

Some Definitions

Philanthropy: the effort or inclination to increase the well-being of humankind, as by charitable aid or donations; love of humankind in general; something, such as an activity or institution, intended to promote human welfare

Charity: provision of help or relief to the poor, almsgiving; something given to help the needy, alms; an institution, organization, or fund established to help the needy; benevolence or generosity toward others or toward humanity; indulgence or forbearance in judging others (see synonyms at "mercy"); in Christianity, the theological virtue defined as love directed first toward God but also toward oneself and one's neighbors as objects of God's love (from Latin "caritas"--dear)

Altruism: unselfish concern for the welfare of others, selflessness; in zoology, instinctive cooperative behavior that is detrimental to the individual but contributes to the survival of the species

Eleemosynary: of, or relating to, or dependent on charity; contributed as an act of charity, gratuitous (see synonyms at "benevolent"; from Latin "alms")

Benevolence: an inclination to perform kind, charitable acts; a kindly act, a gift given out of generosity; (from French "bene"--well, and "vole"--wish)

Alms: money or goods given as charity to the poor; (from Latin "eleemosyna"<Greek "eleemon"--pity, charity)

Voluntary: done or undertaken of one's own free will--a voluntary decision to leave the job; acting or done willingly and without constraint or expectation of reward--a voluntary hostage, voluntary community work; normally controlled by or subject to individual volition--voluntary muscle contractions; capable of making choices, having the faculty of will; supported by contributions or charitable donations rather than by government appropriations--voluntary hospitals; in law, without legal obligation or consideration--a voluntary conveyance of property, or done deliberately, intentional--voluntary manslaughter; (also has a musical meaning--a short, often improvised piece on a single instrument)

Voluntarism: the use of or reliance on voluntary action to maintain an institution, carry out a policy, or achieve an end; a theory or doctrine that regards the will as the fundamental principle of the individual or of the universe

Voluntaryism: reliance on voluntary contributions rather than government funds, as for churches or schools; voluntarism

Volunteerism: use of or reliance on volunteers, especially to perform social or educational work in communities