



## JOAG Tip of the Month

October 2020

# Volunteer, it's good for you & for your neighbor!

To **volunteer** is to give of yourself in service to another person or group. It is about freely giving of your time and yourself for nothing in return to help your community, an individual or an organization.

Actions speak louder than words, especially when it comes to serving others. Choosing to volunteer is taking that extra step to make the world a better place.

### Did you know?

After 9/11, in his 2002 State of the Union Address, President Bush asked all Americans to devote 2 years or 4,000 hours to volunteer service during their lifetimes.

*“The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others” – Gandhi*

### Volunteering helps the volunteer, too! Research shows that volunteering can lead to:

- improved mental and physical health
- life satisfaction and a sense of purpose in life
- enhanced social well-being
- decreased depression (particularly in older adults)
- increased trust in others
- strengthened social ties and protection from isolation
- alleviation of stress
- a personal sense of accomplishment

You can do amazing things that impact the lives of many on a day to day basis when you volunteer. When you commit to helping others, you are doing something wonderful and that is the first step in changing the world.

*“I wish to do something Great and Wonderful, but I must start by doing the little things like they were Great and Wonderful” – Albert Einstein*

References: <https://www.nationalservice.gov/serve>  
[https://www.nationalservice.gov/sites/default/files/documents/07\\_0506\\_hbr\\_brief.pdf](https://www.nationalservice.gov/sites/default/files/documents/07_0506_hbr_brief.pdf)  
<https://buildabroad.org/2017/10/25/volunteer-quotes/>

## Ideas for volunteering during a pandemic

- **Give Blood.** Contact your local Red Cross or other blood donation site to donate.
- **Stay in Touch.** Check on your neighbors, friends, and family. A phone call, text or conversation through the door could really brighten the day for older neighbors and family members, especially those who are alone.
- **Deliver meals and groceries to seniors or others in need.** Help someone you know or contact Meals on Wheels in your area.
- **Help a School.** Check with your local school to see if they need volunteers to take food or supplies to children and families in need. Lead a drive to collect school supplies.
- **Help respond to the opioid crisis** by volunteering to help with or promote the National Prescription Drug Take Back Day. The next one is on 10/24/20. See the website for ideas and PSAs: <https://takebackday.dea.gov>
- **Make a difference in a local park** or community space by planting trees and spring flowering bulbs or by clearing leaves.
- **Set up a virtual visit to a senior citizen or Veterans' center,** send cards to the residents or ask the center if they need personal care items or craft supplies, then launch a collection drive.
- **Write a grant** to help an organization in your community. Some large stores even offer community grants for building or other needed supplies.
- **Donate to or volunteer at food pantries/food banks,** help with stocking or sorting food.
- **Help neighbors prepare for winter:** You may have neighbors who could use help preparing their homes for the winter. Check out the Department of Energy tips for saving energy in the fall and winter (<https://www.energy.gov/energysaver/fall-and-winter-energy-saving-tips>).
- **Donate to nonprofits.** The National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (NVOAD) has a list of organizations supporting COVID-19 response efforts.

*“One of the great ironies of life is this: he or she who serves almost always benefits more than he or she who is served.” Gordon B. Hinckley*