
The Reasons For Charity

CHARITY

Charity is an act of benevolence. It is the practice of giving and sharing what we have with those who do not have. It means voluntary giving your help to those who need it. Acts of charity could be in form of cash, material gifts, quality time or kind words. It could be in the form of providing basic necessities like food, water, clothing, shelter, healthcare, education, occupation and security. You could give directly, volunteer for a charitable organization or invest in a charitable trust. The recipients of charity are often; the poor, beggars, orphans, widows, homeless, jobless, stranded, handicap, ailing or injured people. Recipients of charity could also be the people close to you who desperately need your help. Remember the saying, "Charity begins at home". If we can give to strangers, we should also be able to give to our very own. Every act of charity gives the recipients a lease to life and a hope for survival. Charity is a selfless act. Most people think it is solely a religious practice like an extension of almsgiving but, I do not agree. I think everybody should be able to display generosity at some point in their lives.

WHY SHOULD WE GIVE?

You may be wondering, "Why should I waste my money on someone else when I've got my own problems?"

I know right. I mean, what all the fuzz about anyway? It's not like their problems go away forever when you help them. They will always need your help and you will have to give out your hard earned money again and again and again. Just as you are battling with your thoughts, some other people are thinking that it is a tool for enabling poverty and encouraging laziness.

You must understand that we do not live in a perfect world. Everyone can never attain the same live of financial status. Even the bible says we shall always have the poor among us. It's not just a 3rd world country thing. If you conduct a thorough survey of developing and world power countries, you will find that there are still poor people among them. It is easy to get lost in our pile of problems or become overwhelmed by life's troubles and think our chicken change cannot make a difference. There will always be people out there who need your help. The least you can do is to offer that help them. I'm not asking you go overboard or donate all your wealth to charity. All I'm saying is take it one day at a time. Doing the little you can when you can is more than enough. Every little bit helps. If you do not have the means to give, you can volunteer for a charity organization.

Contrary to popular opinion, you stand to gain a lot by being generous. The giver is rewarded as much as the recipient. Some even say it has health benefits and it boosts our mental well-being. In fact, people who live in developed country are given tax breaks for participating in acts of charity.

The Ripple Effect of Kindness

Charity works for the greater good of the society. We are often told not to expect anything in return when we show kindness to people. That is the best approach so our expectations are not disappointed. Whoever you help today is really under no obligation to repay or reciprocate. In fact, if that is your reason for giving or helping in the first place, then you are missing the point. That is not the purpose of charity. Charity is helping people even when you know they do not have the capacity to repay you. However, there is something occurs when we are kind to people. Some sort of ripple effect occurs. You know how you dip your finger into a bowl of water and the entire water is stirred. Another scenario is when a drop of water stirs the entire ocean. That is a ripple effect and kindness causes that kind of effect. Humanity is connected in more ways than we can imagine. Charity produces a ripple effect that effects every single individual in this planet.

When we show kindness to people, we create a chain reaction which causes that kindness to find its way back to us. It's like the law of attraction of the universe. What we constantly think about or desire becomes ours. What you do also comes back to you. It doesn't just apply to karma. It applies to everything we do. The good we do always has a way of coming back to us. Perhaps not through the same people or in the same manner but it always comes back. So you see, it really is better to give than to receive.

Here's another way the ripple effect works. It produces kindness in people. Sometimes, when we do good to people that are overwhelmed by our act of kindness that they feel the need to do same for others. So as a sign of gratitude, they vow to help some other person who may need their help in future. One little act of kindness gives birth to several other acts of kindness. Remember I said it is a chain reaction. That is the philosophy behind the phrase, "Pay it forward". So instead of repaying that act of charity 'back' to you, they pay it 'forward' to another person. This way, that act of charity is passed on from one person to the other until it spreads to the whole world. Won't it be good to live in a world where everyone is kind and generosity to each other? I think it will make the world a better. So sometimes, when people are good to us for no reason in particular, do not be quick to conclude that it was a divine orchestration of favour or grace. It could just be that they are paying their gratitude forward.

Our charitable actions can compel or inspire others to do same. Yes, you may not know it but someone is watching you. Now these people are not even in the original chain reaction. They are just people who observe and admire of acts of generosity either from a close range or a far and they are inspired to do same. Your good works begins to stir up their passion. Even if they once had reservations about charity, as they watch and see the joy you bring to people through those good deeds, they will begin to see the need to do same. These people could be your spouse, friends, family members, colleagues, distant relations, neighbors, flat mates, roommates, classmates, acquaintances, church members, business partners, mentee or even your secret admirers.

Let's not also forget your children. We keep saying that they are leaders of tomorrow, but what are we teaching them to do differently from the leaders of today. You can start by sharing your charity experiences and exploits with them. Research shows that children learn better through observation than mere words. They will listen if you tell them to do something but it does not guarantee that they will do it. However, if they see you doing it, they are most likely to do same. Promote generosity among your children. Teaching them the importance of charity at an early age shows them that they too can make positive impact in the world. It helps build that virtue in them early enough before they are exposed to the toxins in this world. When they watch you

give to the less privileged, they are more likely to adopt that lifestyle when they are grown. They will grow up a greater sense of care towards other people and a heart of gratitude for what they have. It could even become a transitional family ritual.

Generosity is contagious. One simple act of charity can change the course of the world.

