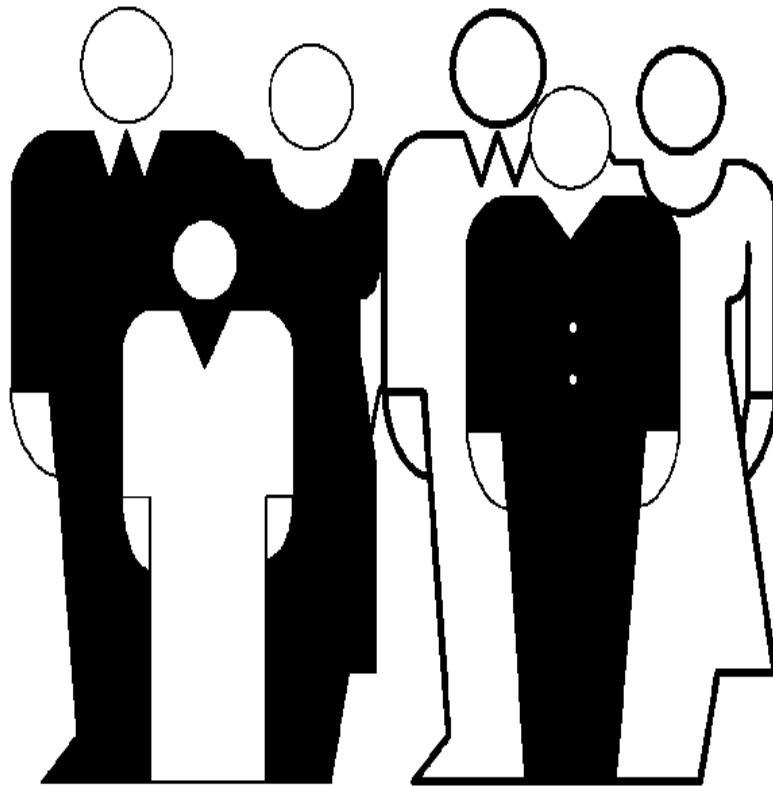


# **The New People Approach**

## **Handbook**



**By Ivan Scheier**

# The New People Approach Handbook

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\*Included – Other methods are available in other sections of the New Volunteerism Project

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People Approach attitudes are at work anytime an imaginative leader of volunteers creates a needed job around the motivations and abilities a person or group brings to a situation, or anytime a sensitive interviewer of prospective volunteers listens to their hopes, concerns, interests, rather than telling them what they ought to want to do. These relatively unselfconscious applications of People Approach are warmly applauded here. But the main agenda has been development of self-conscious, systematic methods and strategies derived rigorously from the People Approach Principle. . . “MINI-MAX” and “Need-Overlap Analysis in Helping (NOAH)”

## CHAPTER ONE



### Definition, Departure Points, and Preview

#### **“People Approach” As A Kind Of Common Sense**

Suppose someone told you that you could have lots of fun helping other people. Would you be surprised? A little shocked perhaps? Or would you readily agree that helping can be enjoyable and maybe should be, more of the time? This last belief has the backing of a body of principles and methods called “People Approach.” These concepts and strategies began to evolve about a decade ago, based on assumptions of rather startling simplicity: if you want people to work for you as volunteers without pay and of their own free choice, it makes sense to stay as close as possible to their natural motivations and abilities in the work you ask them to do. By “natural,” is meant the experiences, values, talents, preferences, and aversions we find existing now, in people we approach. The primary, motivation is something we discover rather than create. To act as if we could create basically new motivations in the adult person is a dangerous concept. Far better if we respect people enough to believe we can take them as they are and get important helping accomplished on that basis.

#### **The Contrast to “Job Approach”**

People Approach can also be understood by contrasting it to “Job Approach.” In Job Approach we come to potential volunteers with a job in mind; we need to fit this or that slot – library aide, Big Sister, fund-raiser, etc. If you don’t happen to fit this mold, your services are lost to the organization. Job Approach first defines the work, then expects people to adjust to the job description; job first, people second. Conversely, a People Approach emphasis puts people first and jobs second. First, we find out what you like to do that you can do pretty well. Only then do we try to find a place where your natural interests, abilities, and experience can be used. We may negotiate gentle deflections of your natural interest and abilities, the better to fit needs we wish to serve. But we always stop short of attempting to persuade you to do something you are not.

A Job Approach emphasis is almost inevitable in the world of paid employment. Suppose your youth-service program has an opening for a bookkeeper. If someone walks in who can’t add or subtract, but is wonderful rapping with kids, you can’t use her/him for that because you can’t pay her/him for that. In a volunteer work system People Approach might find a place for this person’s motivated skills; we might create a meaningful job to suit the person and the people served; we don’t have to find a budget line or salary money for it first. In other words, the volunteer way of getting work done permits far greater flexibility in shaping work around a volunteer’s existing motivations and talents. If we’re looking for companions for one-parent children, and an optometrist who loves swimming walks in to volunteer, the possibilities are there to engage her/his services in eye-testing, if that’s useful to the children, or as a swimming instructor. People Approach attitudes are at work any time an imaginative leader of volunteers creates a needed job around the motivations and abilities a person or group brings to a situation, or any time a sensitive interviewer of prospective volunteers listens to their hopes, concerns, interests, rather than telling them what they ought to want to do. These relatively unselfconscious applications of People Approach are warmly applauded here. But the main agenda has been development of self-conscious, systematic methods or strategies, derived rigorously from the People Approach principles.

### **An Attempt to Take Common Sense Seriously**

To begin with, the concept itself needs to be communicated more precisely. The statement which has been developed for that purpose is:

*Make the minimum difference in what a person wants to do and can do which has the maximum positive effect on other people.*

The question then becomes: what would volunteer job-design, recruiting, screening, placing, etc., look like if we concentrated on the above statement as a serious, consistent basis for strategy and tactics?

Four such strategies evolved during the early and mid 1970's. (1) Two of these four have so far failed to show substantial promise in terms of practitioner interest, application and feedback. These two methods are therefore not covered in this handbook." (2) Instead we concentrated on the other two strategies which have been widely and successfully applied in the real world: MINI-MAX and Need-Overlap Analysis in Helping (NOAH) Since the last general update on People Approach, in 1977, (3) significant refinements and variations have developed in these two methods.

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(1) These four were first published in People Approach: Nine New Strategies for Citizen Volunteer Involvement, by Ivan Scheier, the National Information Center on Volunteerism, Boulder, Colorado, 1977. In addition to the four strategies there were two raw speculations on which no more than a few pages were ever published, to my knowledge. These were Need Broadcasting and Dyads (Signaling).

(2) The two methods were Self-Help and Helping (SHAH), and Community Linkage Process

(3) People Approach, 1977. Several excellent publications since then focus on one method or area of application, and they will be referred to in the text.

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## CHAPTER TWO



### The Case for People Approach and Some Cautions

#### Benefits in Recruitment of Volunteers

Consider the volunteer recruiting crunch most of us suffer today. Throughout North America, informal but powerfully confirmed impressions pile up: while the number of people volunteering may have increased slightly during the past decade, the number of organizations competing for volunteers has multiplied five-fold to sevenfold during the same period, and may shoot up even more rapidly in these budget-shrunk times. It is scant comfort to reflect that we may be victims of our own success in popularizing volunteerism as a respectable, effective way of getting helping work done; for most of us today, good volunteers are harder to find than they ever were. Many individual programs and organizations have been declining in total number of volunteers for several years or more.

Overall, I do not think we can any longer afford to be satisfied with only 20-30% of Americans as volunteers, in an era where social problems seem to demand 100% participation. Grateful as we should be to the one in four who are involved today, we must begin soon and seriously to increase the total pool of volunteers towards a target far closer to four out of four people.

To do this, we must be much more careful and self-conscious in first orienting towards what people want to do, and then imaginatively relating this to our needs for help. This is exactly what People Approach does and – please note – the dividend is not only more volunteers, but a greater variety of volunteer backgrounds and experience. (1)

Insofar as we are willing and able to let people do it their way, I don't believe there is such a thing as an apathetic person, among the three out of four Americans who don't volunteer, or anywhere else. What we do have is some unimaginative leaders who have failed to get across to people how they can often help other people and enjoy themselves at the same time.

#### Benefits From a Program Investment Standpoint

Another people approach benefit pertains to the time, skill, and money we commit to the development and maintenance of volunteer enterprises. This investment should never be neglected or wantonly slashed; anyone who thinks volunteer programs are something for nothing is likely to end up getting nothing for nothing.

But at the same time we can paint ourselves into a corner where our investment in a volunteer program or organization is simply more than we can afford. For the past five years, I've been seeing more and more frequent evidence that it costs \$500-1,000 a year for some sophisticated volunteer programs to field a single volunteer.(2) (I'm aware that some other programs do it for far less.) In terms of return from the typical volunteer in market value and human value of work, \$1,000 has to be the bargain of the century. But in terms of what many of us actually can afford these days, it is also becoming an impossible amount if we wish to keep significant numbers of volunteers involved.

People Approach can help here. When we involve people doing what they are already motivated and competent to do, we can budget less time and money motivating, supervising, and training these "naturals." Even without sophisticated (and costly) incentives and supervision, a volunteer doing work closer to her/his heart, mind and hands is more likely to preserve self-directedly until work purposes are achieved. Put otherwise, People Approach methods can increase the number

of productively and happily engaged volunteers per volunteer coordinator or other volunteer leader. Among other things, this should make the volunteer coordinator's job more significant and valued.

### Issues

People Approach is essentially a search for ways in which more helping can occur, out of a faith that everyone has something to give, if only we are skilled enough to identify it, and imaginative enough to connect it to real need. Not incidentally, part of the positive prospect here is to move more strongly with the best aspirations of our society – to include people rather than exclude them.

But this doesn't mean that anything anybody happens to feel like doing will be helpful to others, e.g., using dope or cheating at cards. At a minimum, the offering must be legal and ethical. Beyond that, what we will call a "Glad Give" can't be just anything a person likes to do and can do pretty well. It must also be something which might be useful to other people.

