



Simple ways to give back every day

Giving back to one's community strengthens towns and neighborhoods and makes them better places to live. Many people volunteer with local charitable organizations, while others make annual donations that help charities and nonprofits achieve their missions. Giving back to your community can require a big commitment, but there are simple ways to give back each day as well. Whether you're strapped for time and can't volunteer or simply want to do a little more than you already do to support your community, the following are some simple ways to give back every day.

- Support a local business. Many small businesses have suffered mightily since the outbreak of the novel coronavirus COVID-19. Such businesses help communities thrive in many ways, including employing local residents. According to The Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey, small firms with fewer than 100 employees employed roughly 70 percent of the Canadian population in 2017. In the United States, the Small Business Administration's Office of Advocacy reports that nearly 62 percent of the country's net new jobs between 1993 and 2016 were created by small businesses. By supporting such firms, whether it's ordering takeout or buying from local retailers instead of their big box competitors, men and women



are giving back to their communities while spending money they would be spending anyway.

- Help a neighbor. The pandemic turned many people's lives upside down, and some people have had to overcome long periods of isolation. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention notes that the elderly are at greater risk of getting seriously ill from COVID-19 than younger people, while those with preexisting conditions such as type 2 diabetes and

chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, or COPD, are at increased risk as well. Because of that heightened risk, such people have been urged to stay at home as much as possible. If you want to give back, offer to help at-risk neighbors with their grocery shopping or other errands that could put them in danger of getting sick. Another way to help at-risk neighbors is to visit them and keep them company. If you do so, wear a mask at all times and stay at least six feet away.

- Donate used items. Many people are still working from home full-time as employers remain hesitant to bring staff back into the office. That extra time at home has no doubt made people realize just how much clutter they have around the house. Rather than leaving items out at the curb for the garbage man to take away, donate lightly used clothing and still-function appliances to nearby charities. Unemployment figures remain high across the country, and more people than ever before are in need of affordable goods. Donating rather than discarding lightly used items can help the less fortunate in your community get through a very uncertain time.

Giving back to one's community does not require a significant commitment of time or resources. Simple things that can be done every day can strengthen communities and show support for your neighbors.

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