

T H E   V O L U N T E E R   A D M I N I S T R A T O R

by

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## A C K N O W L E D G E M E N T

In this type of book it may not seem appropriate to list an acknowledgement. However, it is important to me to single out one special person whose quality of personality, contagious industry, and administrative insights, have been a continuous inspiration. So many thoughts developed in these pages are expansions of tidbits gleaned in conversation with a very special lady, Harriet Naylor.

## INTRODUCTION

I have written this book for the benefit of the volunteer administrators who want to "walk the extra mile" in perfecting their expertise. Volunteer administrators who have entered the profession within the past two or three years may find little in this book that comes across as new or as a new approach. (However, see Chapter X.) This work deals mainly with attitudes, priorities, and ethics of the volunteer administrator. The "how to" methods and techniques we adopt in managing a volunteer service flow almost directly from the type person we are and from the degree of involvement we apply to our position as volunteer administrators.

I do not claim that this book is profound or even totally original in the subject matter presented. I do believe that the ideas developed in each chapter need to be said as often as possible and in as many ways as possible. I do not elaborate on or expand the ideas in this writing. When and where these ideas have been used at workshops, seminars, and classrooms they are explored in depth by discussing them at length.

My purpose in this writing is to state simply and briefly the thoughts and ideas which I believe are critical to our profession. Anyone who accepts these ideas and implements them may jeopardize his job as a volunteer administrator; not everyone, least of all administration and staff, would agree with these ideas. Anyone who accepts these ideas and implements them, however, may very possibly increase his personal job satisfaction many times over. It is with the hope of this second possibility that I present this writing.

Throughout, I have used "he", "his", "him", according to the grammatically approved neuter usage; "used as a nominative case form in general statements to include females and several persons collectively."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Webster's Third International Dictionary,  
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## CHAPTER I

### The Factors For Success

Good volunteer services don't just happen. Dedicated volunteers don't just happen. Cooperative staff doesn't just happen. There are three important factors that determine the success or contribute to the failure of any volunteer service.

In order of their importance, the three factors are:

1. The Volunteer Administrator
2. The Volunteer Administrator
3. The Volunteer Administrator

The first of the three factors is the personal dynamics of the administrator. The second is the industry, and the third is the administrative know-how.

Volunteer administration is a unique profession. In my opinion, there is no other profession where success or failure depends almost exclusively upon the character of the person running the show. While this could be said of some other administrative positions, it must be said of volunteer administration.

For five years, I have been consultant to and evaluator of 52 professionally-directed, large-

scale volunteer services involving as many as 60,000 volunteers. This panoramic vantage point makes it possible to see relationships between really successful volunteer services that are alive and vibrant and services that are "run-of-the-mill". It allows comparisons which are not available to the individual administrator. Always, and I must strongly emphasize that without exception, the overall vitality of a service directly reflects the personality and character of the administrator.

It is easy to run a volunteer service from behind a desk, producing neat reports, organized files, and an impressive number of volunteers. It is impossible to have good volunteer programs, dedicated volunteers, and cooperative staff while running the volunteer service from behind a desk. A contradiction? Not at all. The volunteer services at an agency, hospital, or any facility have no counterpoart within the organization. Therefore, if there are volunteers and neat reports, etc., the service could and often is judged successful. But by what standard? It's not until you've experienced an alive, exuberant, and exciting volunteer service that you can make the distinction. When you find such a vitally stimulating

service, you always find an alive, exuberant and exciting volunteer administrator running the show.

<sup>2</sup>"The reputation of volunteers in an agency is based not so much on their work as on the professionalism of the director of volunteer services — if we want to enhance the reputation of volunteers, we must tend to our own reputation."

The personal dynamics of the volunteer administrator are of primary importance. His personable, thoughtful and considerate attitude are essential daily attributes. We deal with volunteers who are, for the most part, sensitive, generous and thoughtful individuals. Unless we are equally sensitive, match their generosity, give evidence of thoughtfulness and thoroughness, remembering that they are individuals, we are not going to have dedicated volunteers. There may be volunteers, but not dedicated volunteers.

You can change your personal dynamics. You and only you can choose to be friendly; you have total control over the type of person you are. The type of person you are will directly determine the type of volunteer service you have. The type of volunteer service you will have will be the direct result of the type of volunteer administrator you are.

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<sup>2</sup>Jarene Frances Lee, Voluntary Action Leadership, The National Center for Voluntary Action, Boulder, Colo., 1976.

As for industry, the second factor that determines good volunteer services, this might be influenced by the third factor -- administrative know-how. When persons are "sure of themselves" in what they are doing, they tend to be more industrious, aggressive, mobile and visible. Just remember back to the first few weeks in your job -- you weren't too mobile, industrious, or aggressive because you didn't know what you were doing.

The necessity for personal industry in volunteer administration stems from the transitory characteristics of volunteering. Few are the volunteers who stay on for five years. Consequently, we are dealing with new people every week. The tendency to become perfunctory because of so many "repeat performances" is understandable but not excusable. It is only when we have a deep abiding respect for every person we contact, that we can keep our enthusiasm alive and our professional integrity on a high level.

The volunteers are coming into new experiences for the most part. For them, there may be fear, hesitations, excitement, hope, inconveniences, and a host of other possibilities. The decision to volunteer may have been preceded by hours of deliberation or it may be the result of a hurried decision. Whatever

preceded their presenting themselves there is, for them, an element of the unknown. If the first person they meet -- usually the volunteer administrator -- has a "matter of fact" perfunctory attitude, or "just another pair of hands" attitude, any enthusiasm can be so easily squelched. If, on the other hand, they are greeted with enthusiasm, sincere interest, and a genuine effort to establish good rapport, they will view their own offer of help in a more serious light. This can determine their whole approach to the volunteer situation, their success in dealing with staff personalities, and an awareness of the delicate nature of their offer. No other single factor can affect this strategic moment as much as the attitude and industry of the volunteer administrator.

The third factor which determines the success of a volunteer service is the administrative know-how of the volunteer administrator. The atmosphere of the interview, the thorough knowledge of the goals and objectives of the agency, the programs for the clients, staff attitudes, client needs, record handling, office practices, evaluation techniques, and supervisory abilities are all learned administrative practices. The good administrator has to have agency-wide familiarity.

A shy volunteer should not be placed under the supervision of an overly-aggressive staff person or assigned to a gregarious client. The needs and abilities of the volunteer should be matched with care and consideration. This necessitates a thorough knowledge by the administrator of the volunteer, the staff, the client, and the volunteer situation.

Too frequently, we are more concerned with the quantity of volunteers on our roll call than with the quality of volunteers. One well-trained, dedicated, and reliable volunteer is more valuable than ten "fly-by-nighters". However, the ten "fly-by-nighters" may have had the potential of quality volunteers if they had received quality attention and orientation. Developing good administrative practices is a learning process that presumes a willingness to learn. Without good administrative practices and techniques, all the personal industry and impressive personal dynamics in the profession won't result in a successful volunteer service.

In large agencies, such as state facilities where there are hundreds of volunteers, the volunteer administrator has to delegate many tasks. It is even conceivable that interviewing and screening of

volunteers becomes a delegated responsibility. Too frequently, it is left to whoever may evidence a willingness to do it rather than to someone trained by the volunteer administrator. Regardless of who has done the recruiting, the interviewing and screening, the orientation and training, the assigning and supervising and the evaluating, the volunteer administrator must be held responsible. The tasks are, in these instances, to train the delegated persons so that they reflect an awareness of all that is incumbent upon the volunteer administrator. Often, because of a lack of understanding by an administrative staff in an agency, persons are delegated to assist the volunteer administrator simply on the basis of availability. Equally as often, these available persons are not necessarily the most industrious agency personnel. The volunteer administrator must be very selective of whom he chooses or of who is chosen to deal on his behalf with volunteers.

If an agency or facility wants good volunteer services, dedicated volunteers and cooperative staff, it should select a volunteer administrator who is personally dynamic, industrious, and has demonstrated administrative abilities.

## CHAPTER II

### Volunteering - Noble and Dangerous

The first time I heard the "above expression" I was a little skeptical as to whether the guest speaker knew what he was talking about. It was at a volunteer recognition ceremony in Oklahoma City in 1964. After a few introductory remarks, the speaker paused, took a solemn stance at the podium, and very deliberately spoke the words that have guided me and guarded me for over 13 years: "One of the most noble and yet dangerous things a person can do is to help another person."

It wasn't just a way of catching our attention; we all turn a phrase now and then for emphasis or as an attention-getting device. He was saying it because he believed it and he made me believe it. "When you help a person, or even offer to help a person, you are threatening his very dignity as a human being." He went on to develop this idea and to show where the dangers were in the noble and innocent act of helping another person.

I don't think that volunteers think of themselves as dangerous persons or that their act of volunteering is a dangerous threat. More likely, they

view their offer of help in its noble context. I do think that it is extremely important, however, that the volunteer administrators be aware of the dangers in volunteering which they hold in the balance of their hands. If volunteers are assuming a delicate responsibility, then the volunteer administrator who assigns them to this situation has an equally dangerous and delicate responsibility.

Human dignity and human integrity are of the utmost importance. This fact makes our job as volunteer administrators more than a casual administrative responsibility. How often do we stop and think about what is being left unsaid when a person says "I want to help you". In powerful and dangerous ways, a volunteer is saying you need help, you are helpless, and I can do for you what you can't do for yourself. He's also saying I am capable, you are not as capable as I am; I am authority, you are subordinate; you are sick, I am well; and the litany could go on and on. What is really happening, though seldom recognized, is that volunteers place themselves in a position of control over another human being and the volunteer administrator has arranged this situation. If really understood, this is an awesome responsibility.

Before we go any further, make no mistake about the seriousness of this arrangement. We can easily cite instances where there are no apparent dangers involved. Maybe, in some few instances, there may admittedly be no danger. The danger exists because of the tremendous dignity and worth of human individuality, personality and integrity. If this fact eludes us, we will fail to see the point of the thesis. It takes quite a few moments of serious reflection to become aware of the reality of the danger. It doesn't make it easier if you were to envision the arrangement or relationship as being between a volunteer and say, an inmate of a correctional facility, or a client in a retardation center or a psychiatric center. Here the recipient is not thought of as a social equal. Nevertheless, human dignity exists in the most deprived and depraved individual. Therefore, so does the danger.

