

4 Tips That Will Help You Have A Positive Impact On Your Community

Be a good person, y'all.

Updated 01/06/2017 5:28 PM AEST

[Paul Ewart](#)



Whether you define 'community' as the area you live in, the place you work, your religion, a yoga group, or all of the above, community -- and inclusion in it -- can become the lifeblood of our changing world.

And as social beings who often live away from our parents and families, it's more important than ever.

"We know from one of our longest studies that what really makes us happy boils down to connections with other people - our community," principal psychologist at Blue Horizon Counselling Yuliya Richard said.

Outside of the obvious helping others aspect, there's an array of personal benefits too.

"It boosts your confidence," life coach at Upstairs Coaching Alex Kingsmill said. "Knowing that you can make a difference encourages a strong sense of self-belief. And contributing to your community can deliver a strong and incredibly beneficial sense of purpose."

Here are five easy ways to do it...

1. Help Clean Up

Building a clean community starts at home with simple habits such as recycling and maintaining a clean backyard, but to really transform your neighbourhood you'll need manpower. Either take charge and encourage your fellow residents to tackle a project -- painting an unsightly wall, for example -- or join an existing initiative, such as [Responsible Runners](#).

A national non-profit organisation, Responsible Runners integrates running and walking with weekly cleanups to reduce marine debris, build stronger communities and raise awareness.

"By getting together we connect with like-minded people whose efforts collectively help rid our beaches of waste," spokesperson Cath Leach said. "There's something about standing shoulder to shoulder with others who want to contribute that boosts the soul, plus we keep fit!"



2. Try Being A Mentor



"Mentoring is a way to share your area of core expertise with someone who can value the insights you've had over the course of your life and career," founder, [Leading Well Group](#) Vanessa Fudge said.

"For the person being mentored it's invaluable to hear the struggles and breakthroughs that you've had and the wisdom of your hindsight. And it can help you gain insight on your own journey and see how it has shaped you today."

Especially significant for young people, mentoring can provide a positive role model during critical formative years.

3. Offer Your Skills -- Whatever They May Be

You don't need to do something that doesn't come naturally or something that will bore in order to engage with your community. In fact, you likely already have a skill that's of value.

"Sometimes community organisations do need people to invest time into packing products or completing admin," life and confidence coach at [Heart Sparks](#) Johanna Park said. "But many would benefit so much more from a donation of your professional skills and expertise."



Consider teaching classes on entrepreneurship, or 'how to's' for those who have been out of work for awhile. Got a green thumb? Why not build a community garden. Playing to your strengths is something coach, hypnotherapist and speaker, [Nick Terrone](#), advocates.

"I offer free talks and meditation classes at my local neighbourhood centre," Terrone said. "Its a great way to meet people and if they connect with you, they may become clients too - win win!"

4. Be Friendly



"Being warm, open and caring can have a direct impact and has been shown to have a positive influence on both you and others," psychologist at [Sunshine Coast Clinical Psychology](#), Dr Samantha Clarke said.

Introduce yourself to someone you don't know, strike up conversation with the barista at your local cafe, shout someone a muffin, offer to look after a neighbour's cat or dog -- the list goes on. These actions have been shown to have a knock on affect, meaning we can encourage others to behave positively by our own actions, especially the next generation - children learn by example.