



Doing for Others

"Loving others is the greatest gift we can give ourselves" - Alan Lokos

Altruism - the act of selfless giving, has been shown to do more than simply 'feel good' - it protects against depression, builds self-esteem, and reduces stress. It improves our relationships and helps us to feel connected.

When stressed, we can become so focused on our own problems that we struggle to stay involved with our friends and communities. This internal focus fuels isolation and loneliness. Helping others has the pleasant side effect of distracting us from our concerns and boosting self-worth.

Next time you have the desire to withdraw, instead try reaching out: Give back to someone close to you, or to a cause important to you. You can give with your time, attention, effort or resources.

Remember that selfless giving can become problematic if we routinely dismiss our own needs for the benefit of others. If you are becoming stressed and resentful, it may be time to pull back and take care of yourself.



Ways to Practice

Offer attention and assistance to a friend in need.

Help a stranger who appears to be struggling.

Investigate volunteer opportunities that make use of your specific skills.

Send a gift or a thoughtful note to someone you care about.

Mentor someone who is looking to learn about something you have mastered.

Create something which will be helpful to others.

Donate resources to a local organization you support.

Plan an event for a group you are involved in.

Cook something delicious to share.

Spend time with a child, elderly or sick person.

Clean or organize a public space you are not responsible for.