An additional factor that clouds the clarity of the existing danger is the fact that the recipients of the help often times are the aggressors in setting up the helper-helped situation. They may well be laying their dignity on the line voluntarily and inadvertantly saying "walk all over me, belittle me, control me, do whatever... only please help me." Regardless of how the

arrangement takes place, the responsibility for avoiding the dangers is incumbent upon whomever volunteers. If there is a volunteer administrator acting as the go-between in a volunteer/client relationship, the responsibility is shared but not lessened.

It is clearly a physically dangerous situation when the aided hitchhiker is murdered. However, physical danger is not particularly what is referred to in this chapter. A more closely analogous situation would be that of the under-privileged nation seeking aid from a more privileged nation. History records that the price for his "help" has been indignity, moral abuse, exploitation and slavery.

Not to belabor this issue, but hopefully to indicate that there is a subtle - but real - danger, let me say that the volunteer administrator is in a position to affect the course and perhaps the destiny of two human lives for better or for worse.

I would like to recount a final example to make the point perfectly clear. When I was in the seminary, we were given every Wednesday afternoon to visit someplace in the community where we could practice our ministry. I had selected the State Penitentiary in Baltimore, Maryland. In the penitentiary, I had an

option to select a classroom, a cellblock, the recreation area, or the death house. I selected to visit the inmates in the death house. Because of something deep inside of me and also because of my Catholic training, I respected these fellows whose misfortunes landed them on death row. Just before I left on Christmas vacation, one young man said to me "Please come back after your vacation; you make me feel like I was important instead of like I was a criminal." That's the clue. You don't really help a person unless they feel more important after your help than they did before you entered their life. This is where the really noble aspects of volunteering exist.

A safeguard for avoiding the dangerous aspects of volunteerism is to view the act as a privilege, the privilege of helping someone come closer to realizing their own personal integrity and importance. In a materialistic industrial society, we tend to view the rich, the intelligent, the young, the healthy and the beautiful as the more privileged. This tendency leaves the poor, the unintelligent, the old, the sick and the physically handicapped with the impression that they are less important. These minorities may not consciously display their feelings of inferiority.

However, they may, in one way or another, be less impressed with their importance and existence than with that of a member of a "more fortunate" group. The volunteer should view his privileged act of helping as a responsibility and opportunity to lead his client towards a healthy view of himself. It is important that the volunteer administrator direct the attitude of volunteers toward this objective, as well as to prepare them for the services they will perform on behalf of the client.

The volunteer administrator cannot escape the responsibility of the role. He is dealing in human service as certainly as any person working in the field of human services. The more fully this is realized, the more professional and more valuable the profession will become.

We owe it to volunteers to do the best that can be done by them. Their offers are, for the most part, very valuable gifts of time and self. To treat this gift casually, to be oblivious to the subtle dangers or the nobility of the offer is to see our administrative responsibilities in a peripheral sense, missing the essential, exciting and challenging aspects.

CHAPTER III  
The First Priority

The uniqueness of the position of the volunteer administrator makes it difficult to determine a first priority. In every agency there are four areas of pressure, four factors that seem to demand equal attention: a) the needs of the clients who are served by the agency; b) staff needs for additional hands to help serve the clients; c) volunteer needs for meaningful assignments and supervision; d) administrative needs of record keeping, reports and rapport with persons in higher positions of responsibility, i.e., agency needs.

In seven workshops where I have posed the question of priorities, there has always been a spread of opinions, as to which group should be the first priority to the volunteer administrator. The spread, out of 320 volunteer administrators canvassed, looks like this:

clients . . . . .	171
staffs . . . . .	83
volunteers. . . . .	28
undecided . . . . .	21
agency needs. . . . .	17

There are three things about this spread that always surprise me. First, that there is a spread at all; second, that the highest number of administrators felt that clients' needs took first priority; third, that there were always some administrators who were undecided.

If I were to assign titles to administrators in the 320 canvassed, it would go like this: 171 "client administrators", 83 "staff administrators", 28 (only) "volunteer administrators", 17 "administration administrators" and 21 "undecided administrators". Those who would place clients first would soon lose support from staff; those who would place staff first would soon lose support of administration and probably clients; those who place administration first would soon lose support of clients and staff. The only way to keep everyone's support, in the long run, would be to do the job you are hired to do -- that is, be the volunteer's administrator.

One possible explanation for the varying responses is the 6-8 year syndrome. Six or eight years ago, many of the present volunteer administrators were employed in other capacities and were asked (told in some cases) to coordinate the volunteers who were

coming to the agency/facility. Their main job was taking care of client needs; the volunteers were coming to socialize with or entertain the clients. As staff persons, they knew the clients' needs and arranged volunteer activities around these needs. Many of the volunteers signed up for one hour stints and much of the entertainment was a once-a-month service.

Under these circumstances, client needs had first, staff needs had second, administration's permission had the third, and volunteer needs (if referred to at all) had the last priority. There have not been too many important changes in clients, staff, and administration. In many instances, the same persons are holding the same jobs they held six or eight years ago. The staff attitudes toward volunteers are pretty much what they were six or eight years ago, and administration, although a little more sophisticated, still thinks of itself as "permitting the volunteers to come and do their thing".

Volunteers have changed in quality as well as quantity. With the influx of more and more volunteers, the staff person who, on a part-time basis, was assigning volunteers, was released to work full-time with volunteers. In some instances, an outside person

experienced in working with volunteers was hired to do the full-time work. Volunteer administration thus took on new responsibilities and added new expertise to its ranks. The three unchanged groups, clients, staff and administration, are for the most part, not aware of what has changed and their influence upon the position of the volunteer administrator is still very persuasive.

Whatever the explanation, there appears to be a demonstrated need for some collective thinking about our position. No matter how I try to rethink the situation and no matter how often I have weighed the arguments for clients or staff taking priority over volunteer needs, I always end up with the same conviction: volunteer needs are the first priority of the volunteer administrator. Strangely enough, and this always comes across at first as the real contradiction, I would place client needs as my last priority. As I see it, the volunteer administrator's priorities should line up in this manner:

- 1st -- Volunteers
- 2nd -- Staff
- 3rd -- Administration (agency needs)
- 4th -- Clients

If the volunteer administrators focus their emphasis on the needs of the volunteer, the client will be served better by the volunteer. If the second priority is the staff's needs, the clients will be served better by the staff. I do not believe that the volunteer administrator is responsible, except indirectly, for meeting the needs of the agency's clients. The agency basically exists for the benefit of and to meet the needs of the clients. There is a staff assigned specifically to care for the clients; the clients are their first and often only priority. There is no other single person in the agency who is assigned to meet the needs of the volunteer. If the volunteer administrator is not primarily concerned with meeting the volunteer's needs, then no one in the entire agency will meet his needs. If the volunteer administrator does not assign volunteer needs as a first priority, then there is no way that all the needs of the volunteer will be met. If all of the needs of the volunteer are not met, there cannot be dedicated, dependable and qualitative volunteering.

The volunteers, because they are persons, have physical, intellectual, corological and spiritual needs. To meet all these needs is a mountainous responsibility -- to fail to meet all these

needs is to do an injustice to the dignity of the volunteer and to the position of volunteer administrator. Failure to meet any one of these needs also explains why there is a poverty of quality volunteers and why there are doubts by staff as to the validity of volunteer assistance.

The profession of volunteer administration will remain in low standing as long as it is seen as "someone to plug in helping hands where needed". The real challenge in the profession of volunteer administration is precisely in equipping one's self with the variety of abilities and adjustment of attitudes needed to meet the needs of the volunteer. It is a young profession and will remain immature until it equips itself to handle the multi-faceted aspects of its responsibilities -- to the volunteer.

Volunteer administration will never be professional if it continues to see itself or allows others to see it as:

1. Recipients of donations;
2. Funnels through which members from the community (volunteers) pass through to help clients;
3. Providers of assistance to staff;
4. Suppliers of "free service";
5. Catch-all department for party planning, entertainment, etc.;
6. Newsletter producers and/or editors.

Maybe these, and perhaps a few others, are proper assignments for the volunteer office but only after the main function is finished (and if done right, it's never finished). Our main function is to provide service to volunteers.

Too often, we interview a volunteer, determine an assignment, hand him over to a staff person for an orientation and then pass on to the next volunteer. Occasionally, we check up on how the volunteers are doing and periodically send out an evaluation sheet to be filled in by a staff person. We usually assign record-keeping and report writing to a secretary while filling our work hours with juggling phone calls, meetings, speaking engagements and arranging for entertainers to come to the agency. I would venture to say that perhaps one out of fifteen volunteer administrators give any thought to meeting the emotional or intellectual needs of the volunteer.

The volunteer administrator must know what the staff's needs are and what the client's needs are. The only reason to know these needs is to match the volunteer's needs with real needs and to meet the volunteer's needs with essential activity rather than superficial assignments. The volunteer administrator must know the agency goals and objectives in order to meet and challenge the intellectual needs of the volunteer. The volunteer administrator must know the attitudes of the staff in

order to help meet the corological needs of the volunteer. The volunteer administrator must have appropriate and sound personal and professional ethics in order to help meet the personal and professional needs of the volunteer. Whatever volunteer administrators do on the job should be done in order to better equip themselves to help meet the needs of the volunteer.

When the volunteer administrators meet the needs of the volunteer, they will begin to meet the needs of the staff, the needs of the client, the demands of the agency, and the high standards of the profession.

## CHAPTER IV

### The Stage Is Set

If you have ever walked into a movie that has already started or turned on the T.V. in the middle of a serial or dramatic presentation, you will understand part of the message of this chapter. In either of the above examples, the viewer has to follow the actions on the screen for a period of time before realizing clearly what is happening and what parts the actors are taking in relation to the plot. Usually, the stage is set for any plot in the opening moments of a production. Once the stage is set, the actors play out their roles against the "backdrop" of the events used or portrayed in setting the stage.