This point will be elaborated later in this handbook. Suffice it to stress here that People Approach is not license to "do your own thing," whatever it may be, and call it helping. Confusion in this area might be the result of a People Approach position on the enjoyability of helping. When people are simply doing what they like to do, helping can indeed be fun, interesting, even joyful. This position probably bothers people who, unconsciously at least, believe that the integrity of help somehow depends on it being a kind of sacrifice.

People Approach says it doesn't have to hurt before it helps. A great deal of helping can occur when we move with what is already moving in people, before we reach the "obligation barrier:" the things nobody (in sight) wants to do. That point will surely come, where we must rely on conscience, a sense of obligation, and even sacrifice. People Approach simply goes as far as possible with the good that is in people now, however hidden it may be from ordinary view, before having to tap into precious reserves of pure conscience.

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- (1) For more on recruiting, see: Recruiting Volunteers in the 1980's: A Perspective on People Approach by Ivan Scheier, pages 7-8, in the Winter, 1981 edition of The NAVCJ Examiner, published by the National Association of Volunteers in Criminal Justice, University Alabama, 35486
  - (2) See references on page 7 of A Look at the Eighties: Crucial Environmental Factors Affecting Volunteerism. The National Forum on Volunteerism, 1980. These references suggest that the direct and indirect cost of putting a volunteer in the field in organized, supervised agency-related volunteer programs, is currently #1.25-\$1.50 an hour. Volunteers working 350-700 hours a year would then give the \$500-\$1,000 total yearly cost figures. I've also seen that total figure directly costed out in confidential reports.
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## CHAPTER THREE



### Finding the Gladly Given ( And Understanding it, Once Found)

“Bless my soul,” said Mrs. McBee, “because doing something you can do very well, for somebody who needs it being done, not only pleases him, it pleases you.”

“Give something you can do very well to somebody who needs it.  
And see what a pleasure it’ll be.”

From Beginning with Mrs. McBee. A story by Cecil Maiden, with drawings by Hilary Knight. ©  
1960 by Cecil Maiden.

#### Introduction

Yes, that’s a children’s book and yes it was written more than 20 years ago, and yes again, it expresses perfectly the theme of this chapter: a search for that happy state in which giving is as satisfying as receiving. For each individual, the vehicle would be what we will call a “Glad Give,” a fairly specific activity

which a person  
Likes to do, enjoys doing  
Can do pretty well  
and which

Might be of help to other people.

Note that a “Glad Give” is the direct counterpart in an individual of the overall People Approach principle or process as stated in Chapter One.

Instances of Glad Gives occur when, for example, people enjoy comparison shopping, vegetable gardening, cooking, writing, etc., are competent in these skills, and can be connected to other people who will benefit from these abilities.

Glad Give (1) is simply a shorthand for describing a concept, a convenient way of talking about a person’s immediate, specific potential for helping other people – now. A Glad Give is not a speculation on how or why a person got to the point of enjoying an activity and doing it pretty well (the same Glad Give might have different origins in different people). The Glad Give simply says the person is there now, “ready to go” at the point where helping might be connected to the activity described. In sum, Glad Gives are concrete versus abstract, specific versus generalized, and contemporary versus historical ways of organizing the identification of human-helping motivation. They define quite precisely what People Approach should try to get close to in a person as the departure point in the adventure of helping.

To repeat, Glad Gives are a basic category identifying what we begin with and work with in People Approach.

Glad Gives are real enough in their potential for powering help. We must only guard against any unconscious tendency to think of them as if they had physical existence and location, like an automobile battery, or a special set of wrinkles in the brain.

## **Components in Glad Give and Relationships Between Them**

All Glad Gives are divided in three parts:

- (1) A desire, to perform an activity or service,
- (2) The ability to do so, and
- (3) The clear potential for linking this enjoyable competency to the needs of others.

People Approach is based on the faith that these three parts frequently go together, that what a person likes to do is often something s/he also does pretty well, and is also helpful to some other person or persons. Let's take each of the components separately and then trace some of their main inter-relations.

### **Desire**

I wish, wish, WISH we volunteer people would stop talking about skills. People may not enjoy applying some of the skills because of burnout or for other reasons.

However skillful a person may be, s/he is likely to be a poor risk as a volunteer if s/he doesn't want to perform the activity. Therefore, a crucial thrust in People Approach is first to discover what people are already motivated to do. To be sure in identifying Glad Gives we are handicapped by that old Puritan reluctance to admit that anything we enjoy could possibly be of use to someone else. Thus, this part of Glad Give identification severely tests the skills and sensitivities of the leader of volunteers. S/he must be able to reassure people that it's okay to enjoy helping others, then help them move beyond vague gropings to a clear articulated statement of their Glad Gives.

### **Competency**

"Can do pretty well" is a self-assessment for each glad giver. Anyone can be wrong about this, and widely varying standards can be applied. Therefore, how sure can we be that we are identifying genuine competencies?

One mitigation of this validation/accuracy problem is the broad latitude permitted in defining Glad Give competency. You don't have to be the world's leading expert, just reasonably good at it. This very big bullseye is very easy to hit.

A second safety factor is that Glad Gives are usually identified in situations where a person can expect to be taken up on most of all of his/her offers. This prospect of validation encourages reality testing in self-assessment and discourages bluffing. The bluffer will be found out soon enough, and even sooner than that when Glad Give exchanges are in terms of immediate transactions such as: "I have information now on (subject) and would be glad to share it."

It's still partly a case of "let the buyer (needer) beware." As long as this is clearly understood, I don't believe the risks warrant all the muss and fuss of monitoring quality of services given. Indeed, my rather extensive experience strongly suggests that the quality of Glad Gives is generally high.

Another question concerning the competency factor: is it equally important in all Glad Gives? At one extreme, wanting to teach people about energy conservation isn't enough; you must also know something about this subject. But how much technique or training does the glad give hugger need? Speaking for myself, as long as she doesn't outright crush me, the spirit of the thing counts most. We should think more about kinds of Glad Gives in which motivation means more than ability, in which where there's a will, there's a way. We'd probably find a good number of these in the area of personal or emotional support.

### **The Relationship Between Desire and Competency**

Both desire and capability must be adequately present, if a Glad Give is ever to help another person. I may love to talk about solar power, but if I don't know what I'm talking about, it won't be of much use to anyone, and will probably do some damage. Conversely, my technical proficiency



in teaching tennis does little good if I hate the game. The latter instance is the volunteer who doesn't show up for work; the former case is the volunteer who shows up for work and you wish s/he hadn't.

But ordinarily, desire and competency do go together. We enjoy doing what we're good at because we get recognition for it, have pride in it. At the same time we tend to become skilled in what we enjoy, because we're motivated to learn more about it, and practice it a long.

### **The Relation Between Desire + Competency and the Needs of Others: Connectability to Need**

It's one thing to assert that Like to Do/Can Do's are potentially connectable to Need. It's quite another thing to show this actually happens, and that the linkages, once made, will benefit the receiver of the Glad Give. Why should we be so lucky?

There's significant indication that we are so lucky. I've facilitated processes for offering Glad Gives with over 5,000 people on about 200 occasions over the past 8-9 years. Given a reasonable amount of time for the process (an hour or more) about 80-90% of the Glad Gives in a room will get linked to needs of other people. One recent application reported 91% of Glad Gives gladly used within a family group, including in-laws. There's no reason to quibble about the exact percentage: the only claim is that the proportion is substantial, impressive.

Try it for yourself. Think of 8-10 Glad Gives of yours, then give the list to a few friends, acquaintances, or colleagues, and ask if there is anything they can use there. If nobody wants any of the Glad Gives on your list, I'm tempted to offer to eat said list.

Or look at this fairly random assortment of Glad Gives people actually have offered:

- Wash dishes
- Do macramé
- Review writing of style
- Train volunteers
- Community fundraising
- Company for other joggers
- Calligraphy
- Indoor plants (green thumb)
- Split wood
- Dramatic readings aloud
- Gourmet cooking

Is it conceivable there is nothing in this short list you can possibly explore using for yourself, your program, or your organization? Honestly?

My own related experience is in the apparent impossibility of finding any example to illustrate that not everything people like to do and can do is of use to other people. Here are two recollections of recent workshop dialogue:

Me: What about someone who likes to translate Sanskrit into English and can do that pretty well? Anybody need that one? (snicker)

Women in Audience: My son does that as a volunteer (Gasp. . . and moving right along to next subject . . . without daring to ask . . .)

Me: I love to watch sunsets and feel I am an excellent sunset-watcher. But that's really not going to do you much good. See what I meant? (hearty laugh)

Voice from the Back of the Room: Why don't you describe a sunset to some of the blind people I work with?

Smarty is still looking for examples of enjoyed abilities that can't conceivably be helpful to some other persons. Anyone else care to try?

(((( And is anyone still unconvinced? If so, please skip ahead to Chapter Four which lists 50 Glad Gives in the area of volunteer leadership, developed at a single meeting of a volunteer coordinator's group.)))

Amidst all this optimism, several cautions should be mentioned. First, though people who have Glad Gives usually want to share them, this is not automatically so. I may prefer to keep the sunset-watching experience to myself and that's certainly my privilege, to be fully respected. I might enjoy writing and do it pretty well, but this doesn't necessarily mean I'm ready to write your overdue annual report RIGHT NOW!

Occasionally, I've observed people who were ready to do things which raised some eyebrows. Perhaps this was in jest, and the point might be too obvious to mention. Nevertheless, even if some people in some groups happen to enjoy certain activities, and do them well, you should still:

- Avoid the illegal and/or dangerous; for example, speeding in an automobile except in cases where it's directly needed in an emergency.
- Reject the mean and ill-intentioned, such as having fun kicking the dog.
- Be cautious about the esoteric. It's always possible your love of ancient Mesopotamian poetry will be of use to someone else, but a Glad Give for fixing cars is much more easily marketable.

Finally, a Glad Give should be fairly specific. "I like everybody to be happy" is a bit too general to link effectively with needs here and now; so in all probability is "I like to rap with kids and do it pretty well." Which kids? About what? On the other hand, "I like to rap with blue-eyed, red-haired kids, ages eleven and half to twelve" is ordinarily too narrow to be matched. A better compromise between precise and applicable might be "I like to rap with teenage girls who are having problems at home." But the best level of specificity will always be a matter of judgment, dependent on the particular helping situation. Incidentally, hobbies tend not to be as specific as Glad Gives. Also, hobbyists aren't always willing or able to help other people via their hobby. For these reasons, hobbies and Glad Gives are not necessarily synonymous. Many Glad Gives are not hobbies, and some hobbies are not Glad Gives.

