

Recognize What Matters Most in Your Life

Volunteerism may be defined as contributing one's time or talents for charitable, educational, social, political, or other worthwhile purposes, usually in one's community, freely and without regard for compensation. Since the seventeenth century, Americans have shaped their nation by their voluntary efforts: providing services, organizing political action, caring for the poor, reaching out to the disadvantaged, providing education, ensuring equality and civil rights for all citizens, and working for change.

I often tell the volunteers at Specialty Care Center that being a volunteer leader is like being a cat herder trying to cross a river- volunteers are cuddly like cats, but sometimes resist going in the right direction. As you know, volunteer leaders face a variety of challenges or “river crossings” each day. Sometimes the river current moves in different directions as we face divergent expectations from the volunteers, administration and staff- it seems each group has their own idea of what the volunteer department should do. Sometimes the river is very large and the current is swift as we try to cross the “3 R’s Rivers- Recruiting, Retention and Regulations”.

Whatever the river you are crossing today, I want you to know that if you have ever given any thought as to volunteerism- recognize what matters most in your life. Volunteerism is a fantastic way to “make a difference”, a great way to gain some wonderful knowledge of the organization, time management skills, build lasting relationships, and have a resource for your resume.

For many, it seems as though volunteers have been treated, for the most part, with a nice pat on the back with the motion that the majority of people just didn’t “have the time” nor “the desire to get involved”. But as our society moved through economic cycles and recovers from the various acts that may cause volunteers to be put into place, the concept of volunteering to offer comfort, aid and, most importantly, one’s time to “make a difference” has become validated as an accepted and natural part of daily life.

All volunteerism is an expression of giving. All giving is giving of joy. We give because of love. Love desires to give joy and happiness.

Whenever you give anything, you give something spiritual along with it. The feeling that you give with is the spirit of your giving. The feeling is the energy of your giving. When you give with joy, the energy that you send forth is that of joy. But when you give with the lack of joy, the energy that goes with your gift is a negative one.

When we give, we are not just giving a thing but we are also giving the energy that goes along with our giving. The energy that you give with is really more important than the gift itself. The essence is always joy although the form can be anything.

As you sow, so you shall reap. What goes around comes around. The energy you give out is the energy that returns to you. That is the reason why God wants you to be a cheerful giver.

If you have not yet discovered the rewards of volunteering, my highest hope is that, as you go about your daily life after reading this article, you will discover you do have “time to give” to an organization, even if its 2 hours a week. There is no time frame on volunteering.

Methodist Specialty Care Center is a residential facility providing long-term specialized care for severely disabled younger residents whose social and medical needs are too complex and unique for traditional nursing homes.

At Methodist Specialty Care Center our dedicated volunteers are an essential part of our team. Each day, they visit residents in their rooms and work closely with staff to provide much-needed services. There are more than 60 volunteers per week at Methodist Specialty Care Center, providing services to the residents, staff and families. Adult volunteers are asked to commit to a minimum on 4 hours of service each week. Student volunteers are ask to commit a minimum of 6 months of service.

Volunteer applicants must meet the following qualifications:

- Demonstrate a sincere desire to be of service
- Have adequate time to devote to the volunteer program
- Be of good moral character

If you would like to make a difference in someone's life by volunteering at Methodist Specialty Care Center, contact Robby Scucchi, certified director of volunteer services, at (601) 420-7769 or by email at rscucchi@mnrcrehab.org.