A volunteer arrives at the facility with his offer of help after the stage is set. Beyond the stage setting at the agency, many of the performers (staff) are already busy in their roles responding and reacting to the clients, the setting, and each other. In other words, there is a full production already underway when this new actor enters the scene. I recall the prospective student volunteer who had a verbally violent reaction to the staff who had placed a profoundly retarded youngster into a restraint outfit with a football-type helmet on her head. The volunteer reported this apparent abuse to his classmates

at college who, in turn, made a lot of noise to the local newspaper. Though only a prospective volunteer on tour of the agency, the young man did jump to conclusions over what he had seen and should have made some inquiries before saying anything.

However, since the tour responsibility fell to the position of the volunteer administrator, the responsibility of explanation was as incumbent upon him as was the responsibility for inquiry upon the volunteer. What had preceded the stage setting of the restrained youngster which the tourist happened upon was not explained or asked about. The self-abusive youngster would easily destroy herself without these restraints. The stage setting, however, appeared to be severe and unusual punishment for misbehavior rather than what it was in reality. The tourist had placed a meaning on what he observed based upon his own past experiences -- the tourist's mind was also a stage that was set.

The volunteer administrator is not the director of the drama that is taking place throughout the agency. As a matter of fact, he has very little control over even the stage settings that can change from day-to-day. The volunteer administrator does, however, affect the drama and alter the stage settings every time he places a new actor into the scene. If the new actors, the volunteers, are not properly oriented and trained to blend into the

existing scene, they can easily become a disruption to what might be an otherwise smoothly flowing act.

There are many dramas taking place at any one given moment. Not just the drama of staff/client relationships, but also of staff/staff relationships, client/client relationships, staff/volunteer administrator relationships, volunteer/staff relationships, and volunteer/volunteer relationships. The volunteers are completely and totally at the mercy of the volunteer administrator, not only in terms of what stage setting they are placed into, but at what given moment in the progress of the drama they enter the scene. Additionally, the volunteer administrator determines how well rehearsed and readied the volunteers are to enter the scene and whether or not they enter as observers, active participants, or antagonists. The basis for negative staff reactions to volunteers can be found in this too frequent oversight. Too often volunteer administrators fail in their responsibility to provide adequate preparation of the volunteer and adequate preparation of the staff to accept the volunteer. A brief interview following a cursory review of an application, followed sometimes within an hour by an assignment and the volunteer is on his way -- usually.

The possibility of volunteers entering a scene as antagonists is more probable than is the possibility that they enter as a protagonist. It is only when there is

totally adequate preparation of the volunteer, the staff, and the client that the volunteer can enter a scene without danger of antagonism. That is precisely why a volunteer administrator is hired -- to arrange the opportunities and to prepare volunteers to gain the maximum benefits from their volunteered service. Volunteers who evidence any willingness and availability to sustain their volunteer services over a period of time should be given no less than the equivalent of two weeks of structured orientation and training for the specific assignment they will be assuming. Staff have a right to expect trained persons as their co-workers. Short-term volunteers (the 2 or 4-monthers) should be assigned to gift carts or boutiques or some non-staff/client involved situation.

In order to know the various stage settings throughout the agency and in order to be able to keep abreast of changes, the volunteer administrator has to have access to every nook and corner of the agency and be familiar with every actual and potential drama that is taking place or might take place. This mobility and access is essential to a qualitative volunteer service. Only the director of the agency or his first assistant ordinarily has this much mobility or access. Therefore, the volunteer administrator must be directly under their jurisdiction and answerable only to them. This can present some dissention among the ranks of staff persons whose salaries may be higher but

whose mobility may be much less. The discretion with which the volunteer administrator handles this mobility and access can alleviate much of the dissention. No matter what the risks, however, the fact remains absolute; the volunteer administrator cannot be answerable to a personnel officer, a department head, or to anyone who does not have agency-wide jurisdiction.

Current trends in volunteering have brought about two distinct changes in the volunteer scene. The interest in volunteer assistance has extended beyond the "socialization and entertainment" type volunteer (see Chapter X). Currently, volunteers are being assigned to assist in therapy work and at almost every level of professional involvement. Furthermore, the typical volunteer is no longer only the "I've got free time on my hands" person. Rather, persons from every profession and with all degrees of social and intellectual exposure are volunteering. These two factors present a rather involved responsibility to the volunteer administrator. The volunteer administrator has to have a basic knowledge of the variety of volunteer assignments throughout the agency in order to better understand the suitable person needed to assist. He also has to deal with a much more varied array of persons presenting themselves to a volunteer situation. Too frequently, agency administration does not realize this expanded role of the volunteer administrator and the expertise needed to perform the job. But all too frequently, neither does the volunteer administrator.

## CHAPTER V

### Volunteering -- A Right, But Not An Absolute Right

We often hear and I have frequently said, that volunteering is a right. In a democracy, guaranteed by a Constitution which affords to people the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, I am sure it could be argued that a person volunteers in pursuit of happiness. Even without the Constitution, I would maintain that it is the human right of an individual to help another person who is in need of help. It is easy to go one step further and say that in a God-fearing culture, it is a responsibility to help another person when there is need of help. In America and in most parts of the world, we could safely say, therefore, that at minimum, to freely and willingly help another person is a right, if not even a responsibility.

Most volunteer administrators are sub-consciously, if not even consciously, aware of this right. The very fact that they are in the position to set up a volunteer program indicates to them, to agency administration, to staff, clients, and to volunteers, that this right is recognized by this particular agency or facility. Therefore, when a person walks into the volunteer office and proclaims: "I'd like to be a

volunteer", it would be very incongruous to say "I'm sorry but you've come to the wrong place." However, this probably should be said to as many as two out of five volunteers.

The right to volunteer is not an absolute right. If it were an absolute right, no one could rightfully be denied the opportunity. It is not an absolute right simply because there are factors which can make the expression of this right an impossibility. An extreme, but obvious example, would be a blind person volunteering to be an art critic or a bird watcher, or a deaf mute volunteering for a choir master position. Less extreme would be the person who can speak only Spanish volunteering to aid a teacher of English in a tutoring position. The difficulty of saying to such a volunteer "I'm sorry, but you've come to the wrong place" would be greatly lessened because the lack of proper qualifications is obvious.

When we come to examples that are much less obvious, we begin to run into trouble. When a very gregarious person comes into the volunteer office bubbling with enthusiasm and obvious talents announcing that he is available for volunteering at least four hours a day, two days a week, for the next two years and maybe

three, there would be very few volunteer administrators who would entertain the idea of saying "I'm sorry, but you've come to the wrong place." Most volunteer administrators would be delighted with the prospects that this volunteer offers. Precisely here is where it is necessary for good administrative skills and the ability to say "no" might be essential. Such a volunteer might be exactly what is needed -- I do not want to imply that being gregarious, having talent, and being available are undesirable qualities and/or characteristics. The problem arises when careful consideration is given to matching the needs of this volunteer with the needs of the client and/or the staff. If the client and/or staff do not need such a dynamic volunteer, then the volunteer will be unchallenged as well as unwelcomed. If the staff and/or clients need such a volunteer but are not totally prepared to challenge all the energies and enthusiasms to keep such a volunteer constructively busy for his available time, then the volunteer will soon become discouraged. It is precisely this waste and injustice to human potential that is the point of this chapter.

Many volunteers, because they are basically generous and sensitive people, abandon their volunteer assignment with a polite thank-you and a legitimately

trumped-up excuse. They would be hard put to say to a volunteer administrator whose friendship they had appreciated and who had spent time preparing them for an assignment that "you should have been honest with me from the beginning and told me you really had no place for me." Too often, much too often, volunteer administrators are so appreciative of a person willing to volunteer that they plug them into openings where there is not enough room to grow, and with staff where there would be a conflict of personalities.

The expectations of the agency's administrative staff adds to the difficulty of saying "no" to the prospective volunteer. The volunteer administrator is obviously hired and salaried to get volunteers to assist staff for the benefit of the clients. Consequently, live bodies are necessary to fulfill the job expectations. The more volunteers on the scene, the more secure the volunteer administrator's job becomes. In short, it's a matter of either produce or be terminated. Few volunteer administrators can afford the luxury of turning away volunteers because they have too many. At minimum, most would say that the turnover of volunteers leaves them almost always with openings within a short time.

Learning to say "no" to a volunteer might be the best recourse in the long run. However, personally dangerous it is still administratively sound. The right volunteer in precisely the right assignment, with the right qualifications and training is the dependable volunteer, the staff-satisfying volunteer, and the best advocate for more volunteers. But such a person may be found in only one out of every ten who present themselves. If we're lucky and the precedent has been established, there might be three out of five such persons. That may only happen if the volunteer administrator is personally dynamic, industrious and has a lot of administrative know-how.

It may seem from the preceding that staff and/or client needs are on a par with volunteer needs in the list of priorities mentioned in Chapter III. A closer reading would clearly show otherwise. The extensive and prolonged screening of the volunteer and the screening of prospective volunteer assignment is in order to determine the right volunteer for the job. After this is done and the person is selected, the job has only begun for the good volunteer administrator. Extensive preparation of volunteers to enter the stage setting, following up on their progress, promoting qualified volunteers to greater challenges within their

competency, and the constant record keeping, would keep most administrators busy with only ten or fifteen volunteers. Ten or fifteen volunteers of quality would be much more desirable than 100 "on again-off again" volunteers. Ten or fifteen volunteers of quality are the results of expensive involvement of time, energy, and talent of a volunteer administrator. Such involvement would not be feasible if the volunteers were other than a first priority.

One of the "secrets" to a successful and quality volunteer service is the ability to turn away volunteers who obviously or not too obviously are not exactly right for you, the agency, the staff and/or clients. If we eliminate all the not-exactly-right volunteers, it is easier to focus our energies on the well-chosen few. The well-chosen volunteer is the best advocate to staff, client, the administration for continuing and supporting the volunteer co-workers. The well-chosen few are also the best advocates for the professionalization of volunteerism and the professionalization of the volunteer administrator position. This is what is needed in the emerging profession of volunteer administration. Volunteers are, as a matter of fact, on the scene to stay. Their hours are included in determining our gross national product. Volunteer administration

is still not the accepted fact we would like to say it is. I don't think we have to justify our importance as volunteer administrators. However, we now have to justify our being ranked as professionals receiving the continued support from other professionals. More than all that, I think we have to begin to justify our own expenditure of time, energy, and talent by a more careful delineation of its expenditure. Saying "no" in the screening process of volunteers isn't easy to do but it may be a lot easier than accepting the consequences if we don't.

