



Wellbeing

Feeling good

Doing good does us good

Doing good does us good. That sounds almost too good to be true, right? But it is true. Think back to the last time you helped somebody and recall how it made you feel. Think about the smallest acts of kindness you have shown to others over recent weeks. It is highly unlikely that any of us would say that helping others caused us to feel like a bad person. It is much more likely that we would say we felt kind, or generous. We might say that it made us feel happy or more content and even more alive.

So doing good really does do us good.

According to the [Mental Health Foundation there are five reasons](#) why this is the case;

1. Helping others feels good.

This is because when we do, it activates the parts of our brain associated with pleasure, releasing endorphins which are responsible for giving us feelings of happiness and joy. Sometimes it gets called the 'Helper's High'!

2. It creates a sense of belonging and reduces isolation.

We know this to be true, don't we? We want to help, and we want to belong. Think about the outpouring of care across our communities during the COVID-19 pandemic as well as the endless social media methods being used to stay in touch. Acts of kindness are a way we build our connectedness with one another.

3. It helps keep things in perspective.

When we help others, it enables us to see more than just our own world and so learn to appreciate different things and, as a result, develop a more positive and more hopeful outlook. Not only that but it also breeds gratitude and gratitude breeds joy! The more grateful we are the more joyful we feel.

4. Paying it forward is real!

In the movie 'Pay it Forward' a young student devises this understanding and practice of kindness where it becomes contagious – the practice is to pay kindness forward. There is a ripple effect - one good deed actually does lead to another – so when we help others we are helping to make the world a happier and better place.

5. The more you do for others the more you do for yourself.

Researchers suggest that helping others through acts of kindness has a positive impact on our physiological wellbeing – which includes reducing our stress levels and lowering our blood pressure.

It's important to remember that doing good doesn't need to be complex. It can be the smallest and most simple of things – like giving a compliment to as many people as you can, or paying for someone's coffee without them knowing, or writing someone a card, leaving a surprise gift for someone, or donating some food to your local Food Bank.

What acts of kindness can you do this week? Make a plan and have some fun carrying it out. You will feel great! And why not see if you can get others to join in.