Class #11: Helping
Discussion Questions for October 1

Because writing assignments are meant to prepare you for class discussions, you must post a draft question on the Moodle Forum for this date if you want your submission to count. After posting a draft, you must revise and resubmit your final response for a grade by the following Sunday night. In the case of questions posted below, the final draft of your question is due by the end of the day on Sunday, October 6. Include your name, the full question number, and the text of the question on both your draft and final submissions.

Discussion Questions

11-1  Let us imagine that altruism is the act of helping others when as individuals we stand to gain nothing for ourselves. Is this kind of altruism actually possible? I’ve phrased the question to emphasize that people must gain specific personal benefits. Thus vague benefits, like the community benefiting and the individual benefiting from a successful community do not count.

11-2  The chapter "Why Help?" describes three rationales for helping and in each case suggests that the justification for helping also involves refusing to help. Do you believe that some individuals in society do not deserve help? In answering this question, be sure to consider which of the rationales for helping you are buying into and also consider your response to the other rationales for helping.

11-3  Why is community an important component of helping? What kind of social life or social relationships need to be present for a strong helping community to develop? What kinds of social life or social relationships in a residential area make helping less likely to be offered?