



WHAT DO I GIVE?

PREP FOR THE SESSION

Overview

This resource explores the different ways we can **give of ourselves in service/ volunteering** through the value of **Presence**.

At-a-Glance:

This resource explores the value of presence as it relates to the different things that we can give of ourselves while living lives of service – time, treasure and talent – to name a few possibilities. How can being fully present help us hear what is needed by others, and match that with what we can offer?

The resource is designed to be facilitated in sections, with a break in between for the service activity. Prior to the service activity, a question will be posed to learners to consider during their service. After service, they will have an opportunity for reflection and processing.



Time Estimate:

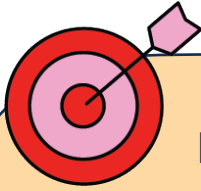
30 minutes



Best Uses:

- To be paired with a service activity component
- For adult learners

LET'S GET STARTED



FRAME THE ISSUE

Facilitator reads for framing:

The word philanthropy comes from the Greek meaning "love of people," but it has come to mean giving of **time** (volunteering, often direct service), **treasure** (money, items of value), or **talent** (unique skills or expertise, serving on committees, advocating).

Nearly 500 billion dollars was given in the US charitable ecosystem in 2022. And Volunteering in America found that 23% of adults volunteered for an approximate total 4.1 billion hours.

Those are some massive numbers. And yet so many needs were unmet. Why? How?

Facilitator prompts the group:

- Think through the categories outlined and defined above: time, treasure and talent. Which one feels most natural for you to offer to others?
- Have you ever been in a service-giving situation where you recognized something was much needed (for example, a particular skill), but you had something else entirely to offer? How did it feel?

7 min





EXPLORE THE VALUE: PRESENCE

5 min



Facilitator reads for framing:

Deepening our exploration of the value of presence can help offer a window into aligning what is needed with what we have to give. Showing up in social justice settings implies more than just being in attendance. Being fully present, and authentically listening is a crucial element. Being able to listen to a person - or even an organization - can lead to a greater understand of their needs and how you can support them. Sometimes what we have to offer is not necessarily what is most needed in service work.



Facilitator prompts the group:

- How can the value of presence allow to see what is truly needed in service work?
- What is hard about being present?

Facilitator continues reading:

The Trust-Based Philanthropy Project, which works to advancing equity and shifting power for nonprofits, suggests that those who provide resources—today, us—should be “self-aware, listen, and be transparent to think critically about how you are showing up with staff, grantee partners, and the community.” This is based on the idea that organizations know their work better than funders and volunteers. It’s the job of the giver to listen to find out what is really needed and not just give how or what they want to give.



Facilitator prompts the group:

- Have you ever experienced a time when deep listening and full presence shifted your view on what was needed in service work? When?
- How can we challenge ourselves to demonstrate full presence when volunteering with an organization and then best try to match what we give to what we heard was needed?



JEWISH ANCHOR

6 min



Facilitator prompts the group to read the following two Jewish texts which focus on present listening and answer the questions below:

Mishlei/Proverbs 18:13

To answer a person before hearing him out, is foolish and disgraceful.

מְשִׁיב דָּבָר בְּטוֹרֵם יִשְׁמַע
אֲזֵלֶת הַיָּאֵל וְכָל־מָה:

Shemot/Exodus 24:7

And he [Moses] took the Book of the Covenant, and read in the hearing of the people; and they said: 'All that the Eternal has spoken will we do, and then listen.'

וַיִּקְחֵם סֵפֶר הַבְּרִית וַיִּקְרָא בְּאָזְנֵי הָעָם
וַיֹּאמְרוּ כָל־אֲשֶׁר־דִּבֶּר ה' נַעֲשֶׂה וְנִשְׁמָע:



Facilitator prompts the group:

- What does the first text suggest about presence?
- When does the second text suggest that we listen? How does presence show up here?
- Do you think these texts contradict one another? Why or why not?

*** PROMPT BEFORE SERVICE ***

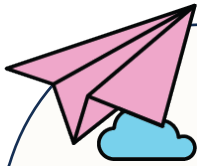
Facilitator prompts the group before service:

As we got into our volunteering today, we encourage you to be present and listen to both the needs articulated by the population served today as well as the staff of the organization.

Try to identify times today when you model your presence by -

1. Listening before answering (Text 1)
2. First doing then listening (Text 2)

BREAK FOR SERVICE EXPERIENCE



PROMPT ACTION

5 min



Facilitator draws participants back together to de-brief sharing the following prompts:

- What do you hear that this organization/community needs to carry out their mission?
- What did you hear from the population being served that they need?

Facilitator continues in a closing activity:

Now we're going to consider how our volunteering today fit into those needs. We recognize that you came in here today with an idea of what you were going to do and give, as volunteers. Our goal isn't to be critical of what we did but rather to try to see in what ways we were able to be present, to listen to needs, and to think about how we might build on them in the future.



Facilitator prompts:

Left-Right movement activity:

- Ask each person to share one thing that they contributed today.
 - As each person shares, they should then move to the RIGHT of the room if they feel like it met the needs of what they heard.
 - They should move to the LEFT of the room if they feel like it didn't meet the needs they heard at all. People can stand anywhere in between.
- Facilitator should ask a few people standing in different locations to share more about why they are standing in that location.



CLOSE WITH INTENTION

Facilitator reads:

What we give isn't always up to us. That seems contradictory, as we are the people coming in with time, money and skills. However, being fully present and allowing ourselves to really listen can shift our framework so we can align what is needed with what we can give.

Closing Activity Redux:

Facilitator prompts:

- Now we're going to redo the same activity with the goal of getting everyone to the right side of the room.
- Each of us will share something we can give next time/in the future (next time you volunteer here, give back in other ways, etc) that reflects being fully present as a way to match what you heard was needed with what you can give.

3 min