### **Variation, Gradations, Qualification**

Let's begin by recalling the argument of the preceding section: the three components in a Glad Give – desire, capability, and connectability to need – go together often enough so that we can consider the Glad Give as a single concept.

So considered, certain distinctions, qualifications, and variations in Glad Gives will add flexibility and power to their application, and also complexity. (practitioners can best decide for themselves the appropriate tradeoffs between flexibility and complexity.)

### **Range**

Glad Gives come in several delicious flavors. You can offer;

- (1) Information, Ideas, Knowledge. (I know a lot about local history and would be glad to share that with others.) The information can be self-standing, as in the above example, or it can be information leading to. (I know nothing about local history but can give you the phone number of someone who does.)

Information, especially information leading to, seems generally one of the easiest media for Glad Giving, with things or materials often a close second.

- (2) Skills. (I'm a good public speaker and would enjoy teaching this form of communication to one or two other people.)

(3) Personal Support. (I'm a good listener and like to do this on a 1-to-1 basis.)

(4) Things, Materials, Facilities. (I'd be happy to share extra copies of our successful volunteer recruitment poster.)

All four kinds of Glad Gives, and especially the first two, cast the prospective volunteer in the role of a resource person or teacher. Ironically, our approach to volunteers often emphasizes how much they have to learn from us via training supervision, etc.

### **Immediacy**

Glad Gives vary widely in the immediacy with which they can be delivered. A colleague recently told me he was still giving golf lessons to another person on the basis of a Glad Give – need exchange contract 18 months ago. (He was laughing, more or less, as he said this.) At the other extreme I recently encountered a Glad Give smiler and received same immediately. Similarly, Glad Gives of useful current information can often be delivered quickly and completely. Sometimes, materials can be exchanged on the spot, too.

Deliberately orienting Glad Give to more immediately deliverable ones helps to introduce the concept persuasively.

### **Gradations**

Until recently, Glad Gives were usually described in an over-simplified on-off way. Implication, you were either glad to do something or you were not; nothing in between. But, rarely if ever are people totally glad or unglad about anything. It's therefore realistic – and will prove useful – to recognize degrees of gladness. The discrimination should not be too cumbersome for people in their self-assessment; for example, a hundred-point scale. A few relatively simple verbal tags will usually suffice; for example, enthusiastic/willing/unwilling. Or it might be enough to ask people simple to distinguish between glad and very glad give, with everything else implicitly in the “not glad enough” category.

Whenever you might be tempted to get numerical, I suggest that the verbal counterparts of the numbers also be there. Here is a sample scale, at what is probably near the practical ceiling of complexity for self-assessment.

5 (or +2)	=	Very glad, enthusiastic
4 (or +1)	=	Glad, willing
3 (or ))	=	In-Between, indifferent
2 (or -1)	=	Moderately <u>un</u> willing
1 (or -2)	=	Strongly averse, <u>hate</u> it.

With gradations in gladness, we're better equipped to deal with what some might call the real challenge of voluntary action: getting the less attractive tasks accomplished. Once we've creamed off the gladdest of the Glad Gives, there will always remain important jobs nobody (in sight) is lining up to volunteer for: the envelope licking, the potato-peeling, the cleaning-up-after, etc. Once we are out of Eden, with the Glad Gives gone away, we can still try for lower degrees of willingness, to fill task-need which have trouble attracting top enthusiasm.

### **Variations Over Time**

Another over-simplification is based on a lazy assumption that knows better. It sees enthusiasm for a task, or the lack of it, as a fixed characteristic of an individual, never changing over time or circumstance. It's as if feeling like cooking tonight means you feel exactly the same way every night. Realistically, at different times people are more or less “in the mood” for an activity, such as washing the car, reorganizing the files, catching up on reading, writing letters, and – so they tell me – vacuuming. These fluctuations sometimes seem quite random, or at any rate not obviously linked to changes in the surrounding situation. On other occasions, the relation to setting or situation is clear enough. Thus, intensive prolonged repetition of an activity will often

bore or burnout a person so that motivation for the activity drops to zero or below. But with sufficient time off, the person's motivation for this work will often be renewed and refreshed. Changes in surrounding conditions over time will also affect enthusiasm for a task; the next section on setting and conditions goes into this more.

For now, both random and situational fluctuations in motivation for a task can be dealt with via the concept of

One-In-A-While's  
or, said otherwise,  
Every-Now-And-Then's.

At a practically acceptable level of approximation, this concept describes activities a person enjoys occasionally but not all the time or even most of the time, as would be implied in a Glad Give. Washing windows might not be something you're wild about doing every day (Glad Give). But Once-In-A-While? When you're in the mood? Sure.

Recently, we analyzed the work of our household into approximately 120 tasks. Each of the three residents then rated each of the 120 tasks as either a Glad Give for them or an Every-Now-And-Then. To match the 120 tasks, the three of us produced a total of approximately 30 Glad Gives, plus an additional 80 Every-Now-And-Thens. Approximately 60 tasks not covered at all by Glad gives were possible for us to get accomplished via these Every-Now-And-Then's. (For household tasks in the bathroom area, we were forced to come up with a new designation: "Every Other Century.")

Clearly, capitalizing on peaks in time-varying motivation can uncover large new reservoirs of useable work offering (more than if we stick to the assumed constant highs of Glad Gives). This is People Approach in the sense of allowing people to serve at their "best times."

But there are special challenges in the use of Once-In-A-Whiles. In some cases, people won't be able to predict when the "up" times in their motivational cycle will be. In other cases, they'll have some solid hints; for example: "Give me at least two weeks off between assignments of this type." Overall, this means we must learn to be more flexible in our scheduling of volunteer work and, whenever possible, allow the volunteer to schedule herself-himself—almost unheard of in some circles.

I am recommending that volunteer leadership use the total available scope of scheduling flexibility (which will take much skill and in some cases considerable awareness-raising as well). I am not claiming this scope will always be large. If you're planning a recognition banquet for your volunteers, and you want a popular speaker, and you haven't got that speaker, and the banquet is only two weeks away, your program chairperson cannot move on this matter whenever she happens to feel like it. But even in this situation, she might have one or two day's grace over which to choose a more-in-the-mood occasion for contacting a speaker.

### **Setting, Conditions**

You might be very willing and able to share your program evaluation experience with one or two other people at a convenient date and time. But if you're suddenly told to expect 75 students with slide rules at midnight Tuesday, the quality of gladness is probably somewhat strained, and likely to reverse towards aversion.

Most people's willingness to offer some service or thing is implicitly contingent on certain reasonable conditions of work being met. Usually, these conditions include; the number of people receiving the service (not too many); the giver's convenience in date and time of delivery; and limitations on overuse ("I never promised you seven days a week!") It's probably best to have some general orientation on this point for potential glad givers. Moreover, if they're asked to register their Glad Gives more formally in writing, conditions for the continuation of gladness

should be covered in the forms used. Otherwise, these kinds of considerations should definitely be part of face-to-face negotiations between prospective givers and the needful.

### **The Organizational Variation**

Glad Gives for individuals are directly paralleled by “willing shared resources” for groups, agencies, or organizations; for example, use of a meeting room, time on a computer, assistance in business management, sharing of a postage meter, etc. Though this handbook focuses on individuals, People Approach for organizations is touched on in Chapter Four.

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(1) Sometimes also called “glad gifts” or “skillwills.” Please suit yourself on which word you use, or some other word, or none at all.

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## CHAPTER FOUR



### Mini-Max for making More Informal Connections

#### Transition

You've been assured that a high proportion of Glad Gives prove useful in meeting other people's needs. You've not yet been told exactly how this happens. The next chapters describe methods for making the happy connection between Glad Gives and Needs:

- Chapter Four: MINI-MAX or Resource Exchange Process, generally for more informal varieties of volunteering
- Chapter Five: NEED-OVERLAP ANALYSIS IN HELPING (NOAH), generally for more organized, structured volunteer programs.
- Chapter Six: LOOKING FURTHER, into a future where it will be possible to identify even more intensively and comprehensively, what people have to offer other people.

#### BACKGROUND OF THE MINI-MAX METHOD

##### What's In The Name

The name is a contraction of key terms in the by now familiar People Approach principle:

Make the minimum difference in what a person wants to do and can do which has the maximum positive impact on other people

Minimum + Maximum = MINI-MAX

Curiously enough, MINI-MAX is in the dictionary, the kind you have to roll on wheels. The term refers to a military or business strategy which minimizes losses in relation to gains, a meaning which is within hailing distance of the one intended here.

The method has a number of alternative names: MINI-MAX, Resource Exchange Process, The Exchange Game, The Glad Give Game, \_\_\_\_\_ (your preference) \_\_\_\_\_, or no name at all. Your choice.

##### Conditions for Facilitating the Process

I've facilitated MINI-MAX with as few as 6-7 people and as many as 200 at once in a room. "Equipment" needed is pen or pencil and paper. Six to eight chairs grouped around each of a number of tables is ideal, but not absolutely necessary. There is more sophisticated equipment described in the Barber reference at the end of this chapter, and that's fine, too.

You can stop the process after only the first of three cycles, or after the first two cycles. For a reasonably complete experience in the complete three-cycle process, allow 90-120 minutes.

##### Getting People Going on Mini-Max: The Explanation

What follows is a description of Mini-Max, as if one were explaining it to a group of people about to try it. The scenario assumes your familiarity with the first three chapters of this handbook.

##### Introduction/Background

1. Briefly explain People Approach philosophy.
2. Indicate where the work MINI-MAX comes from, and give alternate terms.

3. Identify readings for further reference (see the end of this chapter).

### Explaining and Preparing Materials

Give these directions to participants:

1. Tear a piece of paper into 8 slips each large enough to write a phrase or two on.
2. Write your name on each slip of paper
3. On four of the slips write "GG" for Glad Give.
4. On the other four cards write "N" for need.
5. On the four GG cards only, put the telephone number(s) you'd prefer to be reached at. (*Nowadays, we might also ask e-mail address*) (Gasps sometimes occur at this Point and provide an occasion to begin emphasizing that this process is "for real," and not a game).
6. Define and explain the concept of a Glad Give. Provide several examples of your GG's or others'. Ask for a few examples from the participants and discuss until clear. Emphasize the like to do part of it to prevent people from slipping back into describing only their skills or abilities (without regard to motivation) or only things they might do out of a sense of obligation. Also be sure to remind people that they are absolutely free to keep for themselves, things they like to do and can do well; MINI-MAX does not want to pressure people into sharing with others enjoyed competencies they don't happen to feel like sharing.

