



My View

HUMILITY

One of the questions I ask myself and other TIP Leaders on a regular basis is what are the TIP **essentials** i.e. what are those things that make TIP...TIP? What are the key attitudes our volunteers and leaders need to have? What are the ways of doing business we need to preserve? What are the things we need to continue as we adapt to a changing environment? What things must we nurture lest we lose our way?

Of course there is no one answer to these questions. There are quite a few procedures, behaviors and attitudes we need to preserve as we grow. But one attitude...one way of thinking about who we are and what we do keeps emerging for me as vitally important and easily overlooked. It's the attitude of **humility**.

I would describe **TIP humility** as taking our mission seriously but not ourselves. Or, being other focused and not self focused. I believe that without humble volunteers, humble leaders and humble organization we would soon become a rigid bureaucratic agency more concerned with our own welfare and survival than with fulfilling our mission of helping others.

Specifically, if humility did not permeate our organization (which it now does) our TIP Volunteers would not provide the selfless care survivors of tragedy need; our leaders would lose their ability to practice the "servant leadership" TIP Volunteers need; and those considering volunteering or donating to TIP wouldn't...people can sense from a mile away an inauthentic organization more concerned with itself than with those it is supposed to serve.

It's easy to write and talk about humility, and there is probably no one who would disagree that humility is an essential ingredient for a "*helping organization*" like TIP. But keeping our egos in check is an age old challenge, and it's not easy to get ourselves out of the way.

What are some of the things we can do in TIP to actually practice "TIP Humility"?

- > **TIP Volunteers can...**
 - > Continually remind themselves "*it's not about me.*"
 - > Go into TIP Calls "*empty*" i.e. without judgment and without the strongly held values and beliefs we all have.
 - > Admit it when they make mistakes, and share those mistakes with others in TIP.
 - > Reflect on what they don't know about our clients including the client's relationship with the deceased; the clients mental and physical health; the client's addictions; the client's criminal history; and the client's history with

"helpers". As one TIP Volunteer put it "When I first approach a client, I don't know nothin!"

> **TIP Leaders can...**

- > Not buy into the adulation often given them by TIP Volunteers.
- > Focus on TIP Volunteers and not themselves.
- > Admit mistakes and change course when necessary.
- > Laugh at themselves.
- > Give others all the credit for success.

> **The TIP Organization can...**

- > Ensure that all policies, procedures and programs are aligned with the TIP mission.
- > Trust Volunteers to know what's best on TIP Calls.
- > *"Push TIP Volunteers up"* into leadership positions so that TIP is a *"flat"* organization not ruled from *"on high."*
- > Have a feedback system that ensures volunteers and leaders are held accountable for practicing the TIP Way.

Finally, I think that as long as we are a humble organization with humble volunteers and humble leaders we will remain in the good graces of what many of us call the Big Dispatcher In The Sky...that mysterious force that regularly inspires and protects us. I haven't talked to the Big Dispatcher about humility 😊 but I suspect he/she will continue to help us...as long as we humbly admit that we need help, lots of it.

Wayne would like to hear your thoughts.
Email him at <mailto:Tipinceeo@aol.com>