



My View

FACING FEARS

A common and ongoing challenge faced by all TIP Affiliates is recruiting and retaining TIP volunteers. Although everyone thinks that TIP is a good idea very few citizens actually put this good idea into practical action as TIP Volunteers.

The reasons citizens give us for not becoming TIP Volunteers range from *"I'm too busy now"* to *"I can't make the training academy."* I'm sure these reasons are valid in many situations. But I think in many instances there is an unstated reason which many citizens don't disclose for obvious reasons: *"I'm not becoming a TIP Volunteer because I'm scared."* I'm convinced that fear is in fact a major reason citizens don't pursue becoming TIP Volunteers.

What are the fears that many who opt not to become TIP Volunteers have? They include fear of death, fear of carnage, fear of the unknown, fear of getting lost on the way to a call, fear of not knowing how to respond to crisis situations and fear of getting physically or emotionally injured.

TIP Volunteers have these same fears, and some they didn't know they had until they began responding to TIP calls. TIP Volunteers can't go through their TIP careers without facing situations which cause them to face their fears. I debriefed a TIP Volunteer recently who told me *"going on TIP Calls forces me to face all my fears."*

I believe that the difference between TIP Volunteers and those who don't volunteer isn't that TIP Volunteers don't have fears. It's that TIP Volunteers are willing to face those fears. Isn't that the definition of courage....the willingness to face one's fears and act in spite of them?

We can't persuade or challenge those who don't volunteer for TIP because of their fears. As much as we might like, we can't say *"have some guts!"* What we can do is appreciate the courage of our own TIP Volunteers...our Heroes.

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