As noted earlier, information and, under certain conditions, materials tend to be somewhat easier for people to contribute on a Glad Give basis. This would be a good place to mention this, if people seem still, uneasy, or concerned about the process.

Overall, stress that participation in the process is entirely voluntary, but once chosen, is "for real," not a role play or a game. (You can conduct MINI-MAX as a role play, but in my experience, this is far less effective from a learning standpoint.)

7. Ask participants to indicate with a phrase or two one of their Glad Gives on one of their GG cards; another of their Glad Gives on another GG card, and leave the other two GG cards blank. (They're your wild cards.)

At this point, you can focus MINI-MAX on one subject area, say recruiting volunteers, or you can leave the process open-ended: "Bring in any part of your life at work, at home, etc." The open-ended version flows freely, is usually more active and more fun, and is generally more motivating for teaching and team-building purposes. The focussed version is, of course, more adaptable to particular purposes such as career exploration, volunteer program management skills, etc.

8. Now talk about needs (N cards). As with GG's needs should be relatively specific and within the defined subject areas, if there is one. Avoid more private needs, to prevent awkwardness, especially with strangers. Needs can still be very important though publicly shareable and not (usually) requiring highly professional-technical attention. People should also be honest about really needing the help they ask for, and their willingness to accept it. Don't ask for help stopping smoking unless you're really ready to give it a serious try. Otherwise, you'll just waste the time of some sincerely fanatic glad giver.
9. (a) Provide several examples of needs suitable for a MINI-MAX process (your own needs, or others).  
Some examples:
  - I need a rural home for a nice (and possible pregnant) stray dog.
  - I'm looking for some good practical readings on grass-roots fundraising.
  - I'd like some instruction in wok cookery.
  - I need help writing an effective resume.
  - I'd like someone who would (a) listen while I "talk out" my career concerns and hopes and the (b) give me some advice in this area.
  - Can anyone help us with research on state laws and regulations governing the work of children under 18 around machines?

- (b) Ask for several examples of needs from participants.
  - (c) Discuss until the concept of need, as used in MINI-MAX, is clear.
10. Ask participant to put one of their needs on one of their N cards; another of their needs on another N card, and leave the other two N cards blank.

### **Setting Up for the First cycle of MINI-MAX (The Small-Circle Cycle)**

Ask people to get in groups of 6-8 around tables or in circles if there are not tables. Suggest that participants choose people they don't know too well (since they've probably done MINI-MAX unconsciously with their friend and colleagues on many occasions).

The small-circle cycle is quite sensitive to number of participants. It can work with as few as 4-5 people, or as many as 9 or 10, but 6-8 people is the definite ideal.

### **Purpose and Procedures**

Once people get settled in small circles:

1. Explain that the object of MINI-MAX is to make as many matches as possible between Glad Gives (GG's) and Needs (N).
2. Suggest that people begin by going around the circle bidding their Glad Gives, that is, leading from their strengths (though it's not the end of the work if people prefer to start with their needs).
3. Whenever another person hears a Glad Give that's reasonably close to their needs (there'll rarely be a perfect match) it's up to the needer to negotiate with the glad giver, seeking adjustments which will permit a match. Thus, if my Glad Give is calligraphy and your need is for design and production of volunteer recognition certificates, one of us has to scale up or down or sidewise before a match can be reached.
4. "Wild Cards." Explain that if people hear a Glad Give they could really use, and don't have that need written down on one of the N cards, they can fill out one of their blank N cards to match that GG.

Similarly, if a participant hears a need for which s/he has a Glad Give, not written down, s/he can fill out a blank GG card to match that need.

Though two GG and two N wild cards are usually enough to keep MINI-MAX open and interesting, there is nothing scared about that number. If participants ask my "permission" to add more wild cards, my response is: the sky's the limit. In fact, the 'written-down' GG and N cards are mainly to give people enough structure and security to get into the process. Once they're in, it's mainly the wild cards that spark creativity and drive in MINI-MAX.

5. Whenever a GG-N match is made, the person with the need picks up the GG card and keeps it, along with the responsibility to jog the glad giver's memory, if necessary. (Remember, the glad giver's phone number is on that GG card.) Arrangements for the Glad-Give-To-Need transaction are the joint responsibility of giver and receiver, with the receiver concerned to make the transaction as convenient as possible for the giver.

### **Beginning the Small-Circle Cycle**

1. Emphasize that this is "for real" and not a role play. Don't offer a Glad Give, don't even participate in a small circle unless you mean business about giving and receiving help.
2. Ask people if they have any more questions on the purpose of rules of the process.
3. Remind people to concentrate on making as many specific matches as possible. Abstract discussion of the philosophy of volunteering or lengthy self-plaudits on one's volunteer program are not the purpose of the process.
4. Remind people that it's probably good to start by going around the circle bidding Glad Gives.
5. Above all, urge people to keep it moving, keep everybody involved, and interpret rules flexibly. If the group can come up with better rules or non-rules for connecting Glad Gives to needs, that's just find.



*(Groups often tend after awhile to deliberately encourage a shy person to offer more of their glad gifts. Where this doesn't happen naturally, I favored gentle hints from the facilitator.)*

### **During the Small-Circle Cycle**

Allow from 30 to 45 minutes, once people have actually begun the bidding. The most frequent concerns come from people who are accustomed to more structured helping situations, though most people enjoy the process and there are smiles and laughter at times.

Typical questions are:

- What if two or more people want a single Glad Give? (Fine, if the glad giver wants to, and if convenient arrangements for helping both needers can be made.)
- What if there are two glad givers for a single needer? (They can both help the lucky needer, if that's convenient. Otherwise, one of the Glad Gives might be saved for possible uptake in the two later cycles of MINI-MAX. But the glad givers should not get into a big fight over the right to volunteer help to the needer. Marvelous kind of fight that would be.)
- Can two needs be matched? (Sure, why not. If you need someone to talk about training volunteers and I need the same, it will probably be good for us to put our heads (or needs) together. If you need help sticking to your strict diet, and I do, too, maybe we can suffer more effectively together.)

Even better than any of the answers in the brackets is the general response: "Well, what makes sense to your group to do about this?" My excuse for answering a question with a question is that the group usually comes up with something far more sensible than I would.

### **The Ambassador Cycle (Cycle 2)**

After 30-45 minutes, up to 50-60% of needs are usually filled by Glad Gives within each small circle, and the possibilities for further matches within each small group are pretty well exhausted.

Some insightful people will have already reacted to this situation by table hopping to another circle. Indeed, in one variation of MINI-MAX everybody wanders around the room with their Glad Gives affixed to sleeves, forehead, and other parts, until accosted by other wanderers who negotiate to pick up one of these Glad Gives. The accosted can also become accoster of others, and all in all it's a rather glorious and fruitful chaos.<sup>(1)</sup>

The Ambassador Cycle is a more formal way of cross-fertilizing Glad Gives between the small circles, in order to get more needs met.

1. Ask each small circle to appoint an Ambassador. (You have to do a little promotion to get people to volunteer for the Ambassador role, e.g. "we're looking for a charming, intelligent, etc. person, who's also tired of sitting down")
  - (a) This person receives all the unused written GG slips in the circle (not the blank GG Slips)
  - (b) The Ambassador reviews these GG's to be sure s/he understands them, asking the glad giver for clarification whenever necessary.
  - (c) Someone else volunteers to "play" the Ambassador's remaining written down needs while he/she is away.
2. Ambassadors rotate among other small circles in an agreed direction (clockwise, counter-clockwise, or serendipitous). Ask Ambassadors to stand, if possible, while working, so other Ambassadors can see which circles are being covered.
3. At each other small circle visited, Ambassadors read the remaining Glad Gives from their home circle, and negotiate matches to needs in the small circle being visited as if they were back home. The difference is that sometimes Ambassadors go home to consult with their "constituency" – glad givers in their own small circle. They do this whenever they are unsure about accurately representing a Glad Give from the home circle and/or to okay possibly problematical matches.

4. The Ambassador goes home for good when all GG's from his/her group are taken by other circles, or when time is called.

Depending on the number of small circles (2-25), the ambassador cycle should be allowed anywhere from 15 to 30 minutes.

### **The Auction Cycle (Cycle 3)**

By the end of the Ambassador Cycle, we have explored helping connections within and between each small circle. Probably we have matched and met 70-80% of the needs with which people began the process.

Well, you can't win 'em all, and no process should be expected to produce 100% perfect results. Nevertheless some of the remaining 20-30% unfilled needs will probably be galling and important ones. So, the Auction Cycle keeps trying to fill them.

1. Explain that anyone can get up and "auction off" (ask for help with) a need of theirs with the entire room as potential helpers. A desirable option at this point is to suggest to people that they look at their need and see if it can be broken into parts. Thus, we need furniture for our run away shelter home, becomes:

We need rugs . . .  
We need kitchen utensils . . .  
We need curtains . . .  
We need mattresses . . .  
We need chairs . . .  
Etc.

There's somewhat more chance a giver will bite on one of the parts, though overwhelmed by the whole furniture need.

2. The first part of the auction cycle stays within the room, as did the preceding two cycles. It differs from them in that everyone at once works on the need presented. The auction cycle also opens up a range of levels of response to need; that is, there are more options than Glad Give or nothing. Be sure people understand these levels of giving before the auction cycle begins, and ask them to keep the levels as distinct as possible in their responses to the need presented:
  - (a) A Glad Give is negotiable as matching all or most of the need
  - (b) Glad Gives matching part of the need, if it can be divided in parts
  - (c) A moderate willingness to meet all or most of the need
  - (d) A moderate willingness to meet part of the need
  - (e) A Once-In-A-While for all or most of the need
  - (f) A Once-In-A-While for part of the need
  - (g)
3. If this within-the-room scan doesn't develop the help needed, the auction cycle begins exploring outside the room with "Information Leading To's."

