

The Gift of Yourself

This holiday season is a good time to think about the tradition of giving, rather than receiving. Especially when budgets are stretched to their limits, making a personal or family decision to emphasize what you can do for others can add meaning to your holidays and boost your own happiness and self-worth.

There are many opportunities to give the gift of yourself during this season and all year long. Make it a family project by choosing projects that your children can participate in, too. Projects can range from working at an organized event to something as simple as running an errand for an elderly neighbor. Here are some ways to offer your services:

- > Volunteer at a food bank, soup kitchen or homeless shelter.
- > Visit a nursing home; have your kids create cards and crafts to bring as gifts.
- > Cook a meal for an elderly friend or relative.
- > Extend an invitation to someone who has no place to go for the holidays.
- > Shovel snow or do yard work for an elderly or disabled friend.
- > Donate gently used clothing, toys and books to a shelter.
- > Teach someone to read through a volunteer literacy program.
- > Have a food or clothing drive in your neighborhood or at your children's school.
- > Volunteer at an animal shelter.
- > Organize a group to clean up and beautify your neighborhood.
- > Take part in a charity run, walk or bike ride to raise money for a good cause.
- > Volunteer at a museum or zoo.
- > Build houses for the homeless or playgrounds for children.
- > Put your talents and professional skills to good use. If you are fluent in a second language, play an instrument or have computer or other skills, offer your services to a nonprofit organization.

To find volunteer opportunities in your community, contact city or state government offices, local nonprofits, schools and religious organizations. You can also find additional resources by calling 1.800.VOLUNTEER or going online to www.1-800-volunteer.org.

Additional Information

This information is brought to you by ComPsych® GuidanceResources®. This company-sponsored benefit offers confidential help and support 24 hours a day, 7 days per week, at no cost to you or your immediate family. Our Guidance Consultants can assist you with your concerns at: **877-627-4239**
Online: www.guidanceresources.com Enter your company ID: **MAP_4_IBEW**

