

What Brings You and What Do You Bring To This Work?

When you reflect on your current situation, what are the factors and influences that have lead you to do outreach work with people experiencing homelessness? Perhaps you are motivated by certain beliefs and values, or inspired by past experiences, or by someone's example or memory.

Some people can identify very clearly why they've chosen this work. For others, probably most of us, the reasons are less clear. It is not uncommon for workers to say they just kind of "fell into" this work, as if it were an accidental event. It is also not uncommon for these same individuals to come to view themselves as having found their niche or "calling." Few outreach workers view their work as just another job.

Below are some questions to prompt your reflection on how and why you might have become involved in outreach work. Take time to reflect on the questions and jot down what comes to mind.

- 1. When in your life did you first notice you were interested in the "helping professions" or a helping role?*
- 2. What personal life experiences have led you toward this work?*
- 3. What are some of the values and beliefs that influence your work with people experiencing homelessness?*
- 4. What past training/education has helped you prepare for outreach work?*
- 5. Who have been your mentors?*
- 6. What personal skills and attributes do you bring to this work?*
- 7. What concerns or nagging questions do you have about doing outreach?*
- 8. How have you grown or expect to grow personally as a result of your work activities?*
- 9. What are you missing or giving up by being involved in this work?*
- 10. How do you measure success in your work life?*