## CHAPTER VI

### Personal Work Ethics

There is a lot of discussion about professional ethics for volunteer administrators. The imposition of a set of professional ethics is probably very opportune for an emerging profession. The Association for Volunteer Administration (AVA, the national organization for volunteer administrators) is appropriately the source for a code of professional ethics. The difficulty, as I see it, might be in determining broad enough ethics to apply to all volunteer administration positions. The work ethics which are discussed in this chapter pertain more to a general attitude toward work and co-workers, a personal attitude toward any work we might do, and toward others working in relationship to us. It is not, as such, a professional ethic solely for volunteer administrators, but one that would be very appropriate for volunteer administrators.

The extent and role definition we assign to the importance of our personal contribution in the success of volunteer services should describe or define our work ethics. Assuming the extent and role definition given in the first chapter, the personal work ethics proposed here are imperative. Since most volunteer

administration is a one-person operation without any counterparts within the same agency, we need some measuring rod to keep our attitude on a corresponding level with our job responsibilities. What will be discussed in this chapter are work ethics based on the latest thinking in the field of behavioral science (see Chapter VIII). They basically pertain to our attitude toward work in relationship to persons administratively above us, equal to us, and below us, and our attitude toward work in itself. Each will be described briefly and is open-ended, leaving room for expansion and/or modification.

A. NO ONE WORKS FOR ANYONE -- EVERYONE WORKS WITH OTHERS  
IN A CAPACITY OF MUTUAL RESPECT.

Each part of a machine has its own independent function and functions for the benefit of the whole. A good example would be an automobile. The engine operates independently of the brakes and the brakes operate independently of the engine as does the steering wheel, the lights, etc. All parts, however, function for the benefit of the automobile as an intricate unit. The various parts of the automobile can be likened to the various members of an agency. Each staff person has a duty to perform a function and although many functions are inter-related, they still have an independence.

It is an antiquated concept, and unfortunately, still prevalent in business, that people work for other people. The attitude is maintained more by persons in positions of authority than by subordinates. Some subordinates still think of themselves as working for someone. Fortunately, the number is declining. The dictatorial, supervisor-directed office is disappearing and none too soon. The individual dignity of every person is violated by the outdated authoritarian concept. Collectively, volunteer administrators are in an excellent position to assist in establishing this personal work ethic. There is usually no one in a higher administrative position who is familiar with all the aspects of volunteering. All volunteers are in a subordinate relationship to the administrator, and consequently, he can practice this ethic and be influential in establishing it as an administrative modus operandi.

B. THE SUPERVISING PRINCIPLE OF AUTHORITY IS ONE'S OWN CONSCIENCE, NOT ONE'S BOSS.

This second personal work ethic is essential as a backup to the first principle. In any business, it is necessary to maintain a work standard and established rules of conduct for purposes of efficiency and coherence. The inter-relatedness of most agency positions makes it

necessary that employees adhere to established practices and time schedules. Ordinarily, a supervisor was responsible for a given number of employees to see to it that established practices and time schedules were adhered to. This places one person in authority over another person. This is undignified and demeaning for intelligent and aware people. It also inevitably gives several persons the right of jurisdiction over a subordinate (through a chain of command status) and is prone to subjective practices more often than would be just.

To eliminate the necessity for this outdated arrangement, the volunteer administrator should establish a conscientious approach to his responsibilities and not take advantage of the open-ended aspects of his own job description. It is an easy practice when you're a one-person office to take liberties with your time. If we are to establish a reputable impression, we must first establish our conscience as the supervising principle of authority; otherwise, we are prone to becoming a boss-directed subordinate. The choice should be easy and obvious.

C. PEOPLE WORK TO LIVE, NOT LIVE TO WORK. THEREFORE, LIVING IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN WORKING.

Too frequently, we come in contact with persons who are easy to communicate with over a cup of coffee or at

a social function but who placed in their work situation become different personalities. Rightfully, these persons have been referred to as corporate schizophrenics. They make really bad supervisors because they lose their sense of humanness and view a person as a utility, something to be used and ordered about. The volunteer administrator must be constantly on guard against this subtle sickness. Too easily, the volunteer could be viewed as a pair of hands to be assigned rather than a person to be considered. The next work ethic flows naturally from this one.

D. WORKING, IDEALLY, SHOULD BE A PART OF LIVING.

Volunteers are frequently seeking to expand their living through volunteering. They do not see their volunteer assignments as separate from their lives but as an extension of their interest in living. They do not want to be thought of, and do not deserve to be thought of, as another pair of hands to do a job. The volunteer administrator who is work-oriented rather than life-oriented can so easily treat volunteers in a perfunctory manner. They may get results but it will only be an accident of their personal efforts rather than the outgrowth of their attitude. This could make for a

quantitative volunteer service but never for a qualitative one. The "corporate schizophrenics" are the persons who have separated their living from their working. They are either insecure in their living and therefore adopt a different style in their working or vice-versa. They are usually mild-mannered in one and tyrannical in the other. Beware of such people once they become an authority. Beware, that you do not become such a person.

E. SUBORDINATES HAVE A RIGHT TO EXPECT THAT THOSE IN A HIGHER ADMINISTRATIVE POSITION BE RESPONSIBLE AND KNOWLEDGEABLE PERSONS.

Some administrative positions are assigned by test or seniority; some are assigned by favoritism or patronage. However it comes about, the history of agencies and bureaucracies gives sufficient evidence that incompetent persons sometimes end up in responsible positions. The Peter Principle, which states that persons achieve to the level of their incompetence, defines a fact, not the product of someone's imagination. Rarely does someone get promoted to responsibility on the basis of his ability to relate equably with persons in subordinate positions.

If persons have the right to assign me to do something and I have the obligation to respond to their direction, it would be very comfortable to know that they

knew what they were talking about. A volunteer administrator exercises the right of assignment every time a volunteer is placed. Volunteer administrators who are casual toward the heavy responsibilities of their position are proving the Peter Principle and are a discredit to the profession.

Volunteers have a right to expect that volunteer administrators be responsible and knowledgeable persons. When a volunteer accepts an assignment from the volunteer administrator, he should be able to say: "You know what's best for me and where my services are most needed."

F. PERSONS IN HIGHER ADMINISTRATIVE POSITIONS HAVE A RIGHT TO EXPECT THAT SUBORDINATES WILL COOPERATE WITH AND HAVE RESPECT FOR THE POSITION OF HIGHER RESPONSIBILITY.

Someone has to run the show. There is no argument with the need for authority. We all need someone over us, or along side of us, or wherever, to keep us tuned to the right pitch in the performance of our work. Too frequently, the person in the position of higher responsibility confuses the position with the person. I have experienced myself in situations where I respected the position of authority but had a very difficult time finding anything to respect in the person holding the position.

If, as volunteer administrators, we don't see the awesome importance of our position, we will constantly be violating the rights of volunteers. Such a violation can come as much from neglect as from infringement. We have a right to expect that all persons subject to our administrative fiats will cooperate with us and have respect for our positions. However,

G. IF PERSONS IN POSITIONS OF HIGHER ADMINISTRATIVE RESPONSIBILITY HAVE NOT EARNED RESPECT, THEY ARE NOT ENTITLED TO IT.

It is often difficult to separate the person from the position. What too often happens is that the person misappropriates the respect for their position and directs it toward himself. What has happened, but not frequently enough, is that some individuals by the sheer dignity and dynamics of their person have brought respect to their position. Volunteer administration is virgin territory and the dignity of the position is very dependent upon the person holding the position. This ethical principle can help greatly to serve as a guide for our attitude and conduct. Tied closely to this principle is the other side of the same coin:

H. IF PERSONS IN SUBORDINATE POSITIONS HAVE NOT EARNED RESPECT, THEY ARE NOT ENTITLED TO IT.

In this and the preceding principle, the important word is earned. This should be so obvious that it needn't even be a principle. Unfortunately, persons misappropriate the respect they are due as persons and apply it to themselves as workers. In this, as in the preceding principle, we are making the distinction between a person as a person and a person as a worker. When there is work to be done and a person is hired to do the work, the work should be done. If a person doesn't do the work, they should be replaced. When a light bulb no longer lights, you replace it. You might use it as a decoration, but you don't depend on it as a source of light -- you don't respect it as a source of light. So also, a worker that doesn't work cannot be respected as a worker.

I. PERSONS WORK AT THE PEAK OF THEIR PERFORMANCE WHEN POSSIBLE.

In the preceding principle, we stated that when there is work to be done, the person hired to do the work should do the work. This principle is a double-edged sword; it specifies that the work should be done but it also says that we're dealing with the human equation and not with a machine. Work can be a very dignifying activity when it is done properly. Often the work itself specifies the extent of propriety. A person

should do the job he is hired to do as well as the job can be done. For some people, however, this is not possible. Therefore, the minimum that should be settled for is that a person do the job as best as he can do it. The second minimum expectation is that the person will work at his peak when possible. This takes into consideration the fact that humans cannot sustain peak performance every hour of every working day; but when they can, they should.

Personal work ethics are not effective if they are not made known. We often meet people who we would classify as "very ethical persons". Maybe it's something they have said or a manner we observe in them that telegraphs an ethical behavior. More often we meet people who do not evidence any particular ethical code. These people can fluctuate at will; they can be indignantly ethical one moment and unethical the next. They can demand respect but do not command respect.

The largest number of people in the professional world do not fall into either of the above groups. They may have a standard of ethics but no one knows what it is, or they may not have any standard and no one would know that either. The problem is precisely that others do not know and therefore cannot hold such people accountable for any particular mode of action.

Volunteer administrators should have personal ethics as well as professional ethics and both should be known by all with whom they work. It serves as a built-in conscience guide and standard for measuring one's own conduct as well as measuring one's suitability for the responsibilities of the job. Volunteers can feel more comfortable with their administrators when they know what guides them and what personal standards control their behavior.