The format here is: "I can't personally help you with that need, but I know a person(s) or organization(s) that might. (Give phone number and address, if at all possible.) The "Information Leading To" contributor naturally can't guarantee that the lead will work out. Still, the needer has been helped by acquiring one more pathway to satisfaction.

There could be telephones in the room for immediate checks on whether the suggested person or organization will consider providing the help needed (and maybe eventually get involved in your MINI-MAX group, too). Only be sure to decide before hand who's going to pay for that mysterious phone call to Nepal when next month's bill comes around.

Whenever the action moves beyond the usual Glad Gives, to Once-In-A-Whiles, Information Leading To's, etc., encourage people to write down their offering with their names and phone



give to one another, before calling in the outside experts. More, MINI-MAX has an important role in this discovery. Thus, a workshop for the Toronto, Ontario Association of Volunteer Coordinators produced this rich and varied assortment of Glad Gives:

- Will include other volunteers in our training in Corrections.
- Fund raising ideas/models budgeting
- Time listening to “beefs” – if you need someone to listen.
- Professional assistance in composing and presenting written material (one-shot consultation, no on-going editing).
- Exchange training with senior person.
- Theoretical knowledge of children’s behavior and management.
- How to set up a program that provides telephone support by volunteers to clients.
- Volunteers are indirectly supervised by staff.
- Organization of a training program for volunteers.
- Brainstorming. Workshop on active listening.
- Information sharing in volunteer assessment.
- Evening volunteers feel part of total program
- Premises for volunteer coordinator meetings (a.m., p.m., evenings).
- Give example of job description.
- Organizing a volunteer party.
- Time management experience and material
- Preparing grant proposals/budgets.
- My use of the Italian language when helping with volunteers.
- How to plan a workshop.
- Act as resource person or talk on Corrections.
- One-shot consultation to new coordinator on organization, supervision, priority setting.
- Information on legal status of volunteers.
- How to run a meeting.
- Planning public educational meeting.
- Public speaking on the work of the Crisis Unit.
- Help with newsletter resources.
- I’ll give you a copy of my manual.
- Will provide information on contacting church groups re fund raising.
- Use of written contact with volunteers.
- Recognition methods.
- Ideas on working with staff re acceptance of volunteers and volunteer programs.
- Water safety volunteer sources.
- Orientation to volunteer services as human resource management function.
- Time for volunteer projects.
- Talk to anyone interested in hearing what the YW does – and its work with volunteers.
- I’ll discuss places where you can refer volunteers.
- Volunteer interpreters – many languages.
- Some of my organization skills.
- Creative recognition.
- Interviewing and screening techniques in mental health area.
- Planning training programs to meet needs of volunteers.
- Resource knowledge on housing.
- Income tax clinics . . . how to organize one . . . how to do income tax returns.
- Working with other areas within profession areas relating to mental health.
- Slide show on specific volunteer activities.
- Set up of volunteer procedures.

- (Once again, for more ordinary everyday examples of GG's see the packet on "The Window of Work," Section VI)*

*(Thirty years of choleric protest have failed to prevent people from regressing from “glad gift” to the word “skill” when in fact the difference is crucial. Skills are not necessarily gladly given and that is all the difference. Grrr!!)*

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In fact there were probably people there who heard your message, and went on to conclude in this vein: "that's a really significant cause, but I could never do that; I've never been a volunteer before." In other words, you somehow signaled that the first step in volunteer helping was a giant step.

Next time, here is a suggestion. Explain Glad Gives before your talk, ask people to list 8-10 of theirs, and assure them no one's going to pick up the list. Then go into your pitch about your program, the important needs of your clients, patients, consumers of services. At the end have a long and varied list, for display, of the organizations' work assistance needs, broken out as specifically and definitely as possible, with a liberal seasoning of short-term, one-time needs.

Then say, "If any of you out there have a Glad Give that's within shouting distance of any of these needs, let's talk. Even if you don't see a need close to one of your Glad Gives, you might want to see how creative you can be showing us how one of your Glad Gives might help us. We love surprises of that kind."

Essentially, you're bringing people in easy steps to volunteering, by playing a variation of MINI-MAX with them: their Glad Gives to the needs of your clients/patients/ consumers of services and your organization. (*For "Volunteering," read any kind of positive participation.*)

In a variation of the above, club officers, veteran volunteers, and/or staff play the work assistance needs of the organization and its clients in MINI-MAX groups with potential volunteers. Whenever a Glad Give of a potential volunteer matches a need of the organization, at least one element of a volunteer job is coming into place. What's particularly nice about this kind of volunteer job development is that the organizational representatives, via MINI-MAX will also be glad giving to the potential volunteers, right from this early or first encounter.

\* \* \* \* \*

One fund-raising suggestion has been to ask a (voluntary) admissions fee to a MINI-MAX game open to the public or some defined group. They'd have at least as much fun as bingo, and what's more, everybody would win.

Another application begins with a certain attitude towards the people we hope will give us financial or other material support. Instead of just focusing on what they have to give to our need, the MINI-MAX attitude of mutuality in help would prompt us also to think of what we are willing to give to the needs of that big and powerful foundation, government agency, etc. The idea was summarized as follows, as part of a fuller development elsewhere: (5)

(1) Carefully decide what you need most from others and who has it, or has the power to make the decision which will get it for you.

(2) Think about that person and/or organization and the forget step 1. That is . Ask not: What can they do for us. Ask instead: What can we do for them; that they really need, will find hard to get elsewhere, will preserve our own soul.

(3) The idea is to gain power by being genuinely useful or, if possible, indispensable. But first you have to build your own awareness of how useful you and your volunteers can be and in fact already are. Then you build their awareness of your resource power (usefulness).

In other words, maybe we should have a little less pleading and petitioning with the people who have the money, resources, and power, and a little more MINI-MAX – harping less on our (desperate) needs and their strengths, and leading more with our own Glad Give strengths to their needs.

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There is a powerful difference between:

*Please will you do this for us?*  
And  
*Here's what we can do for each other!*

It's trade, not aid.

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#### Other Recent Readings On MINI-MAX

1. David Lewis. *The Neighboring Notebook: Ten Exercises for Working With Volunteers*. 125 pages, 1979. IDEA, East Aurora, N.Y.
2. Putnam Barber and others. *MINIMAX: The Exchange Game*. Notebook Kit, 1979, Volunteer Readership, Boulder, Colorado.
3. Ivan Scheier. *Exploring Volunteer Space*, (parts of Chapters 12 and 18). 200 pages, 1980, Volunteer Readership, Boulder, Colorado
4. Ivan Scheier and Susan Dryovage. *The Bridge: A Guide for Networkers*, 1981, Yellowfire Press, Boulder, Colorado.

David Lewis' useful and beautifully written notebook is primarily for applications in religious settings. The kit by Barber et al. is designed for us by trainers in the MINI-MAX process. The Scheier and the Scheier and Dryovage references related MINI-MAX, or variations of it, to informal volunteering and networking.

1999 note: All these publications are currently out of print, but as of June, 1999 I have readily available copies of all of them except David Lewis' "The Neighboring Notebook..." ( and I might be able to track that down as well).

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- (1) Described in more detail as "Walkabout Exchange in *The Bridge: A Guide for Networkers* by Ivan Scheier and Susan Dryovage, Yellowfire Press, Boulder, Colorado, 1981.
  - (2) One possible exception is the disappointment participants might suffer when their Glad Gives go unused. But this rarely happens with 80-90% of the Glad Gives taken up, on the average, and it is especially unlikely when MINI-MAX participants are alert to the danger.
  - (3) This win-win character should reassure some who are concerned that this is a gambling card game, where one person can win only at the expense of another's loss.
  - (4) *The Bridge: A Guide for Networkers*, Ivan Scheier and Susan Dryovage, Chapter 7, Yellowfire Press, Boulder, Colorado, 1981.
  - (5) Making People Points for Resource Power" in *On Background*, Vol. I No.2, Yellowfire Press, Boulder, Colorado, April, 1980.
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## CHAPTER FIVE



### **Need-Overlap Analysis in Helping (NOAH) for Organized Volunteer Programs**

#### **Building Work that Satisfies**

##### **The Central Importance of Volunteer Job Design**

Day one is the most important day in the life a volunteer program, for on that day the volunteer begins the work designed for her/him. As that job is meaningful and appropriate to the volunteer's talents and motivations, the program will need only the gentle touch of enabling management. But as that job is inappropriate for the volunteer and lacks meaningful purpose, all the heavy management technique in the world won't put humpty-dumpty together again.

Thus, if our insanity is to have volunteers alternately piling and unpling bricks in the middle of the road, improved recruiting techniques will only waste the time of more volunteers. Sophisticated training and supervision might increase performance efficiency, but why; the job is silly in the first place. Somewhere, in the middle of technique-for-its own-sake, we would have forgotten purpose. This purpose is crystallized, preserved, and given life in our shaping of work for volunteers.

##### **The People Who Must Be Pleased**

We must therefore ask ourselves what makes a volunteer job right? Remember first that motivation, not money, is the primary fuel on which volunteer programs run. We recognize this clearly in our entirely proper concern for volunteer recognition, incentive, fulfillment. What we sometimes fail to recognize is that volunteers aren't the only people who need to be pleased with the work done. In fact, a volunteer program or other organized effort may have three or more basic constituencies, three kinds of people who must be satisfied with what volunteers are doing:

- 1) Volunteers themselves, of course.
- 2) The people served – clients, patients, public, audience, other consumers of services, etc. If these people aren't getting something from what volunteers are doing, they won't provide supportive, appreciative feedback. More than that, helping to satisfy client need, either directly or indirectly, is the primary purpose of volunteer program. The volunteer effort which isn't doing that has neither head nor heart.
- 3) Paid staff in agencies, unpaid officers or clubs and church groups, all supervisors and leaders of volunteers must also be motivated by the work volunteers do. This support is crucial to satisfaction, stability, and productiveness of volunteers in their work. Indeed, mere indifference on the part of staff – never mind hostility – is enough to turn off most volunteers. Need-Overlap Analysis tries to deal with staff-volunteer conflict before it begins by building staff ownership, satisfaction, support into the original blueprints of volunteer work rather than trying to troubleshoot later, the effects of volunteer in roles threatening or meaningless to staff.

