



*My View*

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## *A PRIVILEGE TO BE THERE*

When I ask TIP Volunteers to describe their personal experience of helping others at the worst time in their lives, the most common description I hear is *"it's a privilege."* I think it's interesting that for the most part volunteers don't describe their experience as *"I'm glad to help"* or *"People need me"* or *"I love being able to help others."* It's clear that TIP Volunteers describe their experience of helping others not in terms of a gift they bring to others, but as a gift they themselves receive.

I believe that one simple phrase *"it's a privilege"* captures the very essence of the caring attitude we want TIP Volunteers to bring to those we serve. Therefore, I think we need to find ways in our organization of continually reminding ourselves that entering the personal life of those in trouble is indeed a privilege.

My hope is that the *"it's a privilege"* phrase finds its way into our training programs, into our mentoring of TIP trainees, into our recruiting efforts and into our refresher courses. And I think every TIP Volunteer should occasionally ask himself this question: *"Do I appreciate what a privilege it is to be with others during the worst hours of their lives?"*

Finding ways to remind ourselves that what we do in TIP is a PRIVILEGE will keep us grounded in that caring place we need to be to help others. The *"it's privilege"* attitude fosters and strengthens other important attitudes and abilities needed by TIP Volunteers, including the attitude of humility.... the ability to see our clients' strengths ....and the attitude of gratefulness.

Also an *"it's a privilege"* attitude reminds us that we are entering a "sacred place" when we walk into a strangers home or hospital room, and that we need to enter this place quietly, calmly, gently and respectfully.

In short, it's important for us to remember that those we are called to serve do not have to let us into their very personal lives, especially when their lives are in turmoil. The fact that they do so and that they allow us to touch their lives in a meaningful way is indeed a privilege, never to be taken for granted.