



How Can I Help?

Like many of you, I remember how galvanizing the attacks of September 11, 2001, were for communities around our country. I saw people helping each other with no expectation of getting anything in return. In the first days of the COVID-19 pandemic, we are seeing people come together in a similar manner. Clearly this pandemic is going to continue to impact our families and communities for the foreseeable future, so what can we do to keep the positive momentum of community-building?

Below is a list of ideas for how to help your community and neighborhood.

Community

- **Donate to a local food bank.** As people lose their jobs or are not able to work, there is going to be a higher demand placed on local food banks.
- **Buy gift cards for local restaurants and business.** Wal-Mart, Olive Garden, and McDonald's are not going anywhere, but most locally owned businesses get by week-to-week, and a gift card is like a zero-interest loan.
- **Tip generously.** Many servers and bartender will face job losses, and it may take time for them to have income coming in.
- **Schedule virtual happy hours.** If you are used to meeting up with a book group or co-workers after work, continue to do that via Skype or Google Hangouts.
- **Volunteer.** Do what you can to help. The opportunities will vary based on where you live.
- **Ask people what their biggest survival need is and how you can help.** People can be afraid to ask for help, which means we need to be willing to offer that help.
- **Communicate with people that you do not want to be part of any potential misinformation.** Misinformation can negatively impact a community and we need to stand our ground against rumors and innuendos.
- **Don't over shop.** Get only what you need so others can also get what they are going to need.

The Village EAP is taking COVID-19 very seriously and we are working to provide the best continued services to you. If you feel like you or an employee could benefit from talking to a counselor and have our EAP contract, please contact The Village EAP at 1-800-627-8220 to access your free and confidential sessions. We are here so you don't have to go it alone.

Neighborhoods

- **Check in with your neighbors, especially the elderly.** Offer to pick up supplies so they don't have to go out. Take them to appointments; be aware of social distancing by having them ride in the back seat. Pick up their prescriptions.
- **Call your elderly neighbors to alleviate any loneliness.** Your check-in can be a lifeline to someone who has become isolated.
- **Help them with any technology questions** so they can Skype or Google Hangout with family.
- **Drop off books or magazines you've already read for neighbors to enjoy.** Just leave them on the doorstep with a note.
- **If a neighbor must work, offer to watch their kids so they don't have to take time off.** Being able to leave your children with a trusted neighbor allows those essential employees to focus on their jobs.
- **Make a meal or treats for people in the neighborhood.** We all like treats and if we don't have to do dishes, that is even better!
- **Make quarantine kits.** We can only watch so much Netflix or read so many books before our brains begin to demand a challenge. These kits can include:
 - Jigsaw puzzles
 - Coloring books and crayons
 - Puzzle and logic books
 - Cookie and brownie mixes (if you don't want to eat them, deliver them to neighbors)
- **Leave an uplifting note in someone's mailbox or in their door.** It's a great way to use up all those Hallmark cards you never sent! Get your kids involved in making cards to send to friends and family.

In times of uncertainty there may be a feeling that this is never going to end but remember that it will. We are all having similar feelings of insecurity and anxiety. When we reach out to support and uplift one another, we help replace fear with hope and connection. Remember, we're all in this together, and we don't have to go it alone.

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