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The Helper's High

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Healthy Choices

The Helper's High

BY WINSTON CRAIG

Allan Luks in his book *The Healing Power of Doing Good* describes the positive feelings experienced by volunteer workers. Many of them reported that their health markedly improved when they were engaged in helping others, friends, or strangers. Ninety-five percent of those surveyed indicated that helping others and doing volunteer work on a regular basis gave them a warm feeling, increased energy, and actually gave them a sense of euphoria, called "the helper's high."

Furthermore, 80 percent of the volunteers reported that these same health benefits returned when they later reflected upon the acts of kindness. Volunteers also report they experience such positive long-term effects as a greater calm and relaxation. Focusing their attention upon the needs of others allows volunteers to forget about their own difficulties and problems. The result? Their moods brighten and their bodies are energized.

Paul admonishes us not to grow weary in doing good, but rather, as we have opportunity, to do good to all people (Galatians 6:9,10). Long ago the

Tips for doing good:

1. Volunteer to help in a local community project, or go on a mission outreach trip.
2. Help with fund-raising projects at the local school.
3. Tidy up the yard of an elderly shut-in.
4. Extend help to the poor and homeless.
5. Participate in a soup kitchen, big brother/big sister program, or similar community outreach.

prophet Isaiah suggested that those who give assistance to needy people (giving food to the hungry, shelter to the poor, and clothes to the destitute) would experience a surge of health and healing (Isaiah 58:7,8).

Doing good brings true satisfaction and pleasure to the giver. Those who unselfishly engage in the work of doing good will experience an improved physical and mental health (Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 2 (2T), p. 534; *Ministry of Healing*, p. 257). Doing good has been described as being an excellent remedy for disease (2T, p. 29).

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