Volunteering is a very personal thing. Volunteer administrators are most successful when they can humanize their administrative responsibilities, particularly in relation to the volunteer. Without a known set of personal work ethics, the administrator would cease to be an administrator and would not be able to function effectively when a problem arises. When you humanize your work, you become a friend to your co-workers. It's difficult to dismiss a friend unless your personal work ethics are the clearly visible force motivating the dismissal. They are not only the guide but also the guardian for good administration.

## CHAPTER VII

### The Staff

Volunteers do not work with the volunteer administrator, they work with the staff. The volunteer administrator works with the staff and, hopefully, the staff works with the volunteer administrator. One of the biggest assets to a volunteer administrator would be a totally cooperative staff; one of the biggest obstacles to the volunteer administrator could be an uncooperative staff.

Not everyone thinks that volunteers are an asset or even necessary. Some people are even suspect of someone who volunteers. The mentality toward volunteers and volunteering can run the gamut from genuine appreciation to serious suspicion. No one forms such a reaction and judgment without some mental frame of reference or some personal experience. Maybe the frame of reference is real or imagined, maybe the personal experience was intentional or accidental. Whatever, the judgment will stand until it is erased.

It behooves the volunteer administrator to assume that the staff of any agency/facility is made up of a composite of people with these possible attitudes. It would be a mistake to assume otherwise and even to

assume that an expressed favorableness toward volunteers today could not become a suspicion or an aversion tomorrow. One of the steps the volunteer administrator can take to partially insure against antagonistic reaction by staff is the careful screening and training of volunteers as discussed in Chapter III. By doing this, the staff is asked to consider qualified co-workers. This reduces the risk considerably.

The "who" doing the asking is a very important factor in favorably disposing the staff to consider anyone. If people display an attitude of consideration for me and for how I feel about something, I am more disposed to listening to their requests than, say, someone whose attitude says: "I could care less how you feel." The volunteer administrator's attitude of consideration toward staff is a very important factor in determining staff's receptivity to volunteers. Disposing staff to accepting volunteers is as much the result of the volunteer administrator's attitude as it is the result of training and/or exposing staff to quality volunteers. Regardless of how much time you spend training staff in the creative use of volunteers, and no matter how many qualified volunteers you assign, it will be to little avail if staff senses that your attitude toward them is less than considerate.

Ivan Scheier treats the question of volunteer/ staff relations with a refreshing new approach in his article, A New Look At An Old Failure:

"Attempting to tack volunteers on to an unreceptive agency or staff person is unfair and unlikely to help clients, but very likely to 'validate' a self-fulfilling agency prophecy of volunteer failure. This selective approach (presented in the article) requires courage in confronting the numbers fixation that is so common in givers of dollars. But we're partly responsible for that too."<sup>3</sup>

Doctor Scheier points out several valuable steps that can be taken to progressively gain staff cooperation and hold on to it. The entire question of volunteer/ staff relations is one that deserves long and careful study by the volunteer administrator. If, as suggested in Chapter III, the staff needs are the second priority on the volunteer administrator's list, it becomes a much easier task to implement Doctor Scheier's recommendations. Experience indicates to me that it is as imperative to educate the volunteer administrator's attitude toward staff as it is to educate the staff's attitude toward volunteers.

The problem seems to be a progressive distrust of staff following a single bad confrontation with one staff member. The following is an actual letter received by a volunteer administrator from a staff

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<sup>3</sup> Ivan Scheier, A New Look At An Old Failure, Voluntary Action Leadership, Fall 1977.  
Underscoring and parenthesis are my own.

person. It is quoted in its entirety because it supports many recommendations made throughout this book:

"Regarding your memo about volunteers, I think I can best reply by putting down a few thoughts on paper about the whole concept of volunteer help as I see it and the thoughts below crystalize the thinking of many staff here too.

I am personally in two minds about it as to whether volunteer help is a good thing for us, though I hate to suggest that all your efforts might be seen in this way! Firstly, what kind of people volunteer? If it is a student, is the desire to volunteer forced by some college requirement? If the voluntary help has to be a course-related activity, we may have some problem fitting in what the student has to do with what we need help in. I suppose Peg falls into such a category, and there is always some doubt about what we can get her doing and what she is doing. Not her fault, of course. No matter how willing or able they may be, there is inevitably the chance of some conflict over duties, over what is expected of them, and what we are permitted to have them do.

A "freed" volunteer, with only personal motives behind him (altruism, boredom, wanting experience - good and bad reasons) might be easier to assign tasks to and he may be more willing to do "anything" than a student with his eye forever on his course requirements. However, from past experience with volunteers, it seems that we are unable to rely on these people. Witness Judy and Jim Davies! For the staff, it can be demoralizing to have student bodies around who may not be actively engaged in the "corporate effort" sufficiently, but are pursuing their own "special project", though this may, of course, be of some indirect help to us. And usually these projects have to be conjured up and often have an artificial air of work invented to keep a body occupied! It is demoralizing too and probably pointless, to train people who may decide not to come after a week or who can come in or not as they please without us being able to question this. Much valuable staff time (now more valuable than ever!) can be squandered in training and supervising such people,

without any guaranteed result from so expensive an investment. For all their assistance, Marcia and Pete Bednar, for instance are not to be counted on to be here and even when they are, they have limitations which prevent them being able to accomplish all we need them to do. The Youth Corps crowd fall into a similar category, with a few unpredictable exceptions.

Granted that at present we need help, I can't help querying the kind of help we seem to be seeking. I hesitate to be too negative about all your work in the volunteer world, but to tell the truth, I am yet to be convinced that all this volunteer help, actual and potential, is a good thing for us. (Maybe it is for them, but that is hardly the point.) Some temporary benefits may result in the short-term but I have to question the principle of the concept.

As far as staff morale and productivity are concerned, it works counter to the best interests of the agency to have this constant traffic of a variety of people in and out of the place. There can be no reliance put on work continuity and it is most frustrating to have unreliable workers who one cannot count on to come. As you well know, what we need is regular staff who can be instructed and relied upon to report for duty and who can stay long enough to develop their abilities and be of some use to us. As long as we have such transient "help", the Powers That Be in their ivory towers will assume we are well off for staff. It is a horrible thing, but I suspect that the more voluntary help we succeed in getting, the slower is the progress towards replacing the staff we are owed. Anyhow, what kind of way to run a business is it to farm out work to the casual passerby? There must be more reliable and orthodox ways of getting the job done."<sup>4</sup>

In the first paragraph, the question of "Peg" would have been resolved by an in-depth orientation and an assignment that was appropriate to her needs. "Unable to rely on these people" can be alleviated as a staff complaint by a more critical screening or by an assignment to a situation that can accommodate a transient

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<sup>4</sup>Received by a Volunteer Administrator working in an education library from a staff worker.

volunteer. "Conjuring up projects" should be replaced by well-planned job descriptions. Judy and Jim Davies, perhaps, should have been discouraged from volunteering. Marcia and Pete Bednar needed extensive orientation and training. The Youth Corps crowd would be better assigned to housekeeping chores if they really wanted to help and a few select members only assigned to work with clients. Staff morale and productivity should improve with well chosen and prepared volunteers. Finally, volunteers are staff and reliable volunteers are more useful to an agency than unconscionable staff.

The letter, if it is read as though you received it, progressively pounds away at many inner convictions and slowly erodes most arguments we give ourselves in support of volunteers. The grains of truth contained in each example listed are suddenly baked into a full loaf by the final argument "what kind of a way to run a business is it to farm out work to the casual passerby?". Suddenly, this all-inclusive and decisive ending sounds like the entire staff is being committed to this view. One staff person coming on strong and eloquently verbalizing their skepticism can be magnified in the sensitive person's mind into the whole staff.

In Chapter III where I listed the volunteer administrator's priorities, staff should be thought of as a close second on the list. If the volunteer administrator had two hours to divide between volunteers and staff, I would say spend 65 minutes with volunteers and 55 minutes with staff. The responsibility to staff, to meeting their needs on the physical, intellectual, corological and spiritual level, is almost as incumbent on the volunteer administrator as meeting the volunteer's needs. Equally as important to actually meeting their needs is a willing and evident desire to do so. The slightest hint that the attitude is a condescending one will be picked up immediately and will be responded to almost as if there were no interest in their needs.

Staff who are willing to cooperate and work with volunteers are, in many respects, volunteers themselves. Though there may be agency policy that includes volunteers, it still takes that little extra something that separates willing and cooperative staff from the unwilling. Very often the willingness is the reciprocation for the volunteer administrator's willingness to go that extra mile in consideration for staff.

## CHAPTER VIII

### P.O.A. -- Polite, Open, Authoritative

A few years ago, this chapter could not have been written and probably would not have been necessary. It could not have been written because the behavioral science had not focused its research on managerial control systems and their consequent effect on the quantity and quality of employee production. It probably would not have been necessary because rebellion and strange behavior in work situations is a relatively recent phenomenon.

The behavioral scientists, in an attempt to explain somewhat contradictory human behavior in situations of employment, have proposed several theories and solutions for managers. The works by Abram Maslow, Douglas McGregor, Robert R. Blake and Jane S. Mouton, and Dr. Clare W. Graves offer extensive evidence that:

"...there are succeeding levels of human behavior, and the important thing is to see that the style of management suits the behavior level of the group of workers being managed."<sup>5</sup>

Although the scientists offer varying theories on how to cope with the differing problems confronting managers, they agree that workers do not fall into a single group that responds similarly to a single managerial method.

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<sup>5</sup>Deterioration of Work Standards, Dr. Clare W. Graves, Harvard Business Review, September/October, 1966.

For purposes of this chapter, we need only agree that not all co-workers respond in the same way to the same approach.

How often have volunteer administrators experienced opposite reactions from staff to suggestions of volunteer assistance? How often have we found it necessary to use different approaches to staff who are on the same work level in order to elicit a favorable response? How often have we discovered that we can ask some people for cooperation with a new idea and get it, while with others we have to make the suggestion appear as if it were their idea before they buy it? Volunteer administrators, particularly in their dealings with staff, will be well served by an understanding of what behavioral science has discovered.

