

TITLE: Service, Hunger, and Homelessness

OBJECTIVES: To introduce the idea of service, and the difference between immediate needs and root causes

TIME REQUIRED: 50 - 60 minutes

MATERIALS: Quotes written out on flip chart, markers, Post-its, paper and pens for participants to write on

DIRECTIONS

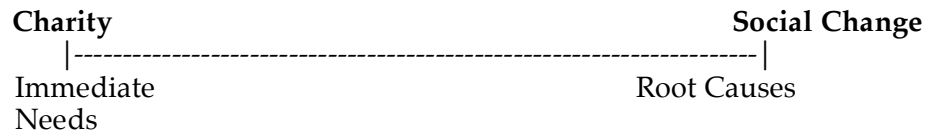
1. Start with 3 quotes on a flipchart and ask for volunteers to read them out loud (whole group, 5-10 minutes).
 - “Service is the rent each of us pays for living- the very purpose of living and not something you do in your spare time or after you have reached your personal goals”. -*Marian Wright Edelman*
 - “Love grows by service.” -*Charlotte Perkins Gilman*
 - “I don’t really know what your destiny will be, but one thing I know – the only ones among you who will be really happy are those who will have sought and found a way to service.” -*Albert Schweitzer*

Have everyone find a partner. Each person will pick one quote that speaks to him/her the most. This could mean that they disagree strongly with a quote, too! Then, in pairs, each person will tell his/her partner what quote they picked, why they picked that quote (this explanation should include what it is about that quote that the person agrees or disagrees with). Ask for a few volunteers to also share with the larger group, and use this sharing to segue to the larger group discussion.

2. Discuss Service (whole group, 20 minutes) – Why do we do it? What is it? What counts as service? Who can do service? If someone does service for self-centered reasons, does it count? What if they are being paid? Use the ideas that are discussed to create a working definition, and write this up on the flipchart.
3. Writing Exercise (individual work, 10 minutes): Ask participants to recall any experience working in a homeless shelter, food pantry, or with the homeless. This will get them thinking about different types of service they have done, which will aid in the brainstorming session for the following activity. If participants are stuck, give them the following prompts:
 - An experience that changed a notion you had or reconfirmed one you already had about homelessness or hunger.
 - An experience that stuck with you from your community service and why?
4. Introduce the Charity/Immediate needs to social change/ root causes continuum (whole group, 15-20 minutes):



- Ask the group for definitions of “Charity” and “Social Change.” Come to consensus understanding of these before moving on, because it is crucial to their understanding of the continuum.
- Put continuum on flipchart (see below).



- One way to help explain this continuum is by using storytelling. Here are two possible stories to help get the point across:
 1. **The parable (from the Bible) of teaching a man to fish versus giving him a fish.** “Give a man a fish and he eats for a day, but teach him to fish and he can eat for a lifetime.” This highlights immediate needs, and some might think it gets at the root causes, but there are some bigger issues it fails to address. These include cultural, environmental, and economic factors; does this man eat fish, or does he choose not to for some reason? Can he even afford to buy fishing supplies? Does he even have access to these materials? Can fish survive in the lakes, rivers, and oceans near this man’s home, or have they been killed off or driven away by pollution?
 2. **The Picnickers.** There is a group of people eating a picnic lunch in a beautiful park, and they have seated themselves near a river. One man looks over and sees a baby floating down the river. He can’t let the baby drown, so he runs over and jumps in to save the infant, and then he brings it back to the picnic to watch the child. In a few minutes, another infant comes floating down the river and again the man jumps up to rescue this child as well. Again and again, babies float down stream and this man keeps jumping up to grab them. Then, the man’s sister jumps up and says that something must be done. She decides to head upstream and find out where the children are coming from, because until they stop the source the problem will continue.
- Discuss the difference between immediate needs and root causes. As a way to introduce this conversation, ask people to brainstorm about kinds of service they have done, and have them write these on yellow Post-its. Then, have them physically place that sticky on the continuum and explain to the group why they placed it where they did. Where would TFP lie on this spectrum?
- It is also important to recognize that people or groups, working at different ends of the spectrum, are no better or worse than each other. Both types of work are crucial to fix these problems.

