🤝 Mutual Aid Projects

A Humanist Approach to Community Care, Not Charity

🌟 What It Is

Mutual aid is the radical, time-tested idea that we take care of each other — not because we're saints or saviors, but because we're all in this together. Unlike traditional charity, mutual aid is **horizontal**, **reciprocal**, and **community-led**.

This model aligns beautifully with humanist values: dignity, compassion, autonomy, and justice — all without supernatural strings attached.

🛠️ How to Start a Mutual Aid Project

1. Identify Local Needs
Talk with community members. What's missing? What are people struggling with? Common mutual aid needs include:

- Rides to appointments or events
- Grocery runs or meal trains
- Help with snow shoveling, moving, or childcare
- Phone trees to check in on isolated members
- Emergency micro-grants or bill pooling
  🌱 *Start small. The scale doesn't matter — the trust does.*

2. Build a Volunteer Network
Create a shared spreadsheet, Signal/Discord group, or Google Form where people can:

- Offer specific help (rides, meals, supplies)
- Request assistance without shame
- Indicate availability or limitations

3. Match Offers with Needs
Designate a few point people to help with coordination. Or keep it fully horizontal and self-organizing — your group's capacity will shape the structure.

4. Host a Kickoff Event
Make it relational, not transactional! Invite folks to a potluck, community discussion, or service day.
🗣️ Use it to build trust, break isolation, and affirm shared values.

📣 Promotion & Outreach Tips

- Use plain language and avoid jargon — "Need help?" > "Mutual aid opportunity."
- Share updates regularly: "This month we covered groceries for 2 families + helped 3 elders with yardwork!"
- Normalize both giving and receiving — everyone's circumstances change
- Promote through social events, newsletters, tabling, and partnerships

Sample Blurb:

> "We're building a Humanist Mutual Aid network to take care of each other in practical, no-strings-attached ways — from rides to groceries to a helping hand. Want to join us or need a little help? All are welcome."

🔁 Tips for Sustaining the Project

- Rotate roles to prevent burnout
- Share stories of impact (with permission)
- Offer training or reflection spaces on boundaries, burnout, and power
- Be flexible — the needs will change, and so will your capacity

---

❤️ Why It Works

Mutual aid taps into the best of who we are: not saviors, but neighbors. It meets material needs while building genuine community and trust. For secular folks often left out of traditional religious safety nets, this *is* the fabric of belonging.