

Microvolunteering

Cause Aligned Actions

For

It Starts With Us



help
from
home

Change
the world in
just your pyjamas

www.helpfromhome.org/

It Starts With Us



Introduction

Microvolunteering can be described as 'easy, low commitment actions that benefit a worthy cause, where the main bulk of the task can be completed on demand in one or more sessions of upto 30 minutes, either from a person's home or on the go. The term 'worthy causes' has been given a broad definition in this list.

Microvolunteering encompasses many forms of volunteering such as mobile volunteering (exclusively via smartphones), virtual or online volunteering (exclusively via the Internet) and traditional volunteering (mostly associated with offline volunteering and, in this context, tasks that can be completed in a small amount of time). It can be participated in for example on the number 39 bus, in a checkout till queue or in your own home either fully dressed or just wearing your pyjamas - although the pyjamas bit is optional, especially if you're on that bus!

This list of activities and ideas has been prepared by UK based HelpFromHome.org, considered to be a leading provider of microvolunteer actions throughout the UK and the world. The actions featured are designed to be completed within 15 minutes-ish and may directly or indirectly benefit an individual. They may be a slight departure from the nature of the missions 'It Starts With Us' regularly sends out, but nevertheless are all 'do good' actions in their own right.

We would appreciate some feedback from yourself as to how useful this list is and therefore help us improve the service. Here's some questions that you might like to consider providing feedback on:

- 1) did you find the actions useful to your cause
- 2) were all the actions aligned to your cause
- 3) did you or anybody you know act on any of the actions
- 4) how accessible were the actions, as in could the actions have been provided on a separate webpage rather than in pdf document, so that all the links were accessible by all users of your website / organisation
- 5) was the information about each action too much, too little or about right
- 6) any other comments

Oh, and just one other thing, Help From Home has prepared a report into the impact of microvolunteering (http://www.helpfromhome.org/impact_micro.pdf). It's quite illuminating as to how much impact is being made by the microvolunteering arena!

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Action Details

Free Kibble Kat - charity donating ecards

Send cheery e-cards to friends and family that also encourage the recipient to visit FreeKibble that donates pet food to animal shelters, at no cost to you.

Website: <http://www.freekibblekat.com/send-an-ecard.asp>

Time taken: Upto 5 minutes

Impact: Raises people's spirits up upon receipt of ecard and also has potential to raise monies to buy kibble (doga and cat food)

Cost: Nothing

One Click at a Time - click to donate

Convert one of your mouse clicks into a charity donation at no cost to you. One Click at a Time contains many links to click to donate websites that fall under many different categories including animal, hunger, children, women and homeless. Donations are paid for by sponsors or advertising. Spend 15 minutes just clicking on as many click to donate websites. The Help From Home impact report (http://www.helpfromhome.org/impact_micro.pdf) highlights quite a few click to donate initiatives and how a seemingly small action can be crowdsourced to make a substantial impact.

Website: <http://www.oneclickatatime.org/>

Time taken: Upto 15 minutes

Impact: Raises money for many different charities

Cost: Nothing

FreeRaiser - charity donating internet sidebar

Install an internet sidebar and then simply surf the web as you normally do. Sidebar displays adverts where 90% of the ad revenue is donated at no cost to you to one of 15 worthy charities of your choice.

Website: <http://www.freeraiser.com/>

Time taken: A couple of minutes to install sidebar, then nothing after that - continue surfing as normal

Impact: Raises funds for many different charities

Cost: Nothing

Charitii - 'do good' internet game

Play a fun crossword-style word game and choose to donate at no cost to you, to providing clean water to communities living in extreme poverty; food to malnourished children and families; school education for children around the world, or help protect rainforests.

Website: <http://www.charitii.com/>

Time taken: A couple of minutes for Joe and Jane Public. A couple of hours for eggheads!

Impact: Raises funds for many different charities

Cost: Nothing

English Out There - virtual volunteering

Help people who want to learn to speak English by giving them the opportunity to practise their English via Skype enabled conversations. Just talking with them will give them the motivation to continue with their studies.

