

7 Practices of Highly Helpful Volunteers

with Partners in Hope and Beyond

- 1. Treat People Like People, Not Projects** It's not that there's anything wrong with projects. It's okay to like things that end with an accomplishment. A final product. A, see what I just did with my last 3 hours, manifest. It's just important to remember that people aren't something to complete but rather, made in the very image of God, something to be close to, present with, live alongside and be in relationship with.

The person you're serving has feelings, intrinsic worth, and a need for community.

The project you're doing has a punch list, market price, and no emotional needs.

"Yet you have made him a little lower than the heavenly beings and crowned him with glory and honor." Psalm 8:5

- 2. Focus on Process, Not Outcome** Your volunteer role is part of a process; the task is not the goal! Tasks are designed to help meet a physical need, share a burden, lighten a load; to encourage and motivate you and the person you're serving; and to facilitate meaningful connections.

Is this you? (process focused)

- How exciting -- a new challenge!
- I'm going to enjoy putting my all into this!
- I just love trying new things and learning new things!

Or is this you? (outcome focused)

- What if I don't know what to do?
- What if I can't do what's asked of me?
- What will people think of me if I mess this up?

"For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope." Jeremiah 29:11

- 3. Commit to Being Part of a Team**

- Work well with others.
- Understand the value and necessity of teamwork.
- Rally others to the cause.
- Be friendly, approachable, and able to listen to other's point of view.
- Contribute talents and skills without stepping on anyone's toes.

"Two are better than one; because they have a good reward for their labor." Ecclesiastes 4:9

4. Understand the Power of Prayer In other words, you know that when you ask God to give you love for a neighbor, he does. When you ask for patience, he provides opportunity to practice patience. When you ask him to be near to you, his presence sweeps in and surrounds you with his peace and strength.

- Pray for God to prepare your heart and use you to benefit others.
- Pray for God to work in the life of person you are serving.
- Pray *with* the person you're serving, whenever possible, or offer to pray for them.

"And this is the confidence that we have toward him, that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us." 1 John 5:14

5. Manage Expectations

Natural thoughts you as a volunteer may have:

- "I want them to deserve my involvement."
- "I want them to appreciate my involvement."
- "I want them to view their problem and the solution the same as I do."
- "I want to feel my time and effort are not wasted."

Natural thoughts the person you are helping may have:

- "I want them to not judge me, my way of life, or my situation."
- "I want them to respect me and my property."
- "I want them to understand and care about what's important to me."

You can choose differently than your natural thoughts!

"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, declares the Lord. As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts." Isaiah 55:8-9

6. Choose an Attitude of Gratitude This means making it a conscious habit to express appreciation for your amazing life, focus on the bigger picture, and find a silver lining amidst any situation.

- Be grateful that trust and responsibility have been put into your hands.
- Be thankful that you get to experience the joy and satisfaction of making a difference in someone's life.
- Be humbled by what you have gained and learned through the generous invitation to show up for someone at their most intimate time of need.

"Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you." 1 Thessalonians 5:18

7. Express Love Effectively

- **Be Kind** - Kindness is the joy of satisfying the needs of another person before our own; it means putting the relationship first. We are kind when we learn to see the other's needs and put them ahead of our own.
- **Be Patient** - Patience is the ability to accept others' imperfections, recognizing that we are all in the process of transformation. Patience helps us allow others to be imperfect.
- **Be Courteous** - Courtesy means treating others as personal friends, with kindness, recognizing their value as a person. The courteous person emphasizes the value of relationship.

Love one another with brotherly affection. Outdo one another in showing honor. Romans 12:10