

From lending an ear to providing a ride.



Oftentimes, simply listening is the best way to help. Other times, it's just getting someone from here to there. Volunteering can mean many different things, but the common thread is always about providing support. Working with individuals who need emotional support or companionship can be very rewarding for those you help, and for you. Why not start today by visiting VolunteerMatch? Bursting with thousands of options for volunteering, this comprehensive site is dedicated to pairing people with their volunteer interests. It's your chance not only to help create a healthier community, but also to help create a healthier you.

You might consider visiting a senior center.

Vibrant, active citizens with knowledge and experiences are waiting for you. Many of our elderly are alone. Many have days go by without much to say. But you can help change that. Engage in simple conversation a casual activity, and you may be surprised to find out things you never knew before. In addition, you'll be creating new friends and giving someone a person to talk to. Just stopping by could help brighten a mood or lift a spirit.

Emotional support can mean everything.

People in desperate trouble often feel they have nowhere left to turn, and that they have exhausted all their options. When their call for help comes, will you answer? Volunteering to work a crisis hotline means providing referrals to services an ear to listen, or taking steps to prevent actions such as a suicide. It's not easy,



and remaining calm is key. With proper training, this opportunity makes you a lifeline when people need it most.

Or you could just give them a ride.

The elderly and disabled have the same needs as everyone. They need to go to the doctor, the grocery store, and to get their hair cut. Most of us take these things for granted. But when you have trouble getting around, these simple tasks become monumental. If you have a car and a valid driver's license, you could provide much-needed mobility for people in your community. It's a great way to volunteer your time, and you never know who you'll meet along the way.

By volunteering your time, car, or even just your ears, you'll be helping the people in your area lead richer, fuller lives. And you may be surprised to find that it's healthier for you too. In fact, in a recent study, nearly all volunteers agreed that "volunteering improves

emotional health” (95%). That same study indicated that nine in ten volunteers agree that “volunteering has improved my sense of well-being” (89%). So, why not get involved today? There are a lot of great people to meet out there.

So you may be asking, “How do I get started volunteering with individuals who need emotional support?” Below, you’ll find some tips, questions and links to help find the right opportunity for you.

Some volunteering suggestions:

- Work at a crisis hotline.
- Visit a senior center.
- Provide transportation services for the elderly or disabled.
- Assist at a women’s shelter.
- Read to seniors.

Is this opportunity for you?

Some questions to ask yourself:

1. Am I a good listener?
2. Do I understand how a crisis hotline works?
3. Do I have a large capacity for empathy for other people?

Visit dogoodlivewell.org to start volunteering and make a real difference today.

You may also wish to visit:

- **National Council on Aging (ncoa.org)**
- **National Senior Citizens Law Council (nsclc.org)**
- **AARP Volunteering (aarp.org/giving-back/volunteering)**
- **Age UK (ageuk.org.uk)**

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