



CARE's WorkLife Solutions

Toll Free 866.888.1555

www.caresworklifesolutions.com

The Benefits of Community Service

Many mental health professionals recommend that patients with grief or loss issues or depression volunteer for a community project. It may sound strange, reaching out to help others when you yourself need care, but it's right medicine nonetheless. Volunteering can bring a greater sense of purpose and pride, which can lift self-esteem. Further, it can lift spirits and lead to new skills and meaningful relationships. Families that volunteer together may be establishing traditions that can last beyond a generation. To learn about volunteer opportunities in your community, call the United Way. You might also ask a friend where s/he volunteers; volunteering with a friend can make volunteering a healthy habit.

"But I don't have time," you say? Then consider these tips from the Macomb Homeless Coalition (MHC). MHC's mission is outreach and advocacy for the homeless and hungry. Adopting these monthly tips through the year may give you a better understanding of the problems facing the homeless and hungry and compel you to do even more.

January — Estimates are that 12 million children go hungry in the US each day. Donate the cost of one restaurant meal to a food bank.

February — Write a letter to the editor to raise awareness of homelessness and hunger-related issues.

March — Eat your evening meal by candlelight, and think of ways you can better conserve energy. Make a donation to a utility assistance program.

April — Donate one day of your time to collect donations or to stock shelves at a local food bank.

May — Homeless people often don't have beds. Donate bedding, towels, pillows and personal care items to a homeless shelter.

June — When you grocery shop, buy extra nonperishable food for a food bank. Buy your favorites instead of unloading unwanted items.

July — Spend a day of your summer vacation, helping the homeless or hungry.

August — Many children start the new school year without basic supplies. Donate these supplies or children's clothing to schools.

September — Many children come from families that cannot afford breakfast. Skip breakfast one day this month and learn how it feels. Then, donate the cost of your breakfast to a homeless shelter or food bank.

October — Donate gift certificates to a restaurant or grocery store to an agency that serves the homeless. Make it your 'trick or treat.'

November — Tax time reminder: Donate extra clothes and household goods. The donation may be tax deductible.

December — Give a gift to a homeless shelter.