



My View

RESPECT

Recently, a new TIP Volunteer told me how much she appreciated a TIP continuing education meeting which she described as a welcome respite from "the social tensions" following the political campaigns and elections. The topic of this continuing education meeting was "How to Help Muslims After a Death in the Family."

What this volunteer found refreshing in the meeting was that she heard community members (TIP volunteers) genuinely trying to understand another group of community members (Muslims) so that the volunteers can help when called upon.

While I was not surprised at this new volunteer's appreciation of the inclusive nature of a TIP continuing education meeting (it happens monthly in TIP Affiliate across the country) it was a stark reminder for me of the importance of a basic core value of our organization....RESPECT for everyone regardless of their race, color, religion, age, politics.....

This attitude of Respect For All permeates TIP on at least 4 levels.....

.....First, the TIP WAY has always directed emergency responders to: *"Call us anytime, anywhere for ANYONE"*. That approach is still alive and well today.

.....Second, in the TIP Training Academy we use the term "The Cast of Characters" as an affectionate term to describe the wonderful diversity in the general public we serve. We emphasize that we need to respect every member of the Cast of Characters we are called to assist.

.....Third, our motto is and always has been *"Citizens Helping Citizens in Crisis"*....not, *"Citizens Helping (a specific group) in Crisis"*.

.....Finally, TIP Volunteers regularly and successfully cross racial, religious, political and language "barriers" to help those they are called to help. No hesitation. No question.

The belief that we need to "respect everyone" is not just an ideal or a "good idea." Maintaining this attitude of inclusiveness is what makes TIP work. If we didn't put the value of "helping everyone" into action emergency responders wouldn't call, volunteers wouldn't be effective in helping others who are different from themselves and we wouldn't attract volunteers from across our diverse communities.

Because a new TIP Volunteer looked at a continuing education meeting with "fresh eyes", I have a renewed appreciation for what I've taken for granted.....that we are a group of caring citizens who don't just tolerate those who are different from us and who are crisis. We reach out to them when they need a compassionate human being who accepts them unconditionally.

Wayne would like to hear your thoughts.

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