Website: <http://englishoutthere.com/volunteer-with-english-out-there>

Time taken: 15 - 30 minutes

Impact: Enables people to become more confident with their English skills and may help them out of poverty as English is the *lingua franca* of the business world

Cost: Nothing

Grid Republic - distributed computing

GridRepublic members run a screensaver that allows their computers to work on public-interest research projects when the machines are not otherwise in use. This screensaver does not affect performance of the host computer any more than an ordinary screensaver does. Projects include finding a cure for cancer, climate prediction, halting malaria etc.

Website: <http://www.gridrepublic.org>

Time taken: A couple of minutes to install software, then nothing after that - continue using the pc as normal

Impact: Contributes to so many life science projects

Cost: Nothing

Virtual Stake Out - webcam watching

Sign up as a Virtual Texas Deputy to participate in a real-time surveillance program via a 24/7 live streaming video that will allow you to participate in fighting crime along the Texas - Mexico border from anywhere in the world. This border is notorious for criminal activity / drug smuggling

Website: <http://www.blueservo.net/>

Time taken: A couple of minutes to sign up and then a couple of minutes to as long as you want per camera

Impact: Potential to stop crime and dangerous criminals in their tracks

Cost: Nothing

Field Expedition Mongolia - be the eyes for research projects

Help Field Expedition: Mongolia conduct a non-invasive survey in the region of the lost tomb of ruler Genghis Khan" by "tagging clues and artefacts (roads, rivers, modern structures and other objects) on satellite images of the area of interest in Mongolia. Their aim is to find Genghis Khan's tomb.

Website: <http://exploration.nationalgeographic.com/mongolia/home>

Time taken: A couple of minutes to sign up and then upto 15 minutes tagging a few photos

Impact: Potential to solve an 800 year old mystery

Cost: Nothing

Deki - microloans

Deki enables you to help a specific person in the developing world. From as little as £10 (\$16), your microloan can help a borrower create a sustainable livelihood - allowing them to work their way out of poverty. Loan, get paid back, reloan again! Easy.

Website: <http://www.deki.org.uk/>

Time taken: Upto 15 minutes

Impact: Empowers people to lift themselves out of poverty

Cost: Nothing

Health Tracking Network - help research projects

The Health Tracking Network wishes to monitor common illnesses such as the common cold and flu, and discover the factors related to illness. Participation is free and requires no more than 3-4 minutes a week to report your symptoms on a regular basis. You also get the chance to earn money for charity.

Website: <http://www.healthtracking.net/index.php>

Time taken: Upto 4 minutes per week, although you don't have to participate every week

Impact: Contribute to a charities wealth by contributing to studies in human health

Cost: Nothing

Donate Life America - promote good causes

Interested in human organ, eye and tissue donations? Think other people should sign up to this worthy cause. Well, there are ways you can spread the word and increase donations right from the comfort of your home, when you visit Donate Life America. Post a web banner, put up a poster, distribute some brochures etc.

Website: <http://donatelifenet.com/spread-the-word/>

Time taken: Upto 15 minutes

Impact: Potential to increase human organ donation

Cost: Nothing

Candlelight Virtual Vigil - promote good causes

Promote awareness of homeless kids by lighting a virtual candle in honour of those kids that died alone on the streets. Each and every candle brings attention to the plight of homeless kids... and helps create a powerful beacon of hope for just 1 kid. Lighting a candle is free, but there is an option to make a donation if you wish.

Website: <http://candlelight.covenanthouse.org/candles/light/>

Time taken: Upto 10 minutes

Impact: Spreads awareness of the plight of homeless children

Cost: Nothing

Hug It Forward - promote good causes

Give someone a hug, then give them a Hug It Forward card. Track the card as it travels around the world, delivering hugs as it goes. For every card registered, \$1 will be donated for free at no cost to you to build a 'bottle school' in Guatemala.