To summarize, we seek in the volunteer job, activities:

- Which volunteers like to do and can do well (Glad Gives)  
And which
- Staff want volunteer to do,  
Which also



- Fill real needs for the consumer of services, or at least provide indirect support to such efforts.

In other words, we try to identify the overlap between volunteer Glad Gives on the one hand, and on the other hand, a combination of client needs and staff work assistance. The name of the process reflects this purpose: Need Overlap Analysis in Helping (NOAH). (1)

### **A Carefully-Considered Strategy is Desirable**

Finding the overlap area is clearly going to be a skilled balancing act and will therefore require planning, method, and practice. Need overlap doesn't often occur "naturally" without such system. The first time we asked male prisoners (Clients) what they'd really like volunteers to do for them – we should have know better. Their other priority was "help getting me out of here." We never even bothered to ask staff or volunteers if they coincided with prisoners in supporting a "volunteer escape artist" program.

Programs based only on expressed volunteer preference for involvement could come up with wonders like: visit the institution for a few hours, then write an "in-depth" public report. Institution staff would be able to contain their enthusiasm for that one; nor is it certain the project would help institution residents in either long or short-term. Once again, no overlap.

Lest staff escape some scathing, they have been know to suggest that volunteers confine themselves to making the coffee or emptying the garbage. To the latter, a voice from the back of the room was once heard to ask "What kind of garbage?" But, ordinarily, volunteer response to such suggestions is unprintable.

But we can hit the need overlap bullseye for all three volunteer program constituencies, and we can do it a significant percentage of items; for at least 15-20% of volunteer Glad Gives is my strong impression over the years. We must only be prepared to go about the overlap search systematically, as described in the rest of this chapter.

The dividends are worth the effort. Insofar as we are able to hit the overlap area:

- Volunteers are doing what they want to do and can do, hence they are easier to recruit and retain, and less training may be needed, too.
- At the same time, staff are getting real help from volunteers, and are therefore positively appreciative of a volunteer effort they own.
- People served are being better served.

The process will sound as if it develops new roles for volunteers, from the ground up. It does that, yes. But Need-Overlap Analysis can also be used to freshen up established volunteer roles to which your program may be committed. Thus, take a basic Big Sister or Big Brother role and recheck for its relation to youth/parent needs, staff work assistance needs, and volunteer Glad Gives. Though this fine volunteer role will retain its essential identity, adjustments may be suggested which will improve volunteer recruiting and retention, staff-volunteer relations, service to clients, etc. Spin-off roles may also emerge; in one instance, Big Brothers and Sisters added a new though related volunteer position: Super Bigs, as resource people for the support of less experience Big Sisters and Brothers.

### **Step-By-Step Description of the Need-Overlap Analysis Method**

#### **Introduction**

We're now ready to provide some detail on Need-Overlap Analysis, in the form of basic steps in the method. These are guidelines, not sacred rituals. Creative variations are welcome as an adaptation to different situations.

Presiding over the process will usually be the volunteer leadership person(s): the volunteer coordinator/director, the lay leader in church or synagogue, the club officer, the staff person who has responsibility of supervising volunteers, the board chairperson, etc.

### Input from Prospective Volunteers

Each prospective volunteer completes Worksheet #1. The basic input is Glad Gives, as one can see at the top of this worksheet. But an addition or supplementary worksheet might also distinguish and explore Once-In-A-Whiles and/or the difference between glad and very glad give. Perhaps all offering could be listed together first, the marked with \*, ✓, etc. to indicate the above distinctions.

As in MINI-MAX, the concept of Glad Gives, Once-In-A-Whiles, etc. should first be explained and instanced. Unlike MINI-MAX, try to get at least 5-7 well thought out Glad Gives from each prospective volunteer. Up to 10-12 is even better.

Here is an example of what a prospective volunteer's completed worksheet #1 might look like.  
Sample Worksheet #1

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>WHAT DO YOU ENJOY DOING?</b></p> <p>List below the things your most WANT TO DO + CAN DO + MIGHT HELP OTHERS. Please make these as <u>specific</u> as possible and be sure they are <u>Glad Gives</u>.</p> <p>Speak French and Spanish Photography (black and white, color) Organize Garage Sales Draw Cartoons Write Poems (limericks) Dog Obedience Training Camping and other outdoor skills Astronomy (I have a small telescope)</p>
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I've occasionally heard of volunteers being asked to fill out Worksheet #1 twice, once with their Glad Gives for staff and once with their Glad Gives for clients. My personal preference is not to worry volunteers with such distinctions at this point in the process. I'd rather have the flow of Glad Gives as unconstricted as possible.

Worksheet #1 can also be completed on behalf of an organization or group's "willingly shareable resources."

## Worksheet #1

### WHAT DO YOU ENJOY DOING?

List below the thing you most WANT TO DO + CAN DO + MIGHT HELP OTHERS. Please make these as specific as possible and be sure they are Glad Gives.

[illegible]

**Worksheet #1A**  
**FOR PROCESS COORDINATOR OR COORDINATING**  
**COMMITTEE**

1. Remember: clients or consumers of service can also be volunteers and fill out Worksheet#1.
2. Take all individual worksheets from volunteers and combine identical or very similar Glad Gives, noting for each, frequency of mention by volunteers, thus;  
Like to share interest in hiking (15 times)  
Enjoy doing graphics (11 times)

\*\*\*

Like to type manuscripts (1)  
(Be careful about cutting single-mention Glad Gives – they  
could be very important, especially because rare.)

\_\_\_\_\_ ( )

\_\_\_\_\_ ( )

\_\_\_\_\_ ( )

3. Cross out all Glad Gives on the above list which fail to meet “the authority check”; that is, the potential host organization(s) is subject to policy, regulation, or law which prohibits volunteers from doing these things, or organized labor objects. But keep trying to change this.

Whether individuals or group, the prospective contributor should provide name, address, and telephone number on Worksheet #1, unless special arrangements for anonymity have been made.

Worksheet #1A is for collating and analyzing the results of a series of individual Worksheets #1's, usually at least 5 or 6 of them. When in doubt about whether or not to combine Glad Gives in a category, the process coordinator should try to consult the Glad Givers themselves.

All well and good, but suppose there's no one around to complete Worksheet #1. It's natural to wonder how you get hold of a sample of prospective volunteers. First of all, the entire sample need not be all together in a group at a single meeting; one or a few at a time is fine and usually preferable.

With that understood, your sample can include.

- 1) Anyone who inquires about volunteering with your organization. Presumably, Worksheet #1 will be incorporated in your volunteer application/registration form, as part of your normal volunteer screening and placement procedures.
- 2) You can include a few of your present volunteers, especially ones who are looking for a fresh and new assignment or are actually awaiting reassignment.
- 3) Friends of your currently active volunteers.
- 4) Community groups you've talked to, or at least a few people from each of these groups. (See earlier section on MINI-MAX recruiting application.)
- 5) Some prospects from the local volunteer center or clearinghouse, especially if it registers people in terms of Glad Gives, Once-In-A-Whiles, or something translatable into these.
- 6) Your clients, patients, consumers, audience, etc.

For all these types, and especially types 3-6, there might be an option to remain anonymous (thought you needn't overly encourage this). In any case, there should always be this kind of guarantee with Worksheet #1; the interest implied by your participation thus far in this process, in no way obliges you to accept volunteer work with our organization unless you freely choose to do so.

#### **Input From Paid Staff Or Whomever Know the Organization's Needs Best**

This input can come from a club officer, lay leader in church or synagogue, neighborhood association leader, etc. as well as from paid staff.

Staff input can precede volunteers' input, follow it, or occur concurrently. The order between the two types of input is not important.

Worksheets #2 and #2A are for the staff input part of Need-Overlap Analysis.

Some people have had no trouble at all gathering and discussing staff input in relatively large face-to-face groups. Other have encountered small riots when staff were overdue to let off steam, often about things having little or nothing to do with volunteers. There may also be scheduling problems in getting larger groups of staff together at one time and place.

In what follows, we therefore assume the typical case: Worksheet #2 administered to staff individually or possible in small groups. The process can be explained to an individual staff person(s) and Worksheet #2 then left with her/him, to be picked up in a day or so (or dropped in a special suggestion box). The advantage of the procedure is giving staff ample time to do a thorough job with their responses. The disadvantage is that staff might produce more artificial responses on overlong pondering, or – this is only for paranoid ex-professors such as me – compare notes. Therefore, sitting with a staff person as he/she completes Worksheet #2 is usually the best procedure, provided you have the time. The process should not be rushed. Allow at least 20 minutes for steps 1, 2, and 3 in Worksheet #2; take 30 minutes if necessary. Even more preferable are interludes for staff to reflect and then come back to the process.

### Worksheet #2

#### HOW COULD YOUR WORK BE MORE SATISFYING

1. Activity List: the specific things you do over a period of 3 to 5 days at work. They need not be listed in order of priority.

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2. Mark star spin-offs in above list. These are things you'd rather not do, because your training or experience fits you better to invest your time elsewhere.
3. Make a separate list for your dreams. These are things you'd really like to do on behalf of the organization or the people it serves, but you lack time, resources or both.

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### Worksheet #2A

#### FOR PROCESS COORDINATOR OR COORDINATING COMMITTEE

1. The star spin-offs and dreams represent the total raw work assistance need of staff and/or the organization. Combine and collate identical or very similar ones over all staff and list in order of frequency, thus:

Would like help writing newsletter (12 times)

Need people to help with community fundraising (9 times)

\*

\*

\*

Want someone to paint a picture for my office (1)

(Remember: single-mention work assistance needs can still be important

\_\_\_\_\_ ( )

\_\_\_\_\_ ( )

\_\_\_\_\_ ( )

\_\_\_\_\_ ( )

2. Delete from the above list items which fail to pass the authority check; that is, which volunteers would be prohibited from doing by firm policy, regulation, law, or objections from organized labor. The remaining list represents staff's work assistance needs.

Almost without exception, it is desirable to offer staff the option of anonymity on Worksheet #2, and/or the firm assurance that their individual results will not be inspected by supervisors or management. Most practitioners recommend that staff should be explicitly told the purpose of the process: to help ensure that the work of volunteers is responsive to staff needs.

