



Why Should We Help Other People?

One may ask, how does it benefit me to help someone else? We are very busy with our lives.

Our culture and media continually send us a message about what we need, what we don't have, what we should get. We get stuck in a cycle of feeling empty and not enough. We don't measure up to what we see on TV and the internet. It's a sad state. Many youth feel a sense of worthlessness because they already are searching for their identity in the teen years. Now they have added expectations (that are false), that they should be different, better, more physically appealing and have more material stuff.

The message is somehow, that this search is supposed to make us feel fulfilled.

So I guess fame, fortune and popularity aren't the best goals. We all know people who have a lot and are unhappy or even worse, depressed and feel empty.

So what fills our tank? What would make us feel valuable and worthwhile? Hmm? For many, it's being of benefit to someone else. It could be a family member, neighbor, co-worker, stranger, or a random coincidence encounter with someone.

As we see their need and respond in kind, something changes in us. We experience feelings of gratefulness for what we have in our lives. We may even be grateful about family members we previously were not feeling good about. Our perspective changes. We reflect on what we have instead of what we don't have.

We feel a sense of value because we are needed and are a beneficial help to others. It adds meaning to our life, our existence. It shifts the focus from ourselves, our needs, our problems, and our desires.

When we help someone else, is the person who gets the most benefit from the giving is the giver? Yes! It's a dumbfounding reality, that we receive when we give. I wish I was taught this message from a young age, instead of wasting so many years buying into the societal emphasis to focus on ourself. Well, at least I finally figured it out or should I say, allowed myself to receive this reality.

For years, Freedom4U has been taking teens to do service activities. It is incredibly enriching and satisfying to do these activities with youth, as they give of their time, energy and selves to those who have less, are less fortunate and who face the perils of violence, abuse and poverty daily.

But you don't have to interface with someone who lives in peril. The person you help, could be your neighbor, someone at a store or a family member.

We give and then we receive which leads us to want to give again and the healthy productive meaningful cycle continues. I'm sure many of the readers of this already live in this reality. If not, give it a try helping someone out. Let's keep the cycle of gratitude going!

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