**Edgewater Village Chicago**

**Volunteering Is Better For You   
Than You Think**

1. **Builds Communities**  – According to the Corporation for National & Community Service, you strengthen your community and your social network when you volunteer. *You make connections with the people you are helping, and you cultivate friendships with other volunteers.*
2. **Ends Loneliness** – The Campaign to End Loneliness says that close to 45 percent of people in the U.S. and the U.K. admit to feeling lonely. On top of that, one in ten adults reports that they have no close friends*. Loneliness and social isolation are two of the most severe epidemics in the world today*. The simplest way to reverse this? Volunteer!
3. **Increases Socializing** – Socially, the benefits of volunteering show up quickly and have long-term effects. Social interaction improves mental and physical health, according to Psychology Today. *The benefits of consistent socializing include better brain function and lower risk for depression and anxiety.* You also improve your immune system.
4. **Builds Bonds, Creates Friends** – Volunteering creates stronger bonds between friends. People build closer relationships, better connections, and more powerful attachments to people when they work together. If you feel the need for deeper connections with other people, try volunteering. You might just live longer and be happier.
5. **Improves Self-Esteem** – When likeminded adults volunteer, they develop increased self-esteem, confidence, and feelings of self-worth. Imagine the benefits to those who volunteer and to those who benefit from your efforts of generosity and caring. Volunteering could be life-changing.
6. **Promotes Longevity** – While everyone benefits from a little boost in physical health, long-term volunteers have longer lives, less disease, and better overall health. One report says that people who volunteer over 100 hours a year are some of the healthiest people in the U.S.

Alzheimer’s disease has become a frightening possibility for millions of individuals in the U.S. and globally. However, some research has shown that people who volunteer may be at lower risk of dementia.

Studies from the Journal of Gerontology indicate that social service improves elasticity in the brain. As volunteers age, they may be able to maintain the connections in their brains that often break down in Alzheimer’s patients. Any social interaction can help delay or prevent Alzheimer’s, and volunteering can be a wonderful way to do that.

1. **Volunteering Adds Fun to Your Years** – Volunteering and freely giving your time, energy, and resources to people and causes can create change on a global scale. It is incredible to think that one person’s efforts can change the life of someone else. However, the best part, and often overlooked is that volunteering is just plain fun.

The mission of the Edgewater Village Chicago is to engage and support older adults, enhancing their quality of life as they age, so they remain active and contributing members of the community.

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