Character Building

Charity is a great way of building ourselves and reinforcing our own personal values. Charity helps us build our social conscience and a sense of moral duty towards each other. This is one act that builds up our personal values and principles. It causes us to live a life that truly reflects the ethics and values we profess. It opens our eyes to see the suffering and vulnerability of others. It makes us recognize our own good fortune. It helps us to become grateful for the little we can afford while being careful not to hurt people in our quest for more. That is why prisoners and youth corps members are encouraged to participate in community development. That is the first step to building our sense of responsibility and obligation.

Charity also improves our interpersonal and social interaction skills. We truly need to create human connection during our acts of charity. You can't just walk up to people frowning and twitching your nose and then you tell them that you came to help them. Listen, they already have a lot they are dealing with. Do not add your nasty attitude to the list. You are there to uplift their spirit not pull them down. You have to show them warmth and care. The only you can do that is by being friendly towards them. It helps you become more humble and polite when relating with other people. Participating in acts of charity also helps to boost our self-esteem and self-confidence. We become more appreciative of our lives and the things we are privileged to possess. It gradually debunks our negative outlook to life. It changes our mindset and perception completely.

Charity is a good tool for financial management. When we plan our charity goals, we need to make a financial commitment to it. If we really want to achieve that goal, we would have to include it in our monthly financial budget. It makes us pay closer attention to our bank statements. We begin to track our expense to avoid running behind the estimated budget.

A Sense of Fulfillment

Charity gives us a sense of fulfillment. People who give are happier people. It brings a great deal of joy and contentment to us. Psychologists say it activates the pleasure centre in our brains. Isn't it lovely to see the smile on their faces? Inasmuch as we hate to admit it. It makes us feel good about ourselves. It gives our life more meaning. We actually rise by lifting others and that's what charity gives us the opportunity to do. The knowledge of our own goodwill overwhelms us with this sense of happiness and satisfaction. Being able to improve the lives of other people in our own little or big way is fulfilling. It gives us a great sense of personal satisfaction. Is it okay for us to pride in ourselves for participating in impacting the world positively through charity? Well, I will say it never hurts to applaud yourself once in a while. It is a sign that you are enjoying what you're doing. It even propels you to do more. If you do not enjoy the moment you share with those people while helping them, it's only a matter of time before irritability and grumbling sets in. It's just the same way we feel happy after eating, playing, swimming, vacationing, shopping or participating in fun activities. Charity could be your

own way of fulfilling purpose.

Don't get caught up in the life's problems and troubles that you can't spare a minute to display a single act of kindness to someone who needs it.

LITTLE DRPOS OF LOVE

...Simple ways of practicing charity

I choose to call acts of charity "little drops of love" because these seemingly simple things we do to help the less privileged creates a special effect in their heart. That is the true evidence of love. A love that only boasts of what it can do without actually doing is not love at all. A love that only gives for the benefits that will be given in return is not love. A love that has terms and conditions for its expression is a lot of things but deficiently not love. The love I know is kind, selfless, sacrificial and unconditional. Like wonder they love is not just a feeling. It is a decision. It is a decision to open our hearts to give care and support to someone without expecting anything in return. Small acts of kindness can have enormous impact on the recipient. It may seem like a mere gesture to you but it means everything to them. It feels like doing less but it actually brings us more. It is regenerative in an amazing way. It is a medicine for true happiness. These little gestures count. Jordan Carroll said,

"Sometimes it is actually the smallest gestures that can make the biggest impact"

What is your excuse for not charitable? You do need to become mega millionaire before you can practice little acts of kindness. All you need are these easy, simple and inexpensive practices.

Occasionally, you should go through your properties and select item you've not used in a long time. They could be items you do not like. Or items you have no need for. Select such items and give them to people who really need them. Moreover, decluttering your living space will do you some good. It is a remedy to excessive attachment to material things.

In this part of the world, we always seem to be in a hurry. We are so into ourselves. All we care about is how to satisfy our immediate needs that we do not take cognizance of the people around us. It must be "Me, Myself and I or we won't hear of it. While you are in a haste to make ends meet, pause for a minute and give these ones priority over yourself. It is as simple as letting someone take your turn on the queue in the bank, supermarket or at an office. Yes, it is as simple as letting them go first. Who knows? Their own emergency may be more serious than yours.

When you go grocery shopping or any other activities, do not spend the little change that remains on snacks or other frivolities. Save them up consistently. When they must be accumulated into a handsome amount, give them to someone who needs them. It could be that relative who has money problems or the beggar on the street who is not sure of his breakfast that morning. You could also engage in monthly donations, giving activities in your local church and volunteering for charitable organizations. If you do not want to give in cash, you could think of several options. You could decide to give them random gift little gifts like; Books, cards, clothes, health care support etc.

You could participate in this challenge. Spare 5 minutes in a day to do something nice for someone you barely know. Doing this will instill the habit of kindness in our hearts.

Whatever you say must be a true reflection of your heart. You may not know what they are going through but your kind words. Let every compliment you pay to people be heartfelt. It should resonate with their hearts and put a smile on their face.

The disposal of leftover food in a waste dump it is an awful sight to behold. You may not need that food but there are many people out there who desperately need it. Don't store your food items in the fridge for them to soil. Wrap up leftovers and unwanted food items. Walk into the streets and you will find someone who truly needs them.

Try practicing charity whenever you have the opportunity. You won't regret for get him.

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