

Helping Helps

Creativity applied to anxiety (Activity 7/12)

DESCRIPTION

Volunteering is rewarding. Even if we think that the most important thing is what we bring to the beneficiaries of the voluntary work, in many cases the sense of purpose, connection and self-confidence boost it brings to the volunteer has an equal value. Some kinds of voluntary tasks may be also good for cognitive abilities and preventing dementia. There are lots of possibilities to volunteer for seniors, either attending events of support or as a permanent activity.

Getting involved in volunteering can also help to reduce anxiety as well as helping tackle loneliness or sadness.

OBJECTIVES

Reducing anxiety by:

1. Enhancing wellbeing with a positive impact on mental health
2. Increasing the sense of purpose, life satisfaction, self-confidence
3. Increasing the sense of belonging and strengthening social networks
4. Enhancing intergenerational dialogue and connection.

There are a lot of studies emphasizing that volunteering in elder age can have a positive impact and also meet these objectives.

RESOURCES AND MATERIALS

When implementing a volunteering programme it's recommended to research and prepare a list of local possibilities for seniors such as in NGOs and institutions, voluntary centers, foundations, associations, museums, municipal and city offices, and so on.



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IMPLEMENTATION

1. The volunteering tasks that the senior will undertake must be tailored to their capabilities, skills and the needs of the other party.
2. Voluntary work and the senior's help may be needed and expected in many areas - e.g. in social welfare, health care, education, culture, ecology, sport. Just as there are a wide variety of places where volunteers help out, there are also a great many activities that they can do, e.g. caring for the sick, giving free tutoring, organizing festivals, exhibitions, doing office work, assisting events.
3. A volunteer may be responsible for a specific task or a part of an activity/project, e.g. running thematic activities (e.g. cooking, embroidery, history), addressing envelopes, consulting in an area in which you have experience, or coordinating an activity, such as running a discussion club, a community centre, or organising a special event.
4. As volunteering among seniors is becoming more and more popular, here are some guides (in different languages) for seniors on how to become a volunteer:

- a. PL - Guide for seniors – how to become volunteer?

http://bibliotekawolontariatu.pl/wp-content/uploads/poradnik_seniora_wolontariat.pdf

- b. SP – Volunteering for elders. How to promote and manage participation in voluntary action:

<http://www.madrid.org/bvirtual/BVCM007221.pdf>

- c. ENG – Age-friendly and inclusive volunteering”

<https://ageing-better.org.uk/sites/default/files/2019-05/Age-friendlyandinclusivevolunteeringfinalprint.pdf>

On life-long learning, volunteering, intergenerational exchange, consultation and participation of older persons in Europe

https://www.age-platform.eu/sites/default/files/AGE_Barometer-2021-FINAL.pdf



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EXPECTED RESULTS

- increased sense of purpose
- increased wellbeing and reduced anxiety
- increased overall life satisfaction.



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