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Community Service comes in all shapes, sizes, and forms. It entails people helping others. From BiG charity organizations to people just like you. Contributing to your community means giving back for a good cause. Whether it's helping a charity fundraiser, donating your time, or making a donation. This guidebook offers lots of ideas for how to “Give Back” because it is something generous you can do, easily, on a daily basis. So let's jump right into these activities!

## Who Does Community Service?

When we think of community service we often think of big organizations such as Goodwill or Red Cross. However, there are lots of other community industries that benefit others. Begin by naming community service charities/organizations and then write a few words to tell how they benefit others. Fill in this chart using your knowledge—or use the Internet to research.

Name of Charity	Purpose/Benefit to Others	Charities Known Only in Your Community

# Community Service Starts with YOU!

While many organizations serve citizens needs on many levels, the bottom line is charity begins with each one of us. Giving back feels good, because we know it's the right thing to do. Fill in the circles on this focus wheel below. Write your feelings of why it feels good when you do community service. To identify your feelings, recall a time someone did something for you, or when you helped another.



# The Things in Your Path

There are a lot of things YOU can do to help out your community where you live. For example: If you see empty pop cans on the side of the road, you can pick them up and recycle them. Many states have can deposits so they may even be worth some money.

Fill out just the middle column—for now—on the chart below for things you may see along your path. Write down how you can- or would deal with each incident for the benefit of your community.

Things in Your Path	What Are You Going to Do About IT?	Assess & Assign
Along the road where you live, you see a full 30 gallon trash bag filled with lawn clippings.		
While driving to work on a 60 mph freeway you spot a dead deer.		
At school the lunch trash is overrun. Many lunch sacks have spilled over onto the floor right where people walk.		
On a rural road at a spot known for dumping animals you see a skinny puppy looking lost and abandoned.		
In a supermarket lot you see grocery carts overturned about in the middle of an intersection as you are walking to the store.		
You are a passenger on a bus and notice someone left their laptop on a seat by you.		
You just about slipped in dog poop left on a popular hiking trail.		

You see two people trespassing on your neighbors property which is clearly marked NO Trespassing.		
At a shopping mall a crying 5 year old boy comes up to you and says he is lost.		
At a jewelry counter the person next to you forgets her new purchase and walks off.		

## Can You Take Care of It Yourself?

There are many times you can contribute to a cause and take care of it yourself. (1)

Sometimes you see a situation, but cannot resolve it. Here are some reasons you may not be able to take care of a community concern:

- It's dangerous, and not safe for you to handle it. (2)
- There are community agencies that handle these situations. (3)
- Even though you are concerned it may not be your issue to handle. (4)

If the above is a case that another agency or person can resolve the community issue you still can help out:

- Call the agency who can help. If you don't know you can always call information or 911 if you believe it to be an immediate or pending safety issue. (5)
- Contact the entity directly affected to alert them to the situation. (6)

## Assess and Assign

Complete the "Things in Your Path" exercise. Go back to the third column labeled "Assess & Assign". After reviewing the items above, assign the code- or codes- in brackets to each situation above that fits your assessment of the situation.

For instance, the dead deer on the highway would be assigned (2) because it is not safe for people to remove a carcass from a high traffic road. (3) would also be assigned as there are agencies equipped to handle this, such as animal control. (5) is also appropriate as you should alert the proper agency.

# Assessing Sticky Situations

While you may have a big heart and may be someone who enjoys lending a helping hand, sometimes you need to assess questionable situations. Perhaps you do not have the resources to help out. Or there may be times you have the resources to help, and don't. Every circumstance is different.

Every charitable situation needs to be quickly assessed to make a decision whether it's the right thing to do for you to become involved. Here are some awkward situations. Write your assessment based on only the facts given and tell whether you would help out, or not, and why. Explain your reasoning.

Situation 1: You have stopped at a freeway rest stop. There are three middle-aged men dressed in shabby clothes sitting in metal folding chairs. One man has a sign that says 'Need Gas Money'. Another man holds a sign that says 'Need Food'. The third man is playing a guitar with a visible money tip jar. They are sitting in the same area, but it is not obvious if the men are together. Would you give to one, two or all three of them? What would you give if you decided to give so. Explain your reasoning.

Your Assessment:

Your Decision:

Situation 2: You often see an older man sitting in the entrance cafe when shopping at the local supermarket. He is unshaven with scruffy hair, his clothes are sort of dirty, but he bothers no one. He just sits and reads old newspapers. You have been told that the store lets him sit in the cafe during the cold weather during open hours. You don't know his situation, but it is obvious he is homeless. Would you offer any help to this man? If so, what type of help? Why or why not?

Your Assessment:

Your Decision:

Situation 3: You are at the counter of your local animal shelter. Someone comes in with two cat carriers. She tells the intake clerk that a mother cat adopted her backyard shed recently and had a litter of 5 kittens. She cannot keep the cats because she is allergic to cat hair—and she does not have the funds to care-take them. So with good intention she brought them to the shelter in hopes to give the cat and kittens a chance to get good homes. The intake clerk tells this woman that they will accept all the cats at a charge of \$15 per cat. The woman becomes upset because she wants to do the right thing, but does not have the money to pay the shelter. She thought the animal shelter would accept these cats freely. The clerk holds firm to their rules. The woman says she will be forced to let the cats go at an abandoned barn nearby because she does not have the resources to pay this shelter, or keep them herself. She is frustrated on what to do because abandoning the cats means they will have to fend for themselves; most likely become feral; and populate with more unwanted kittens. As a volunteer you have listened to the whole story. Will you get involved?

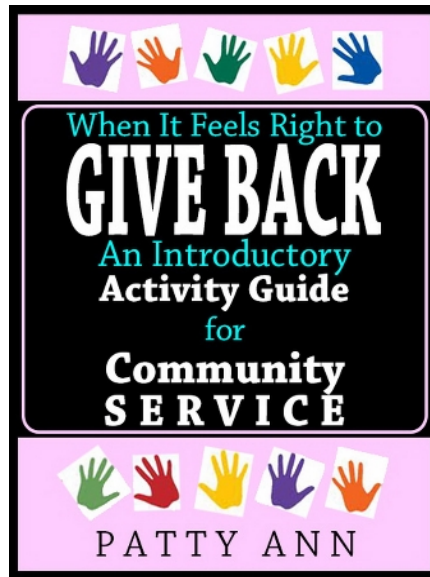
Your Assessment:

Your Decision:

Situation 4: Make up your own situation regarding community service needs that you see, have witnessed, or have encountered. Write it down here to share for discussion time with classmates.

*This concludes our activity guide introduction to GIVING BACK.  
Remember, you are a part of any community you live in—and  
community service even on the smallest scale starts with YOU!*

**Thank YOU for Enjoying**



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