



Altruism is Good for Your Health!

by award-winning author / stress-relief expert Susie Mantell

*"Those among you who will be truly happy are those who have sought and found how to serve."
-Dr. Albert Schweitzer*

While walking down the beach, a man saw someone in the distance lean down, pick something up and throw it into the ocean. Coming closer, he saw thousands of starfish the tide had stranded on the beach. A young boy was picking the starfish up one by one and tossing each back into the ocean. After watching this seemingly futile effort, the man said, "There must be a thousand starfish on this beach. You can't possibly save enough to make a difference." The young boy smiled as he picked up another starfish and tossed it back into the ocean. "Sure made a difference to that one!" (*Anonymous Parable*)

Got Stress? Try this Pop Quiz:

1. One friend of mine who is experiencing stress is _____
2. I can see that its short-term impact is _____
3. I think its long-term impact could be _____
4. One way I could help would be to _____
5. How does my own mood change when I perform even a small kindness for another? _____
6. How might that enhance my own quality of life? _____

Feeling stressed? Try extending a hand to someone else...

Toddlers & Innate Altruism: A scientist dropped his clothespin. A wobbly toddler raced to eagerly hand it back. The capacity for altruism emerges as early as 18 months. www.msnbc.msn.com/id/11641621

Altruism & Depression: Research suggests that those who help others often report less depression, less pain and fewer doctor visits. www.mothenature.com/Library/Bookshelf/Books/44/72.cfm

*"Giving is a very good criterion of a person's mental health.
Generous people are rarely mentally ill people." -Karl A. Menninger, M. D.*

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