Worksheet #2A is for collating and analyzing the results of Worksheets #2's from individual staff people. You would usually wait to collate until you have at least 3 or 4 staff worksheets, if you have that many staff people. Where there are less than that number of staff, try to get to everybody. With larger numbers of staff, a representative sample will ordinarily suffice. Otherwise, where there are a great many staff, as in a hospital, it is often best to organize the information-gathering and collation of Need-Overlap Analysis in terms of individual units or division, because of their similarity in purposes, concerns, attitudes, and for sheer manageability of size.

The pattern-identifying process in Worksheet #2A parallels the one for volunteer Glad Gives (Worksheet #1A). A staff sub-committee can be a resource on issues of how best to categorize staff spin-offs and dreams. When in doubt on whether to combine two dreams or stars, you probably should keep the distinct.

### Finding and Negotiation Overlap Between Staff, Volunteers, and Clients

Worksheet #3 outlines the main steps in determining staff-volunteer overlap and in securing client review. Additional notes on Worksheet #3 are provided below.

Steps 4 and 7. The staff-volunteer committee ideally should represent:

- Staff currently working successfully with volunteers
- Staff working with volunteers and have some problems
- Staff not currently working with volunteers (for skeptical as well as other reasons).
- A sample of volunteers: veteran, new, prospective, and if possible, dropout.
- At least one relatively high-level decision maker in the organization seeking to involve volunteers.
- A representative of the local volunteer clearing house or center, if you have one
- The volunteer coordinator/director as process facilitator

<b>Worksheet #3</b> <b>FOR PROCESS COORDINATOR STAFF-VOLUNTEER OVERLAP AND CLIENT REVIEW</b>			
<p>1. Set Worksheet #1A and Worksheet #2A lists as left-hand and right-hand columns on the same large piece of paper.</p> <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top; padding: 5px;"> <p><b>GLAD GIVES</b> (1A)</p> <div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; margin-bottom: 5px; display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"><span></span><span>( )</span></div> <div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; margin-bottom: 5px; display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"><span></span><span>( )</span></div> <div style="margin-top: 10px;"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li></li> <li></li> <li></li> </ul> </div> </td> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top; padding: 5px;"> <p><b>WORK ASSISTANCE NEEDS</b> (2A)</p> <div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; margin-bottom: 5px; display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"><span></span><span>( )</span></div> <div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; margin-bottom: 5px; display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"><span></span><span>( )</span></div> <div style="margin-top: 10px;"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*</li> <li>*</li> <li>*</li> </ul> </div> </td> </tr> </table>	<p><b>GLAD GIVES</b> (1A)</p> <div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; margin-bottom: 5px; display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"><span></span><span>( )</span></div> <div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; margin-bottom: 5px; display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"><span></span><span>( )</span></div> <div style="margin-top: 10px;"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li></li> <li></li> <li></li> </ul> </div>	<p><b>WORK ASSISTANCE NEEDS</b> (2A)</p> <div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; margin-bottom: 5px; display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"><span></span><span>( )</span></div> <div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; margin-bottom: 5px; display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"><span></span><span>( )</span></div> <div style="margin-top: 10px;"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*</li> <li>*</li> <li>*</li> </ul> </div>	<p>2. Draw a solid line between perfect or near-perfect matches of individual Glad Gives and work assistance needs, thus: Like to write ----- Need help writing newsletter</p> <p>3. Draw a dotted line between promising but still problematical matches, thus: Love to cook ----- Need help with community fundraising event.</p> <p>4. The results of Steps 2 and 3 are your pool of staff-volunteer need overlap items, that is, the things which volunteers need/want to do which are also the things staff needs/wants them to do. Now clarify these, that they are in fact reasonable matches, by discussion in your staff-volunteer committee or, if necessary, by going back to the people who offered the Glad Give or expressed the work assistance need. This will be particularly desirable in the case of dotted-line connections (Step 3 above).</p> <p>5. From Step 4 you now should have a clarified need overlap list. Take this to a sample of people you serve (clients, patients, consumers, audiences, etc.), and ask them to rate each one of the need overlap items:</p> <div style="margin-left: 40px;"> <p>Good = I can really use this, am not getting it now, etc.</p> <p>Bad = I really don't want this</p> <p>Indifferent = I really don't much care either way.</p> </div> <p>On the good-rated items, try to give clients the opportunity to say: "We could do this for ourselves" (certainly or maybe under certain conditions). Clients might then go on to participate in Need-Overlap Analysis, Worksheet # 1 and all.</p> <p>6. Collate and identify trends in Step 5 results. Certainly a trend to bad ratings should take you back to square one, or at least further discussion with the people you serve, before you implement this overlap item as a volunteer job.</p> <p>7. The client-accepted need-overlap items go on to the final negotiation between the volunteer glad givers and the staff work-assistance needers.</p>
<p><b>GLAD GIVES</b> (1A)</p> <div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; margin-bottom: 5px; display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"><span></span><span>( )</span></div> <div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; margin-bottom: 5px; display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"><span></span><span>( )</span></div> <div style="margin-top: 10px;"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li></li> <li></li> <li></li> </ul> </div>	<p><b>WORK ASSISTANCE NEEDS</b> (2A)</p> <div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; margin-bottom: 5px; display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"><span></span><span>( )</span></div> <div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; margin-bottom: 5px; display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"><span></span><span>( )</span></div> <div style="margin-top: 10px;"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*</li> <li>*</li> <li>*</li> </ul> </div>		

Step 5, Worksheet #3. Effective client review committees have included juvenile delinquents, terminally ill patients, and educable retarded people. Do not count clients out as capable of such review with you until you've tried it! The exception is when it's dangerous even to try because the organization is threatened by anything but the most safely dependent clients.

If consumers of services are absolutely unable to provide meaningful input, or won't be permitted to, get people who are as close as possible to them as their representatives; family, friends, advocate volunteers, etc.

Only a regrettable concession to current rigidity explains why client review occurs so late in the Need-Overlap Analysis Process – sometimes only in time to consider the accomplished fact of prior staff-volunteer agreement on “what's a good for you folks.” In the better of all possible worlds, clients would lead off, listing needs they could not deal with themselves. This would then be the material worked on by both staff and volunteers.

Worksheet #3 leaves much to the discretion of the practitioner in details of implementation and possibilities for innovation. This is as it should be; in maximizing the probative participation of people, there are no formula solutions. But there had better be some more volunteer solutions in an era where it is increasingly unlikely the work assistance needs of staff can be met by endlessly inflatable budgets.

### **Variations and Extensions**

Earlier versions of Need-Overlap Analysis seemed exclusively designed for volunteer programs in an agency setting. Indeed, this is an extremely important situation involving millions of volunteers, staff, and clients.

But the practical imagination can adapt the process to other situations as well. For example, an all-volunteer group or project could complete and collate their Glad Gives as in Worksheets #1 and #1A. The same people might then turn around and simulate the role of organizational staff on Worksheet #2, #2A, and #3. But here, all items on the activity list (Worksheet #2) as well as all dreams would have to be implemented by volunteers, if they were to be implemented at all.

Generally there is nothing sacred about the client-volunteer-staff triumvirate. Thus in some situations, it's “difficult to identify or define clients or consumers of service who are served jointly by volunteers and staff. In such cases, Need-Overlap Analysis can be used with only two kinds of participants; for example:

- Staff – Service Volunteers
- Staff – Board Volunteers
- Club Officer – Club Members
- Clergy – Congregation
- Parent(s) – Children

The Need-Overlap Analysis procedures would closely parallel those for three constituencies, except for omitting steps 5 and 6 on Worksheet #3.

There can also be four (or more) constituencies, especially when there are consumers of services in more than one sense, thus

- Employment Program for Displaced Homemakers
  - Contributors = Staff/Service Volunteers
  - Consumers = Clients/Community at Large

- Region In Scouting
  - Contributors = Staff/Scoutmasters
  - Consumers = Scouts/Parents of Scouts

In both the Displaced Homemakers and the Scouting examples, we have two different types of consumers of services (which doesn't prohibit them from also being contributors, of course). As consumers of services, both groups could participate in client review (Steps 5 and 6, Worksheet #3).

There might also be several kinds of potential contributors to the mission of the organization, as for example

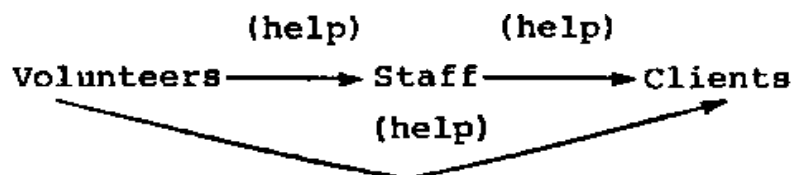
Staff – service volunteers – the media – local corporations.

The Worksheet #1 and #1A procedure would be used to identify the Glad Gives or willingly shareable resources of any of these types of contributors.

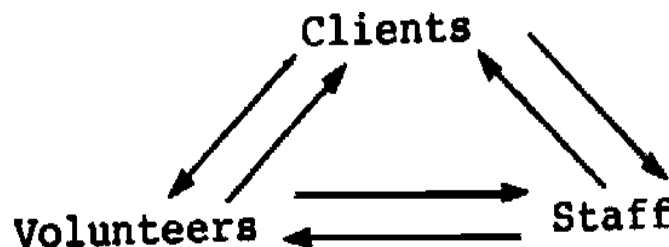
The decision on which contributor and consumer constituencies to include depends on clear judgment on (a) who could or should contribute voluntarily to achieving the organization's purpose. (service volunteers, board, the media, corporations, etc.) and (b) who needs their help (staff or volunteer leaders for work assistance (stars and dreams), and consumers of services (clients, patients, parents, the public, etc.) for direct or indirect assistance by the organization or program).

I've seen Need-Overlap Analysis done with as many as six constituencies (contributor or consumer). If you know of instances with ten or more constituencies, I'd appreciate not being advised.

The steadily developing variations in Need-Overlap Analysis application are still less than completely flexible in their assumption about who can help whom. The classical Need-Overlap Analysis has helped going in essentially one direction, thus:



A Need-Overlap Analysis fine-tuned to more current concepts of help as a two-way process, would probably look more like a MINI-MAX between these three (or any other) constituencies. That is, prospective volunteers would be describing their needs as well as their Glad Gives – and volunteers do have needs – while staff and clients would be offering their Glad Gives along with their needs for help. The Need-Overlap process would then evolve towards



And the name would be neighboring.