In a simplified form, but hopefully sufficient for our purposes, an explanation of the theory would go something like this: People mature at different rates and achieve different levels of awareness. Three people at age 35 might be on three different levels of maturity and awareness. At each level, they often respond in a way that would be contradictory to their response on a different level. On one level, they would respond positively to direct command, and on another level, resist a direct command. In the working world, employees basically fall into four different categories determined

by their level of maturity and awareness. Some employees want to be told what to do, some employees want to go it alone, decide what to do and how it is to be done (these are rare if present at all in social service organizations and are not included in our considerations for purposes of this chapter). Some want to be consulted when the outlines of a job are being determined and a fourth group wants to be told what is needed to be done and then be left alone to do it.

These are variations on this simplified explanation and when presented in the language of the behavioral scientist, it allows for less ambiguity. For our purposes, the basic understanding will serve to guide us in our dealings with staff particularly, with volunteers occasionally, and always when we give a recruitment pitch in the community.

In a facility or agency, there are some staff persons who respond best when they are told to accept volunteers, orient and train them to their assignment and supervise them by doing thus and so. There are other staff persons who want to have it explained to them why volunteers are needed and consulted in the determination on how to use them. There are staff who need only to know the agency's/facility's philosophy on volunteers and they will do all the rest.

When speaking to an organization from which potential volunteers can be garnered, there will invariably be persons who are at different levels of maturity and awareness. The presentation needs to be direct for some, indirect for others, and almost ambiguous for still others. The same understanding is necessary in interviewing and assigning volunteers. Some volunteers want and need to be told what to do. Others want to know what is to be done and then be left alone to do it. Still others want to be consulted as to what they think should be done and then left to decide whether or not they are interested.

If the volunteer administrator assigns a volunteer who needs to be told each step to work with a staff person who expects the volunteer to take the initiative, there will be an unhappy marriage. The reverse would be even more drastic, assigning a "free-wheeling" creative volunteer to work with a staff person who uses a command approach and spells out every detail of the assignment. Many of these consequences are avoided by mere common sense or assessing a possible conflict of personalities. However, the purpose of this chapter is to equip the volunteer administrator to better handle situations where he is dealing with a group rather than in the matching of staff/volunteer personalities.

In speaking to or with a group, be they volunteers, staff, or community organizations, it is not necessary to design three different presentations. It is necessary, however, in order to reach the three basic levels of listeners, to design the presentation and your personal approach so that no one is turned off. In some ways we do this automatically. If we are speaking to a group of high school students, we give a presentation that would be different than if we were speaking to a group of professionals. Our choice of examples, our choice of words, even perhaps our attitude, would be different. We are aware, in these circumstances, that we are dealing with different levels of maturity and awareness.

When we are dealing with the same age groups and the same professional disposition, we may not be aware of the subtle differences which are indicated in this chapter. In order to appeal to or not turn off our listeners, we need a formula for our entire presentation. We need to be polite, open and authoritative.

By being authoritative, we will communicate with the group who want to be told what to do. By being open, we will communicate with the group who want to be told what is to be done and then left to decide what they will do about it. By being polite, we will communicate with the group who want to be consulted as to what should

be done. When we have determined which group an individual falls into, our approach to that person has to be aligned with his level of behavior. As Dr. Clare Graves so succinctly puts it:

"...the psychology of the mature human organism is an unfolding or emergent process marked by the progressive subordination of older behavioral systems to newer, higher order behavior systems...when a person is in one of the states of equilibrium, he has a psychology which is particular to that state. His acts, feelings, motivations, ethics and values, thoughts, and preferences for management all are appropriate to that state. If he were in another state (of maturity and awareness), he would act, feel, think, judge, and be motivated in a different manner."<sup>6</sup>

Most of us can look at our past behavior and say that we were polite in this or that situation or with this or that person. We can do the same, I am sure, with openness and with authoritativeness. We would probably agree also that our approach and our attitude were dictated by the circumstances and/or by the person with whom we were dealing. So we know that in our repertoire of behavior patterns we have the capacity to elicit all three approaches. What might not be too evident is the capacity to elicit all three of the approaches in a given situation.

The three attitudes are not mutually exclusive and therefore can be simultaneously expressed. It is very important that the three approaches or attitudes be held in

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<sup>6</sup>Deterioration of Work Standards, Dr. Clare W. Graves, Harvard Business Review, September/October, 1966. Underscoring and parenthesis are my own.

equal esteem. To be polite does not mean we are open any more than to be authoritarian would mean we are polite. They are three distinct attitudes that must come through with equal emphasis and genuineness. Some people are polite because it would be to their own detriment to be otherwise. The politeness we are speaking of is a respectful attitude to have toward the person with whom we are dealing.

It is wise to be polite to our boss if we're asking for a raise. It is proper to be polite to a subordinate because he is a person. It is easy to be open with our friends if we want to hold onto their friendship. It is proper to be open with a child because they have a dignity and deserve to be treated with integrity. It is easy for us to be authoritative to a casual acquaintance who attacks our integrity. It is proper to be authoritarian with loved ones when their actions are leading them into a behavior pattern that is socially unacceptable.

The polite, open, authoritative approach and attitude should be cultivated because it is good administration. It takes into consideration the person or persons with whom we are dealing. Besides being a good administrative technique, it is good personal dynamics.

## CHAPTER IX

### To Serve, Not To Be Served

A giant among historical figures introduced an idea and couched it in a phrase that could be the motto for volunteer administration: "I have come to serve, not to be served."<sup>7</sup> Another giant among men and former president of the United States took the phrase and applied it to contemporary times: "Ask not what your country can do for you, ask what you can do for your country."<sup>8</sup> This, with a slight modification, should be the motto for every volunteer administrator: "Ask not what the volunteer can do for you, ask what you can do for the volunteer."

Volunteers, for the most part, are prompted by a generosity of spirit to give of themselves, their time, their energy, their talent to the service of another. Some surface motives may appear which might dilute the idea of generosity such as student volunteers, time-release volunteers, or job-seeking volunteers. The fact is that there are, for all these people alternatives, but they choose the volunteer alternative. The generosity of their offer should be matched by the generosity of your service.

Many businesses were initially established to meet a need. As the public responded and the service became big business, much of the initial purpose was buried

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<sup>7</sup>Matthew 20:28; Mark 10:45.

<sup>8</sup>Innaugural Address, John F. Kennedy, 1961.

in the quest for quantity of profit and/or quality of power. This results in a reversal of roles: the public becomes "those who exist to fatten our coffer" and the business becomes "we who are doing you a favor". Some volunteer services are prone to this fallacy.

When an agency or facility first begins to solicit the services of volunteers, the first few volunteers are treated like royalty. The red carpet is out for them and the welcome mat has their name lettered in a golden smile and an uranium thank you. Slowly, often imperceptibly, the cooling off period sets in; the enthusiasm is just a little less genuine, the assignments slightly less significant, the thank you less frequent and the absences nearly unnoticed.

The drudgery of record keeping with its triplicate paper work, the repeat performances of the interview, orientation and the no-shows, and the staff's expressed disappointments with the here today, trained, and gone tomorrows begin to take their toll. The reversal of roles begins to happen. The perfunctory volunteer administrator comes across to the hesitant volunteer as "I who am doing you a favor" and the volunteer is "he whose name fattens my file folder and makes me look good on paper".

How do we escape this routine? How do we protect ourselves from the subtle malignancy often referred to as "state-itis" or "agency-itis" or "volunteer-itis"? Perhaps a big sign over our desk would remind us and announce to others our purpose: "To Serve, Not To Be Served". Or, as one administrator did on a wall hanging poster: "If I forget to smile, please don't think I'm not happy to see you."

I frequently contemplate and try to analyze the changes in our culture that have taken place just during my own life span. Two examples keep coming to my mind's eye and I wonder with some trepidation what might yet be forthcoming. When I was younger, I worked part-time at a gas station as an attendant. My "briefing" before I could wait on customers spelled out, among other things, "courtesy and complete attention to clean windows, checking oil and tire pressure, and at least act like you are happy to be of service". Customers "are what keep us in business and keep you in a job". Over the years, the first thing to go was tire pressure, then oil was overlooked. Finally, buckets with a stick in them were placed near the pump so if the customers wanted to wash their own windows while they waited, they were (graciously) provided with the means. Have you been to a self-service gasoline station lately? And,

have you noticed how when the prices go up the service goes down?

The other example is a curious dilemma. Not only did the roles get reversed, but you can be arrested if you don't go along with the very thing you brought about in the first place. When our country was first starting to feel the growing pains of social structure way back when mothers and fathers taught their children the fundamentals necessary for life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, the idea of a school was born. Soon, mom and dad found that they did not have enough time to spend with their offspring in order to teach them the "3 R's". So they got together with other families and appointed an educator. The townsfolk went one step further and pitched in to build the one-room school house. Slowly education began its transition. I wasn't around to see all the stages that transpired, but I do remember recently reading where some parents were arrested because they refused to send their under 16 years of age children to school. The very persons who prompted the idea of public education can now be arrested if they violate the laws which regulate the schools they instituted.

Both these examples have a warning message to the volunteer administrator. Little by little, the

courtesies, the extra attentions, and the "I'm here to serve you" attitude gives way to job complacency and job expediency. The day-after-day, week-after-week, year-after-year repetition of recruitment, interview, orientation and placement erode interest and enthusiasm. What is lost sight of is the fact that most volunteers are experiencing the first-time jitters, a new experience that is a generous gift. They do not, for the most part, have a litany of experiences to use as a comparison. The complacent reaction takes the edge off their own enthusiasm and diminishes the value of their services. Their otherwise valuable service is translated into a routine gesture.

In some few instances, the parent-school dilemma has its counterpart in volunteer administration. This happens in all instances where there is a confusion of priorities -- the volunteer administrator placing staff or client or administration in a position of priority above the volunteer. At this point in time, the volunteer is dismissed if he does not conform to the expectations of staff, client and/or administration. This is not to say that there are not circumstances where dismissal is justified. It is saying that proper alternatives to dismissal are overlooked because the

complaints of staff, client and/or administration take precedence over the volunteer's role as co-worker. What might have been avoided by adequate orientation, training and placement is resolved by dismissal. What might have been solved by transfer is desolved by tokenism interest.

