



# CARE FOR OTHERS

**Caring for others is often an important part of keeping up relationships with people close to you. It can even bring you closer together.**

Consider the positive feelings you experienced the last time when you did something good for someone else. Perhaps it was the satisfaction of running an errand for your neighbor, or the sense of fulfillment from volunteering at a local organization, or the gratification from donating to a good cause. Or perhaps it was the simple joy of having helped out a friend.

This “warm glow” of pro-sociality is thought to be one of the drivers of generous behavior in humans. One reason behind the positive feelings associated with helping others is that being pro-social reinforces our sense of relatedness to others, thus helping us meet our most basic psychological needs.

Research has found many examples of how doing good, in ways big or small, not only feels good, but also does us good. For instance, the well-being-boosting and depression-lowering benefits of volunteering have been repeatedly documented. As has the sense of meaning and purpose that often accompanies altruistic behavior. Even when it comes to money, spending it on others predicts increases in happiness compared to spending it on ourselves. Moreover, there is now neural evidence from studies suggesting a link between generosity and happiness in the brain. For example, donating money to charitable organizations activates the same regions of the brain that respond to monetary rewards. In fact, the mere intent and commitment to generosity can stimulate neural change and make people happier.

## **Helping Others With Their Emotions Can Help You With Yours**

Recent research suggests yet another way our well-being can benefit from practicing pro-social behavior: helping others regulate their emotions helps us regulate our own emotions, decreases symptoms of depression and ultimately, improves our emotional well-being.

When helping others navigate their stressful situations, we are enhancing our own emotion regulation skills, and thus, benefiting our own emotional well-being.

Source: <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/between-cultures/201805/in-helping-others-you-help-yourself>

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## **Volunteer**

Why not share your skills more widely by volunteering for a local charity? Helping out can make us feel needed and valued and that boosts our self-esteem.

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## **Pets Count, Too!**

Caring for a pet can improve your well-being. The bond between you and your pet can be as strong as between people.

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"We make a living by what we get; we make a life by what we give."

*Winston Churchill*