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- (1) The process also relates point-for-point to the People Approach Principle. Volunteers input like to do's and can do's. Need-Overlap Analysis is then designed to connect these enjoyed competencies to staff and client needs.
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## CHAPTER SIX



### Looking Further for the Future

#### Challenge and Response

Here we are at the last chapter and still nowhere near the perfect society. For when all the MINI-MAX and Need-Overlap matches have been made, many needs will remain unmet. True, a large proportion of Glad Gives, perhaps 80-90%, prove useful to other people, and that helps a great deal. But the reverse is not logically necessary, nor is it likely to be factually true: that 80-90% of all needs in the world can be filled by Glad Give. (1) The overall experience from Need-Overlap Analysis seems more realistic; about 15-20% of volunteer Glad Gives overlap (are relevant to) the needs of staff and/or clients.

What about all the needs which people are not glad or even willing to fill? We can of course pay people to do the unenjoyable assuming we have the money and they need it badly enough. We can also manipulate situational characteristics of work to make it more attractive to people. The foundations of a system for doing this have been described elsewhere. (2)

But People Approach differs from either of these two options because it focuses on what's coming from the "inside" of people rather than what's offered from the outside: financial or situational. This means careful avoidance of any pressure on people to do this or that: instead we concentrate on complete listening.

Thus far, People Approach listening has been in terms of Glad Gives and this has taken us far. But, as we have seen, when the Glad Gives are gone, people still hurt and hunger and lack. We must therefore ask if there are additional categories in terms of which we might more intensely explore what people have to give.

These categories should be clear, understandable and realistic enough so that people can use the categories to inventory themselves, with little or no outside promotion. The self-survey results must also be potentially useful in meeting needs.

Two promising candidates are emerging at the growing edge of People Approach: Do-It-Anyhows and Quests.

#### Do-It-Anyhows

Do-It-Anyhows are activities a person has compelling reason to perform. These reasons exist prior to and independent of any attempt on our part to persuade the person to help.

Examples of a volunteer coordinator's Do-It-Anyhows might be:

- Training volunteers next Tuesday evening
- Regularly reading a professional journal
- Putting up volunteer recruiting posters all over town
- Tabulating and analyzing volunteer program statistics
- Writing the annual report
- Writing a letter to the editor praising volunteers
- Terminating an unsuitable volunteer
- Driving to work every weekday

The list illustrates a distinction between Do-It-Anyhows and Glad Gives. You don't necessarily enjoy a Do-It-Anyhow; you might be doing it mainly because you have to and/or you might be bored by having done it over and over again.

Chances are a person will reasonably well practiced and experienced in a Do-It-Anyhow activity, but this is by no means certain. You might never get good at firing a volunteer, no matter how many times you have to do it. Roughly the comparison looks something like this:

<b>Glad Give</b>	<b>Desire</b>	<b>Competency</b>
	Yes	No
<b>Do-It-Anyhow</b>	Maybe, but probably less than Glad Give	Probably but not certainly

In other words, the Do-It-Anyhow is somewhat uncertain in either or both criteria for a Glad Give: Desire and Competency. Therefore, Do-It-Anyhows will often not appear on a person's list of Glad Give. Nevertheless, some help can sometimes be gotten from Do-It-Anyhows, and this makes them a People Approach resource additional to Glad Gives.

Thus, if I'm going food shopping anyhow, and you know about it, I could mail a letter for you on the way. Save you a trip.

If you're training your volunteers next Tuesday evening, I might sit in and observe because I need to learn more in this area.

If I'm reading a professional journal anyhow, I might alert you to significant articles, or even summarize them for you. You might do the same for me for another journal.

If you're driving to work every day, could we carpool?

If I'm putting up posters all over town, I might agree to put up a couple of your posters (if they don't compete with mine).

The examples suggest a pitfall. When hitching a helping ride on a Do-It-Anyhow, you are adding inconvenience to the life of a person who never said they were glad to give. Therefore, you must be especially careful to minimize the "extra trouble" the help-connection causes the Do-It-Anyhow. If I want to observe your volunteer training, I must promise to stay out from underfoot, and keep that promise. All the better if I do a little something for you in return, like pass out worksheets for you at the session, or, at your request share with you my perceptions of training. I'll be there anyhow.

The inconvenience issue explains why we exhaust gladly given contributions first, before getting to the Do-It-Anyhow layer of People Approach. This problem also must be dealt with when we ask people to list their Do-It-Anyhows. We must decisively reassure people that (a) the act of inventorying doesn't commit them to anything and (b) they are perfectly free to keep an additional list of "None-Of-Your-Business" items, written in invisible ink, of course.

After these important preliminaries, I usually request the survey in two parts:

- (a) an activity list of regular doings, much like Worksheet #2 in Need-Overlap Analysis (Chapter 5) except capable of including off-work as well as at work activities.
- (b) Special things you expect to be doing in the next two weeks; for example, visiting relatives in Atlanta, Georgia, attending a local workshop on networking, doing your income tax, etc.

It is sometimes also useful to ask people to indicate on their lists activities they might be relatively more willing to share with other people because it's less inconvenient to do so and/or because there's a better chance of getting something useful in exchange.

The, insofar as the Do-It-Anyhowers are willing, the negotiations begin. We who are seeking help review the lists, and do our creative best to persuade sharing of Do-It-Anyhows by removing inconvenience blocks as previously discussed, and maybe offering trades as well.

Paralleling the Do-It-Anyhow in the realm of materials and facilities is the Have-It-Anyhow. Examples include a place to meet, an excellent private library of books and journals, and spare copies of last year's highly successful volunteer recognition certificate.

### Quests

The desire to learn and grow and the desire for variety of experience in one's life have always been high on the list of motivations for volunteering. "Quests" is a concept/category which enables us to tap into these motives in a concrete, specific way.

A Quest is either:

- (a) some knowledge or information you'd like to have
- or
- (b) some activity you would like to try because you want to learn more about it or because you're just curious.

A prospective volunteer's Quest list might include:

- Learn cause of juvenile delinquency
- Go river rafting
- Learn automobile maintenance and repair
- Learn creative writing
- Have passenger ride in a small airplane
- Learn operation of computers
- Learn how to write a resume
- Meet people of different ethnic or racial backgrounds

The (self-rated) desire is there in a Quest, but the competency is doubtful and presumably absent. People who lack experience in an area are unlikely to be instant experts.

Thus the comparison is:

Glad Give	Desire	Competency
	Yes	No
Quest	Yes, but see later	Probably not

Clearly, whoever accepts an individual's Quest is at risk on the effectiveness of the person's performance. But this makes less difference in some cases than in others. Thus, a person can quite easily and quickly become an "effective" passenger in a small airplane. But proficiency in computer operation or automobile repair, does not come in a day.

Therefore, the organization which accepts an individual's Quest does so with the responsibility to provide supervision and/or training or at least experience which will satisfy the volunteer's desire to learn and grow. From the organization's point of view, this is a disadvantage of Quests vis-à-vis Glad Gives; you would usually have to give more in return for a Quest. But this, too, is a matter of degree depending on how well what the organization is doing coincides with the Quest. Take, for example, a program in which volunteer work with juvenile delinquents through shared recreation experiences, including river rafting and airplane rides. At least three of the Quests in our example could be satisfied via normal training (causes of delinquency) and activities of the

organization; no extra trouble is involved in satisfying the volunteer's Quest. In fact, the match between Quest and program need helps assure good motivation on the part of the volunteer. Even Quests not used directly in the program will be useful to the volunteer's supervisor as keys to what freshens up motivation for that person.

But even the motivational aspect has its uncertainties (hence, the "Yes, but..." in the table comparing Glad Gives and Quests). The urge for a ride in a small airplane may evaporate at 500 feet on a rough day. A similar possibility exists for eagerness to meet people of different racial background when you discover that, early on at least, these people don't fully trust you. Even when a person does enjoy an activity, as they expected to, the novelty might soon wear off. Generally Quests are based on anticipated enjoyment of an activity, and there's always the chance this prediction may be wrong.

For all these reasons, Quests, like Do-It-Anyhows, are a secondary vein mined in People Approach, after the primary vein of Glad Gives has been thoroughly explored.

But there's gold in them thar hills just the same. The desire to learn and grow and expand one's experience, tapped by Quests, makes for some exciting volunteers, the kind who push us instead of having to be pushed by us.

So get your list of Quests, asking people to be as specific as possible. You'll probably encounter less worry about being exploited sharing Quests, than in the case of Do-It-Anyhows. After all, acceptance of a Quest implies the opportunity to satisfy curiosity and to learn, a very human venture.

#### **From Now On**

So, we have cast our net wider now;  
Glad Gives  
Very Glad Gives, perhaps  
Once-In-A-Whiles  
Information Leading To's  
Do-It-Anyhows  
Quests.

When we have taken that longer role call of offerings, we are distinctly closer to validating what seemed like mere slogan ten years ago.

There is no such thing as an apathetic person  
Because  
Everyone has something to give.

Our job is to help people find a place to give what they have. That is People Approach, and it remains still as much a quest as an achievement. So be it, if the reason for that is a sense of mission seeking to extend the boundaries of what free people can do in a free society.

Though we are nowhere near the final barriers yet, perhaps someday we'll come up against them.

Indeed, I do believe there are limits to what volunteers can do. But those limits are in our imagination, in our understanding of our own people and in the faith we have in them.

The choice is ours. Shall we be frightened when we could be bold, rigid when the call is for creativity, poor when we might be rich in human resources?

And as we have welcomed the help of scientists, technicians, and managers in developing our  
implementary skills, shall we dare to let poets set goals for us?

WORK IS LOVE MADE VISIBLE

. . . . Kahlil Gibran

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- (1) To illustrate the logic involved here: if you give apples to children and they accept them 90%  
of the time, that does not ensure meeting the children's other food needs any of the time.
  - (2) "The Task Enrichment System: A First Outline," by Ivan Scheier in Volunteer Administration,  
Fall 1980, vol XIII, No.3.
- 
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By Ivan Scheier

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