There is no escaping the responsibility incumbent upon the volunteer administrator to see to needs of the volunteer. In today's materialistic society, many services that were volunteered yesterday are paid for today. Many constructive ideas that began our institutions have gone full circle and are now oppressing the persons who gave them birth. There are far too few instances where the spirit of unsolicited assistance reflects the attitude that was once the pride of the American way of life. The wrong attitude in volunteer administration will cause the demise of our profession. The mediocre volunteer will be the rule instead of the exception.

Volunteer administration is not immune to the social and economic diseases that stalk the professions and turn them into big business. The medical profession that once boasted about its doctors who went to the sick is now the profession where the sick go to the doctor. Some volunteer administrators used to visit the volunteer to see if everything was all right. Now those

same administrators notify the volunteers that they are always welcome to come to the volunteer office if they have any problems.

The only person who can determine the destiny of volunteer services and promote the dignity of volunteer efforts is the volunteer administrator. While we are still for the most part a one or two-person administrative operation, we can keep a handle on our direction. While we are still an emerging profession, we can determine the prevailing attitude of our position. While we are still free to do so, we must collectively agree that we are here to serve the volunteer, not to be served by them.

## CHAPTER X

### Leave The Door Open -- A Crack

Volunteer administrators who have entered the profession within the past few years may find little in this book that is new or a new approach. They have entered the profession with training and exposure to new administrative techniques. They have selected volunteer administration as their career, rather than finding themselves in it by an administrative directive. It has been partly due to their innovative approaches and desire for involvement that has given rise to much new thinking in volunteerism and inspired many thoughts in these pages.

Coming with new ideas, genuine enthusiasm, and to some extent, on a different level of awareness than many of their established fellow administrators, these new volunteer administrators may tend to minimize the value of the "do-gooder" volunteers ("do-gooder" in the sense that I use it throughout this chapter is not intended as a term of derision but to identify a large group of volunteers whose involvement in client rehabilitation is minimal). Many of the newer volunteer administrators are taking over established

volunteer services and immersing themselves in the newer aspects of volunteerism. Frequently, they encounter staff and volunteers who firmly believe that the old days and the old ways are better. Many of the "do-gooder" volunteers are comfortable in their assignments and staff are comfortable with this "old" form of volunteering.

Some of these "do-gooder" volunteers are still coming faithfully to their assignments and performing them with dedication. The legitimate contention that the job of volunteer administration has multiplied in complexity tempts the volunteer administrator to close the door to this group or to ease them out of volunteer services. This would be a mistake.

The arrival on the volunteer scene of the professionals, the para-professionals, the college students, and the business release worker, has challenged and taxed the ingenuity of the volunteer administrator. A once simple routine of assigning volunteers to a social setting and recording their volunteer time has become a montage of orientation, training, supervision, evaluation, promotion, and recognition. It has resulted in a tendency to minimize the offer of the volunteers who "merely" want to do some good and also fill up some

idle moments in their lives. It can happen that the inclination would be to treat such offers with indifference or even to squelch them entirely.

When the focus is on the utilitarian aspect of the volunteers' offer or on how much they can do for the staff, the clients, or the administration, the inclination can easily be justified. The inclination magnifies with every offer of significant service. From this vantage point of priorities it is an easy transition to gloss over the "idle-time-filler" volunteers and spend one's time, energy, and talent on the volunteers who offer a significant commitment of time and talent. If, however, the focus of priorities is on the volunteers as persons, the "do-gooders" have as much right as anyone to volunteer and deserve equal attention from the volunteer administrator.

Too frequently, new approaches replace old techniques instead of absorbing what was good of the old and redirecting it. To be able to take what was of value from the old and build it into the new is a better course of action than discarding or destroying. The socialization "do-gooder" volunteer of the past can become, with good administration, the advocates for the present and future. Many of these faithful long-time serving volunteers are the best-equipped persons

to speak in the community on behalf of clients. Their warmth as persons, their often intimate knowledge of the clients, their very availability, make them -- with training -- excellent advocates for the new philosophy of rehabilitation.

Volunteer administrators, by job description, have frequent contact with the community. Volunteer administrators are being asked more and more to prepare and dispose the community to enter into the rehabilitative process. To normalize the opportunities for clients for social contacts, the community is being asked to absorb the client population and exert an influence on their behavior. The best-equipped people to speak to the community are the volunteers of long-standing -- the "do-gooders".

We would do an injustice to the idea of volunteering if we do not see in every offer of service a value beyond the surface. As volunteer administrators we are the custodians of a treasure that is fast disappearing from society. To volunteer is to freely and willfully offer one's self through service to the assistance and enrichment of another person's life. Regardless of what time frame is placed on this offer, regardless of what details of service are expressed, regardless of what combination of circumstances has

prompted the offer, the offer stands as a tribute to a generosity of spirit underlying the expression. Concern for another person's life pattern is no trivial thing. To take it lightly, to treat it with indifference, to scoff at it or to belittle it is a serious breach of one's own dignity as a person.

I am often reminded, when I see or hear about a person treating lightly the offer of another, of the parable of the widow's mite. The widow had very little to offer but the meagerness of her offer in comparison to her supply made it a very generous offer. When we focus on the offer of the volunteer we can justify minimizing its importance; when we focus on the volunteer who makes the offer, we can justify a commitment of our time and service. Though we may have to say "thanks, but no thanks" to a particular volunteer, the way we say it, the reasons for saying it, and the effect on the volunteer to whom we say it, will be much different depending on where our priorities lie.

A volunteer who can only give one-half hour, one day a week, or one day every two weeks, may be making an offer (from their point of view and circumstances) that is more valuable than a volunteer who is offering extensive time. A volunteer who is offering

to sit and visit with a client may be making a more valuable offer than a professional person who is willing to give professional service to a client. The value of the offer should be based on the motive behind it rather than on the type of service or the commitment of time.

One day I was sitting in my office trying to improve my appreciation of the volunteers who were giving service at the facility where I was the volunteer administrator. I focused first on the various activities they were involved in and tried to envision the value to the clients, to the staff, and the overall service to the facility. Nothing happened inside of me, no new appreciation welled up to give me job satisfaction. Then I focused on just one volunteer, a retired school teacher who was tutoring four young men. She was due to arrive that same afternoon. It was around 10:00 in the morning when the thoughts began to take form in my mind. I went mentally to her home and saw her peeling potatoes and preparing supper for her family. The thought struck me very vividly that she was beginning her volunteer assignment four hours before she was due to arrive at the facility. Many thoughts followed in rapid succession. I saw her planning the meal, picking up the house, setting the supper table, sprucing herself

up all in preparation for the time she would be spending at her volunteer assignment. I began to get a real gut feeling of appreciation from this scene, not only of this volunteer but of all the volunteers. A volunteer's gift of time is often much more than we realize. Often it is a gift of other people's time and generosity who pick up the slack and fill in the voids made by the volunteer's gift.

We would be unwise to close the door on any type of volunteering or on any type of person who may volunteer. Some may give of themselves, some may give of their time, some may give of their money, some may give of their advice, some may give a lot, some may give a little. It's the giving that is of value -- not the gift. And, the giver is always worth more than the gift. If we don't leave the door open for everyone, we will readily find ourselves thinking more of the gifts of the givers than the givers of gifts.

CHAPTER XI  
The Mark Of The Beast<sup>9</sup>

Evil is often disguised as good. Human nature, being what it is, always seeks the good or the apparent good. Evil to have any success infiltrating society has to disguise itself as an apparent good. The more beneficial a thing or an act might be to social growth, the more it is likely to be contaminated by a subtle evil under the guise of an apparent good.

In Chapter II, we spoke of the dangers in volunteering. The dangers discussed in that chapter can be avoided by maintaining the attitude that it is a privilege to help another person. With this attitude, the volunteers are less likely to offend the personal dignity of the recipient of their services. There is another kind of danger that is more difficult to avoid, less easy to identify, and more dangerous because it is disguised as an apparent good.

In Revelations, the mark of the beast is symbolically placed on the right hand or the forehead -- the hand that offers help, the forehead that houses the mind. The beast (and all who have this mark):

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<sup>9</sup>Idea originally developed by Kathleen Clark, Coordinator of Volunteer Services, Syracuse Developmental Center; by permission.

"causes all, both small and great, both rich and poor, both free and slave, to be marked on the right hand or forehead."<sup>10</sup>

The beast is evil; "the Anti-Christ", disguised as apparent good.

I am sure all of us can remember a time when we were young that we were told not to play with this or that person because he was a different religion, a different color, a different social class, just not a good influence, etc. Most of us, when we were young, didn't know about differences of religion, color, race, social standing, or what is a good influence opposed to a bad influence. We saw only the person and didn't notice most of the differences. Prejudices were taught to us by good people. We learned to hate; we learned that colors made a difference; we learned that money separated. It was taught to us in the guise of good from good people, people who said they loved us.

Most volunteers are good people, most volunteer administrators are good people. Most clients, whom volunteers help, don't care about differences; they just want help. Most people carry the mark of the beast in one form or another and frequently perpetuate the mark by doing an evil in the guise of an apparent good, unknowingly. "Oh, you poor thing, let me help you."

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<sup>10</sup>Revelations: 13.16.

Some guises are not quite as obvious as that statement. Sometimes it is a stethoscope and white garment. Sometimes it's a benign smile that intimidates and places the exorbitant price tag of degradation on its victim.

The mark of the beast can be found in inanimate objects as well -- many fashioned by human hands. The three brick walls and a fourth with vertical bars, a locked door, a pair of handcuffs, a whistle, a club. Sometimes it's a title; sometimes it's a pronoun instead of a name. Whatever separates and categorizes, whatever stigmatizes, is the mark of the beast.

When we go to someone's home to visit a friend, relative, associate, we find a relaxed, warm, lived-in atmosphere. Our conversations are sometimes general, sometimes specific, sometimes just sociable. When we visit an institutionalized client or agency personnel, we can distinguish the mark of the beast in so many things and so many ways. Often our speaking attitude is controlled by the "beast" because it is suggested by the environment. In prisons and hospitals, we talk in hushed tones -- unnaturally. In institutions, we talk downward and paternalistically. In offices, we talk bureaucratically. In classrooms, we talk authoritatively.

