d taken a shower.

And that gave Page an idea. Instead of sending “Bobby” away to find a new place to sleep, or arresting him for loitering, Page told “Bobby” to stop by the police station the next day.

Here’s what happened. Officers gave him a haircut and a clean shave. He took a hot shower. By the time he left the station, he was wearing a new pair of shoes, clean clothes, and big smile.

“It’s about giving back and providing a helping hand,” says Page.

Has someone done something nice for you? How did it feel? Or have you been able to help someone else?

When you practice generosity, it has a positive impact on you and other people. And it doesn’t have to be a big thing. Even a smile or a compliment can make a difference. Doing good can even be good for your health.

Take the month-long health challenge. *Practice Generosity* and reach out to help others.

Quiz: Does generosity matter? Find out if helping others can improve your health

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1. I want to improve my relationship with others.
2. I sometimes feel stressed out.
3. I want to reduce my risk for chronic diseases.
4. I sometimes feel depressed, unhappy, or unsatisfied with life.
5. I feel good when I help others.

If you answered “yes” to any of these statements, taking a minute out of your day to help someone else can make a difference. Research shows that helping others can improve your mood, reduce stress, and provide other health benefits.¹

Generosity is Good for Your Health

When “Bobby” left the police station, he felt pretty good. And so did Page and the rest of the officers. Being generous can have a positive impact on your health in more ways than one.

Increase Happiness

Being kind to others can help you feel happier. In one review of 400 studies, acts of kindness for others had a positive impact on mood and happiness.² It didn’t matter who: family friends, colleagues, community members, and even strangers. You can be kind to anyone and feel happy.

Live Longer and Boost Brain Health

But being kind does more than just help you feel good. One study tracked about 43,000 people for a year. Researchers found that those who help others are more likely to live longer and have healthier brains.³ Doing good may also help reduce stress and inflammation linked to chronic diseases.

The Health Benefits of Giving
tinyurl.com/y9pnf797

Control Blood Pressure

In a separate study, researchers followed about 7,000 people for 48 months.⁴ They found that people who volunteer at least 200 hours a year are less likely to develop high blood pressure than those who don’t volunteer. And that’s important. High blood pressure has been linked to heart disease, stroke, and early death. Doing good matters.

40 WAYS TO Practice Generosity

So how can you practice generosity? It's simple. Look for ways to help others at home, at work, in your community, or when you're out and about. You can lend a hand by doing something simple like offering a compliment. Or, you can make a bigger impact like Officer Page did. Here are 40 ways you can practice generosity:

Infographic:
Why Being Generous Is Good for You
tinyurl.com/ybwuv5hy



At Home

1. Hug your kids.
2. Compliment your spouse.
3. Write thank you letters.
4. Mow your neighbor's lawn.
5. Do someone else's chores for a day.
6. Call a friend just to talk.
7. Be a good listener.
8. Invite a friend over for dinner.
9. Throw a party for someone.
10. Encourage laughter.



8 Ways to Be Generous at Work
tinyurl.com/ybkwf4nm



In Your Community

16. Give blood.
17. Be a mentor to others.
18. Share your talents.
19. Donate to a food drive or charity.
20. Help out at your child's school.
21. Serve on a council or board.
22. Help plan community events.
23. Take healthy cookies to a friend.
24. Serve meals at a local shelter.
25. Adopt a road and pick up litter.
26. Offer pro-bono services.
27. Babysit for parents with young children.
28. Volunteer at a library, hospital, or museum.



At Work

11. Help new employees feel welcome.
12. Point out a job well done.
13. Take a co-worker to lunch.
14. Write a thank-you note to your manager or co-worker.
15. Fix problems when you can, even if it's not your job.



More Ways to Be Generous

29. Let someone go ahead of you in line at the store.
30. Pay for coffee for the person behind you.
31. Hold a door open for someone.
32. Return your shopping cart.
33. Share an umbrella.
34. Give directions to someone who is lost.
35. Let other drivers in front of you.
36. Help a stranded driver.
37. Compliment others.

38. Smile more.

39. Listen more.

40. Say thank you.

Being generous doesn't have to take a lot of time or money. It's something everyone can do. You might not be able to help everyone. But you can still make a difference. "If you can't feed a hundred people, then just feed one," Mother Teresa said. Doing good to help others, will also help you.

References

1. Nelson, S.K., et al. Do unto others or treat yourself?: The effects of prosocial & self-focused behavior on psychological flourishing. *Emotion*, 16(6):850-861. doi: 10.1037/emoo000178.
2. Curry, O., et al. (2016). Happy to Help? A systematic review and meta-analysis of the effects of performing acts of kindness on the well-being of the actor. *Open Science Framework*. <https://osf.io/ytj5s/>.
3. Detollenaere, J., et al. (2017). Volunteering, income and health. *PLOS One*, 12(3). doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0173139>.
4. Sneed, R., et al. (2013). A prospective study of volunteerism and hypertension risk in older adults. *Psychology and Aging*, 28(2):578-586. doi:10.1037/a0032718.





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Instructions

1. Post this calendar where you will see it daily (bathroom, kitchen, bedroom, etc.)
2. Record the number of days you practiced generosity and helped others.
3. Use the calendar to record the actions and choices you make to practice generosity and help others.
4. At the end of the month, total the number of days you practiced generosity to help others. You must do this on at least 22 days this month to complete this challenge. Then keep up the practice for a lifetime of best health.

MONTH:							HC = Health Challenge™ ex. min. = exercise minutes
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	Weight & weekly summary
HC [] ex. min. _____							
HC [] ex. min. _____							
HC [] ex. min. _____							
HC [] ex. min. _____							
HC [] ex. min. _____							

_____ Number of days this month I practiced generosity

_____ Number of days this month I exercised at least 30 minutes

Other wellness projects completed this month:

Name _____ Date _____