

# Training Effective Altruism

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## Abstract

Our randomized controlled trial of Pakistan's deputy ministers compares two schools of thought about how to cultivate prosociality. We find that training the utilitarian value of empathy results in a 0.4-0.6 standard deviation increase in altruism, cooperation, coordination, and teamwork. Field outcomes—orphange visits, volunteering in impoverished schools, and blood donations—also roughly double. We find that treated ministers increased their mentalizing of others, both in terms of measures of theory of mind and in the field—however, blood donations only increased when their specific blood type was requested. We also find effects on language use in social media and on honesty. In contrast, we find no effects training malleability-of-the-self, even in combination with the utilitarian treatment. We interpret these results through the lens of self-image models.

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