

After the height of the COVID 19 pandemic, we understood that social isolation had a negative impact on the community. We saw mental health challenges increase as well as loneliness. There were also significant impacts on our economy. I bring these thoughts to this essay because community service can positively affect the challenges mentioned above.

Throughout my essay I considered The Four-Way Test. In the paragraphs that follow I address by example is it fair to all concerned, will it build goodwill and better friendship, and will it be beneficial to all concerned. Is it the truth, this is my perspective on how volunteer work impacts me and I feel it is true.

I have found in my volunteer work that when I assist with childcare at the church I attend I see the value of volunteering. I see this building relationships and trust with children and their parents. By providing childcare during church, it gives the parents time to focus on their faith which can strengthen them and their families. I get to build trust with the children by playing with them, taking care of them and interacting with them.

I have seen community members come together to provide basic needs for those in our community who are struggling. I had the opportunity to help organize and stock food donations at a local food pantry. While participating in this event I have gained trust and rapport with the other volunteers. I was also able to see the incredible need for those living with food insecurity.

I've also been involved in volunteer work with older adults. The older adults I volunteered with had mobility challenges. My role was to assist in helping them to events of their choice. I learned how to connect with people who may have hearing, vision or memory issues related to aging. I was able to build rapport and learned older people are just like me. They have had good and bad experiences and still get up every morning. I would even consider some of them my friends.

I've also worked with an organization that provides blankets for children and animal shelters. This was a middle school club that was composed of 7th and 8th grade students. It is important to recognize that the school supported this community service project. I learned a lot about working together with other kids my age to have a positive impact on my community.

Will it build goodwill and better friendships? As you read how volunteer work has impacted me, you can see that these examples fit into goodwill and friendships. All of my volunteer work involves working with others. Is it fair to all concerned, will it be beneficial to all concerned is a little more challenging to answer. When I volunteer I don't want a person to feel less than because they are the recipient of my volunteer work. By partnering with persons who are recipients, this could build goodwill and friendships instead of the person feeling needy.

Since community service is part of my life, my social connections have increased. If others were able to participate in volunteering they could potentially see social connections increase when participating, it could combat social isolation and mental health issues.