We probably don't give much thought to our less than human fluctuations because they have become the accepted, commonplace mode of acting and speaking. Without realizing it, we probably come across in four or five different ways daily. Over a cup of coffee we are sociable; over a desk we are officious; as a passerby on the street - aloof; shopping at a store - formal; on the telephone - informal; to our boss - humble; to a subordinate - authoritative.

Several years ago I began my career as a Volunteer Administrator at a state school for the mentally retarded. During the second week, while I was familiarizing myself with the work environment, I attended a resident evening social function. Standing off on the periphery of the dance floor, I turned to a woman next to me and commented about the dancers. We struck up a conversation about the school, the residents, the staff, and the programs. A half-hour later, I learned from the woman that she was a resident and had been institutionalized for over twenty years. At that moment, my attitude toward her changed and it shouldn't have. I was as conditioned as anyone having been marked by the beast. My prejudices, my preconceived ideas, my job status, all directed me to act differently while relating to a client. Up to the point

of the discovery, we had been relating person to person. When I learned that she was a client, the relationship became paternalistic. Though she struggled to keep the conversation person to person, I backed off and "kept her in her place".

Volunteer administrators and volunteers can, without advertng to it, perpetuate the mark of the beast. We can place the volunteers in a uniform or give them a badge, thus setting them aside as different. The uniform, the badge, becomes the mark of the beast. The uniform, the badge announces: "I'm not staff; I'm not a client; I'm a volunteer. I'm different, you're different; we're not in the same category." That's not what volunteering should be.

Volunteering is a noble opportunity whereby human beings, offer themselves to other human beings, unequivocally to enrich their lives and frequently to have their own lives enriched consequentially. There should be no side effects that would detract from this human encounter. The avoidance of detractive side effects is the responsibility of the volunteer administrator. Promoting and safeguarding the purity of the encounter is the responsibility of the volunteer administrator.

As volunteer administrators, we cannot change the personality of the volunteers; we cannot alter their character; we cannot accurately predict their suitability for an assignment. They can change their own personality; they can alter their own character; we can devise some fail-safe techniques for predicting their suitability. We can motivate them to improve their personality; we can challenge them to alter their character; we can create situations of suitability. We can direct their energies; we can inspire their deeds; we can equip them for greater endeavors; or we can allow them to perpetuate and promote the mark of the beast.

Kahlil Gibran, in "The Prophet", might well have been admonishing volunteer administrators in how to approach the orientation and training of volunteers and how best to assist them in their gift of giving so as to avoid passing on the mark of the beast.

Then said a rich man, Speak to us of Giving.  
And he answered:

You give but little when you give of your  
possessions.  
It is when you give of yourself that you  
truly give.  
For what are your possessions but things you  
keep and guard for fear you may need them  
tomorrow?  
And tomorrow, what shall tomorrow bring to the  
over-prudent dog burying bones in the  
trackless sand as he follows the pilgrims

to the holy city?  
And what is fear of need but need itself?  
Is not dread of thirst when your well is full,  
the thirst that is unquenchable?

There are those who give little of the much  
which they have — and they give it for  
recognition and their hidden desire makes  
their gifts unwholesome.  
And there are those who have little and give it  
all.  
These are the believers in life and the bounty  
of life, and their coffer is never empty.

There are those who give with joy, and that joy  
is their reward.  
And there are those who give with pain, and that  
pain is their baptism.  
And there are those who give and know not pain  
in giving, nor do they seek joy, nor give with  
mindfulness of virtue;  
They give as in yonder valley where myrtle breathes  
its fragrance into space.  
Through the hands of such as these God speaks, and  
from behind these eyes He smiles upon the  
earth."<sup>11</sup>

Nothing and no one passes directly from the  
worst to the best. Everything that is has something of  
good in it; everyone who is has something good in him.  
A thing or a person can pass successively from bad to good,  
good to better, better to best. A volunteer's motive,  
method, and production can be improved by constructive,  
well-administrated, and well-orchestrated orientation,  
training, supervision and counseling. The responsibility  
to effect this transition is incumbent upon the volunteer  
administrator. The responsibility to detect the mark of  
the beast and to deter its successive transition is  
incumbent upon the volunteer administrator.

Gibran, Kahlil, The Prophet, Alfred A. Knopf, Inc.,  
New York, 1926.

## CHAPTER XII

### The Volunteer Administrator

With this final chapter, we come full circle back to where we started. Between the pages we have looked at many aspects of the job of the volunteer administrator. We have spoken in several instances of the value of persons as persons and focused on the dignity of being a human being. We have drawn many pictures and stood back to examine the pictures with an attitude of respect for what we were seeing. Now it is appropriate that we place ourselves into the scene and examine ourselves with an attitude of respect.

Let's imagine first the scene of a cocktail party where conversation has gone from the surface topics to the topic of professions. One proud parent is heard saying: "My son is studying to be a doctor." The 'oohs' and 'aahs' that follow this proud announcement give indication that all agree this is a noble profession. Another proud father announces that his daughter is studying to be a lawyer. His pride is bolstered in much the same manner as was the one who made the "doctor announcement". Then timidly, one woman pronounces to the bewilderment of everyone that her son is going to be a volunteer administrator.

We can well imagine the looks of consternation on the faces to this remark and we know the questions that follow such a remark. We have seen the looks; we have heard the questions. Everyone knows that doctors are "dedicated" to making sick people well. Everyone realizes that lawyers are "dedicated" to the concepts of justice and to helping people get their just dues. Not everyone knows what a volunteer administrator is or does.

I think it is very important for us to realize the high dignity of our position and the sound basis for its listing as a profession. I am not at all disturbed by the fact that so few people and so few professionals know what we're all about. I am disturbed when I realize that some volunteer administrators don't hold themselves in high esteem. The lawyers who bring down the image of the legal profession are the ones who are in it for the money and don't hold themselves in high esteem, let alone their profession. The doctors who bring discredit to the medical profession are the ones who don't hold their Hipocratic Oath or themselves in high esteem. In both the medical and the legal profession, it is the value, dignity, and welfare of the person served who establishes the high standard of these professions.

In volunteer administration, we are privileged to be of service to a very select few of distinguished

persons from every walk of life. Persons whose generosity and magnanimity are a treasure to everyone they serve. What greater thing can anyone do than to freely and willfully offer one's self through service to the assistance and enrichment of another person's life. Volunteers, through friendship and service, make it possible for less capable persons to have a fuller life, to enjoy liberty and to pursue happiness. Volunteers are people who know how to love.

Volunteer administration is a doorway, and possibly the last doorway, through which a person can pass who wants to express concern for another human being. Hospital doors, mental health facility doors, prison doors, have all been opened by volunteers. Government agencies and practices have, for the better, been scrutinized and improved by volunteers. If this weren't enough, the course of human destiny has been altered by volunteers because they have improved the condition of life for many members of the human race.

The volunteer administrator is privileged to champion the cause of one of the finest and highest qualities in the human character -- the quality of charity. When we serve the volunteer we embellish their gifts with a setting befitting its dignity. When we recruit, we offer opportunity. When we orient, we

enlighten. When we train, we equip. When we assign, we bring about an encounter of the closest kind and when we dismiss, we administer justice. We have an awesome responsibility when we serve the volunteer.

The clients who are in turn served by the volunteer are persons administered to by every profession. Often, where the professional might fail, the volunteer with his unselfish gifts brings healing and consolation. Volunteers visit the sick, enter the prisons, clothe the naked, give food to the needy; in short, they give the most to the least. And we make it all possible.

A profession, among other qualities, has a distinguishing characteristic that fits volunteer administration - as outlined in this book - like a glove fits a hand. It is a vocation or an occupation requiring advanced training, and usually involving mental rather than manual work. A professional is a person engaged in or worthy of the high standards of a profession. The volunteer administrator who tends to the needs of the volunteer is constantly busy mentally and is thereby dignifying the profession through the weight of his own mental effort. There are an infinite number of ways to be nice, to be dynamic, to be industrious. There are countless ways to be of service. There are opportunities galore to challenge energies and to change

opinions. There are duties to be refined, there are imaginative doors to be opened, and there are innumerable combinations of circumstances favorable for creating a better image of the work of volunteer administration.

Volunteer administration has been in the public arena as a profession for only a short period of time. It has not yet reached the maturity of public notice. In many instances, it has not even been noticed within the very agency where it exists. Added to this lack of recognition is the implications conjured up by the word volunteer. Because there is the overtone of free attached to the service, some of our co-workers and many other professionals attach a stigma of inexpensive to our services. They tend to see us as mere channels of free service: "Therefore, how much could our service be worth?". The materialistic tendencies of our present social order explain some of this anemic view. Some of this view, however, is due to our own fault.

We have failed, in many instances, to realize the full impact of our position and we have failed to place the emphasis of our energies in the right direction. If we are busy juggling phone calls, attending meetings, arranging for entertainment, receiving donations, planning parties and producing newsletters, we are minimizing our own administrative responsibilities. If we are "in

the numbers racket" we are feverishly burning up our energies in efforts of futility.

The administrator who focuses on the needs of volunteers is contributing a service of eminent value to persons of great worth. Beyond this, our society has need of volunteers far beyond the present aspect of volunteering. To school our present cadre of volunteers for greater involvement, more challenging service, and more vocal expression, takes a person with parallel commitments. Volunteers who can be committed to social changes will be inspired to do so by those who have the courage to lead. As volunteer administrators we are in the most vital position to inspire and to lead.

Our singular position as volunteer administrators meeting volunteer needs is great in its present format. The potential of our position is greater still. Volunteer administrators have every reason to be excited about their position. We sit in a position that is vibrating with potential and brim-filled with satisfactions. We need collective thinking about where we are going. We need to determine what priorities belong to each successive stage in developing the potential of our profession. We need to see ourselves in the picture

of volunteerism as professionals designing a profession.  
The profession of volunteer administration can only be  
as great as we make it, as recognized as we want it, and  
as important as we give it impetus.