

Experiences of people volunteering during the Covid-19 pandemic: An Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis.

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Abstract

A recent quantitative study showed volunteering to be an important protective factor against the negative psychological impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. This study aimed to further explore this area of research by analysing the experiences of those volunteering during the pandemic using qualitative methodology. Semi-structured interviews of six individuals volunteering in various roles throughout the pandemic have been analysed using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis. There emerged three superordinate themes; Staying Connected, Doing Something Useful and Having a Choice. The results suggest that volunteering can help individuals to overcome the negative effects of social isolation and strengthen their sense of connectedness, to find meaning by engaging in interesting and useful activities, and, finally, to experience autonomy in the autonomy-frustrating lockdown context. The findings broaden understanding of the protective impact of volunteering which could be used to inform public health interventions following infectious outbreaks.

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Appendix_1_Interview_schedule (1).docx available at <https://authorea.com/users/588967/articles/626009-experiences-of-people-volunteering-during-the-covid-19-pandemic-an-interpretative-phenomenological-analysis>

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Appendix 2 Data analysis steps.docx available at <https://authorea.com/users/588967/articles/626009-experiences-of-people-volunteering-during-the-covid-19-pandemic-an-interpretative-phenomenological-analysis>