

GENEROSITY PAYS: The Rewards of Generous Behavior

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We admire generous people. Fortunately, anyone can be generous. It's not necessary to be wealthy, talented, skilled, attractive, or even likable to be generous. Anyone has the ability to give something to others, even if it's just a shoulder to cry on.

What you might not realize is how much you gain by being generous to others.

You're not just helping someone else. You're helping yourself, too. Being generous has even been shown to add years to your life!

See how generosity pays off:

- 1. Self-esteem.** It feels good when you put your time, attention, or financial resources toward a worthy cause, or to just help a friend. It's proof to yourself that you're a good person. What could be better than that?
- 2. Relationships.** Your relationships improve when you're generous. After all, both parties should be getting something out of any relationship, or it's simply not a positive relationship.
 - When you're generous, the relationship is beneficial to the other person. You also feel good about yourself, which is actually a benefit to you, too. You both have more positive feelings about the relationship. You're also more likely to be on the receiving end of more generosity.
- 3. The more you give, the more you receive. When you're willing to help others, others are more willing to help you.** We feel obligated to reciprocate when we

receive assistance or a favor from someone else. If you're not willing to do something kind for others, you might be left wanting in your time of need.

4. **Abundance mindset.** When you're generous, you're sending the message that you believe there is enough for everyone. You don't feel the need to hoard your resources. **This is a powerful mindset that can greatly increase the odds of enjoying a fruitful life.**

5. **Generosity sets a good example for your children.** Your children are always watching you, even if you're convinced that they're not listening. When you demonstrate generous behavior, your children are more likely to be generous, too. This is good for your children's relationships and overall health.

6. **Generosity is good for your health and longevity.** Several university studies have shown that generosity decreases stress and depression. **It also increases life satisfaction and lowers the risk of mortality.**

The benefits of generosity aren't always easily measured, but they are certainly present.

Experts suggest that the more we are able to see the impact of our generosity on the lives of others, the more we gain from being generous. For example, helping a child directly will impact you greater than simply sending a check to a charity for an unspecified use.

An act of generosity takes your focus and attention off of yourself. This can be a well-deserved break from worrying about yourself and your challenges. It also reduces negative self-talk. Your thoughts are more positive while you're being generous.

There is a limit, however. It's not wise, nor healthy, to overextend yourself. **You're just as important as anyone else, and it's critical to remember that.** There are people that can be too generous. Harming yourself to help others isn't a viable

survival or success strategy.

Generosity is great for your physical and mental health. Generosity can be free, and it's good for both you and the recipient of your generosity. Give generosity a try and see how it works for you. Make it a policy to perform one act of generosity each day and notice the results. Generosity might become a habit!