MUTUAL SERVICES

Healthy Intel

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Everyone benefits from volunteering

Volunteering is the act of giving of your time to serve other people without being paid. It has benefits for the person providing the help, and the community. It gives individuals a sense of purpose, community and belonging, and provides an opportunity to build long-lasting social connections with like-minded people.

What are the benefits of volunteering?

Volunteering improves your mood and increases your sense of satisfaction and happiness and can even lower mortality rates. The health benefits from volunteering are significant, especially for the older generation, however research tells us that anyone who volunteers may experience improvements in their mental health, physical health, and social wellbeing.

Mental health

- Reduced stress
- Increased happiness and satisfaction
- Reduced symptoms of depression and anxiety

Physical health

- Reduced risk of chronic disease
- Increased physical activity (role dependent)
- Improved sleep quality

Social wellbeing

- Sense of purpose and belonging
- Stronger social connections
- Builds social capital

Below are some other benefits of volunteering

- Supporting important causes
- Provide purpose in retirement / spare time
- Connect with other people
- Learn about different cultures
- Give back to the community
- Learn new skills
- Gain experience to improve chances of employment
- Make a difference

Types of volunteering

There are two types of volunteering, informal and formal volunteering.

Informal volunteering would include helping family and friends with home repairs, gardening or babysitting, while formal volunteering is through a charity or community organisation.

Finding the right volunteering for you

Regardless of your background, skills, experience, and time you have available, there are roles to suit everyone. The first step to prepare yourself for volunteering is to think about the following:

- The type of volunteering you would like to participate in
- Your interests and passions and the type of organisations you would like to volunteer with
- What you hope to gain from your volunteering experience
- How much time you have available to contribute as a volunteer
- How regularly you want to volunteer such as one-off, weekly or monthly

Where can I volunteer?

Volunteers make significant and important contributions to Australian society. Some examples of places where you can volunteer include:

- Hospitals
- Aged care
- Local school
- Community events
- Environmental groups
- Food bank services
- Community centres / social groups
- Playing fields and community sport

Getting started with volunteering

- Visit the Volunteering WA website – www.volunteeringwa.org.au
- Check out your local government's initiatives, there will be plenty of opportunities in your local community.
- Visit your favourite charities website; organisations such as Starlight Children's Foundation, OzHarvest, Australian Red Cross, Lifeline or the Vinnies are always looking for a helping hand.

OR

- Simply ask your friends and family what they do

Moroccan sweet potato soup

This warming soup is perfect for cool winter days. Perfect as meal prep, make a large batch and freeze some for lunch or share with family, friends and neighbours.

Serves 8 | Prep 5 mins | Cook: 15 mins

Ingredients list

Mince mix

- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 3 medium orange sweet potatoes, cut into small pieces
- 2 zucchini
- 400g tin of lentils, drained
- 1 tsp salt reduced vegetable stock
- 2 tbsp Moroccan spice
- 2 cups water
- 3 tbsp plain Greek yoghurt, to serve (optional)
- 2 tbsp pumpkin seeds to garnish (optional)

Method

- Place oil into a large pot on high heat. Once hot add sweet potato, zucchini, lentils, stock and spice and stir well. Cook for 10 – 15 minutes.
- Add water and allow to simmer. Once potato is soft blend mixture. Either use a stick blender in the pot or transfer to a blender.
- To serve drizzle with Greek yoghurt and top with pumpkin seeds.

Notes:
Trying to get more veggies into your diet? You can add extra veggies to this recipe think onion, carrots, or celery. At the end, after blending, you can also stir through some English spinach or finely chopped kale to add greens and texture.

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The LGIS WorkCare Services team are specialist health and wellbeing professionals.

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