Website: <http://www.hugitforward.com>

Time taken: Upto 15 minutes

Impact: Spreads awareness of the plight of homeless children

Cost: Nothing

Photo Foundation - share your photos

Donate your photos for free to Photo Foundation to be used for free by nonprofits in the promotion of their causes. Photos are also sold to non-charities to raise money for nonprofits.

Website: <http://www.photofoundation.org/>

Time taken: Upto 15 minutes

Impact: Allows nonprofits to use royalty free photos for free, whilst also raising money for good causes

Cost: Nothing

Mind Apples - submit ideas

Mindapples is an initiative promoting mentally healthy living for everyone through simple, daily activities. They're asking everyone to pick their own "mindapples" and share them with the world, and using the power of the internet to build a thriving community of people supporting each other to make their minds healthier.

Website: <http://mindapples.org/>

Time taken: Upto 15 minutes

Impact: Inspires people to have a healthier mindset leading to a better wellbeing

Cost: Nothing

Twitcause - vote for good causes

Follow and vote for a cause of the week @TwitCause and then impact the world as you spread the word and point others to ways to help the cause via Tweets.

Website: <http://www.experienceproject.com/twitcause>

Time taken: A few minutes that ticks all the right boxes

Impact: Helps to spread awareness of worthy causes.

Cost: Nothing

Vote4Cause - vote for good causes

Vote for your favourite cause. The higher up the league table, the more exposure will be gained for that cause, which could potentially lead to more donations being given to that nonprofit. No need to register with this one.

Website: <http://www.vote4cause.org>

Time taken: A few minutes

Impact: Helps to spread awareness of worthy causes.

Cost: Nothing

Yahoo Answers Community Service - donate your knowledge

Answer questions about, for example, fundraising ideas, charities, community service, name suggestions for charities – anything related to serving the community. There are loads more categories to choose from but this link takes you to the 'Community Service' section. You need to register with this one.

Website: <http://yhoo.it/ayyP4y>

Time taken: Upto 15 minutes

Impact: Potential to help people commit / donate more time to worthy causes or just come up with ideas that help a good cause

Cost: Nothing

Horsemouth - ementoring

If you've lived, you've learned. What pearls of wisdom could you pass on to somebody facing a choice, a challenge or a change in life? With Horsemouth, you could share some of your experience and become a mentor to guide somebody through the maze of life.

Website: <http://www.horsemouth.co.uk/>

Time taken: Approx 15 - 30 minutes

Impact: Potential to change somebody's life

Cost: Nothing

Human Writes - letter writing

Befriend prisoners on Death Row in the USA via writing letters to them. "There are prisoners on Death Rows all over the States who are in need of help to live like a human being for the time they are here."

Website: <http://www.humanwrites.org>

Time taken: Upto 30 minutes to write a letter

Impact: Sends out a message of humanity and compassion

Cost: Nothing

Post Pals - letter writing

Postpals provides a list of very sick children, to whom you can write a card, letter, Email, sign their guestbook or even send a gift to them, all in attempt to keep them smiling during the course of their illness and hopefully, eventual recovery.

Website: <http://www.postpals.co.uk/>

Time taken: Upto 30 minutes to write a letter

Impact: Puts a smile on a sick child's face - priceless!

Cost: Nothing if emailing. Postage if sending a letter

Spirit Jump - letter writing

Spirit Jump's mission is to provide hope and comfort to the many men, women and children battling cancer. Spirit Jump accomplishes this by providing you with the opportunity to make and send uplifting cards and inspirational gifts during their most difficult time.

Website: <http://spiritjump.blogspot.com/>

Time taken: Upto 30 minutes to write a letter

Impact: Raises the spirits of people battling cancer

Cost: Postage

The Forgiveness Project - share a story / experience

The Forgiveness Project works at a local, national and international level to help build a future free of conflict and violence by healing the wounds of the past. Share your story that could be included in outreach programmes and The F Word exhibition.

Website: <http://theforgivenessproject.com/>

Time taken: Upto 30 minutes

Impact: Encourages people to explore the nature of forgiveness and alternatives to revenge

Cost: Nothing

Experience Project - share a story / experience

Billed as a social experience website, where you can share your experiences and be supportive for other people going thru similar experiences.

Website: <http://www.experienceproject.com/index.php>

Time taken: Upto 30 minutes

Impact: Enables people to grow, learn, educate themselves and be supportive of each other each and every day

Cost: Nothing

Recognize Good - share a story / experience

Share an experience of someone doing a kind action on this website and a small donation in their honour will be paid to a local non-profit in your area at no cost to you.

Website: <http://www.recognizegood.com/>

Time taken: Upto 30 minutes

Impact: Potential to elevate the world's spirit of community by creating a public forum to recognize, reward, and promote acts of kindness and unselfish charity.

Cost: Nothing

Distributed Proofreaders - proofread a page

Are you good at reading? Can you spot spelling mistakes? This is a web-based method to proofread a Public Domain book to ease its conversion into an e-book. By dividing the workload into individual pages, many volunteers work on a book at the same time. Proofread as many pages as you want, when you want.

Website: <http://www.pgdp.net/c/>

Time taken: 3 - 10 minutes per page, although there is a steep learning curve

Impact: Preserves old books for future generations to read

Cost: Nothing

Think Before Printing - emails with a conscience

Use an email signature to spread awareness about whether emails need to be printed off.

Website: <http://thinkbeforeprinting.org/>

Time taken: Upto 15 minutes

Impact: Potential to save paper and therefore save some of the world's resources

Cost: Nothing

Green Footers - emails with a conscience

This is quite a comprehensive list of different signatures you can add to your e-mails to urge people to save trees by not printing their email out.

Website: <http://carbon-free.of-cour.se/green-email-signatures/>

Time taken: Upto 15 minutes

Impact: Potential to save paper and therefore save some of the world's resources

Cost: Nothing

Edison - energy saving software

With one little click you can start saving energy and fight climate change. Absolutely free.

Website: <http://www.verdiem.com/edison.aspx>

Time taken: Upto 10 minutes to install software and tweak settings. After that use the pc as normal

Impact: Saves on energy bills and cuts down on CO2 emissions.

Cost: Nothing

Treewala - 'green' games that donate money

Play. Learn. Save the planet. This is a word definition quiz where you click on the answer that best defines the word on the screen. You earn one leaf for every word you define correctly. Every leaf generates ad revenue at no cost to you, which Greenwala (the initiative that created the game) uses to buy trees.

Website: <http://www.treewala.com/>

Time taken: Up to 10 minutes, but maybe a bit longer if you're an egghead!

Impact: Helps to improve the atmosphere we live in.

Cost: Nothing

Do Good Cards - spreading ripples of kindness

Download a 'Do Good' card and print it out. Grab a unique tracking number and enter it in the boxes on the cards. Commit to doing something good and once done enter it and the unique tracking code on to the website. Pass your card onto friends, family or that stranger across the road. Track it's progress to who knows where. Repeat.

Website: <http://helpfromhome.org/dogoodcards.php>

Time taken: 15 - 30 minutes-ish to download, print, do good deed and pass card on

Impact: Potential to virally spread good deeds around the world

Cost: Nothing

Peace Day - spreading awareness of peace

Want peace? Fold an origami crane, which is recognized as an international symbol of peace, and mail as many cranes as you can make, to world leaders asking for peace around the world. Website contains crane making instructions as well as addresses of key people around the world.

Website: <http://www.peaceday.org/>

Time taken: 15 - 30 minutes-ish depends how good you are at origami

Impact: Potential to spread awareness that people just want peace

Cost: Nothing

Another Poster for Peace - spreading awareness of peace

Another Poster for Peace's aim is to engage the public in the peace movement through peace, not war via artwork and design. It contains copyright free art posters, whose theme is to deliver a message with a punch, can be printed out and displayed where you think they might be most effective.

Website: <http://www.anotherposterforpeace.org/>

Time taken: Upto 15 minutes to print it out and put it up

Impact: Potential to spread awareness that people just want peace

Cost: Nothing



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These cause aligned micro-actions were compiled by Help From Home, a leading provider of microvolunteer actions