



## **Module Four - Lesson Five**

### **Making a Difference**

What type of difference do you want to make in this world? What legacy do you want to leave behind?

The only way of fulfilling your highest vision is through service to others. Greatness lies not in your duration but in your donation to others.

Service has valuable paybacks. The paybacks are the love and gratitude we inspire in those we help, the increase in our own self-esteem, and the positive change in our own body chemistry.

George Vaillant, M.D., psychologist and director of a 40-year study of Harvard grads identified service as “one of the qualities that help even the most poorly adjusted men of the study group deal successfully with the stresses of life. It’s service that makes the difference.”

The opposite of service is selfishness. Selfishness may make you ill. Dean Ornish, M.D., author of *Reversing Heart Disease*, concurs. He says, “The exaggerated focus on the self may further reinforce the sense of isolation and separateness.” Basically, looking out for number one is not self-interest at all. It’s just lonely.

Caring is biological. The mandate to “love your neighbor as you love yourself” has an effect on your whole body. Just ask retirees or elderly that volunteer. I am convinced that serving others is a high value especially to those who lose friends and family regularly. It gives them a sense of purpose and fulfills their needs.

It is the intention behind our giving, and our receiving, that is important. The intention should always be to create happiness for the giver and for yourself. Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) is one of the best examples of this principle. “When I help you, I help me.”

When we serve, we give one another a special kind of human companionship. When people share their problems and search for solutions together, there is a strong sense of connectedness and mutual understanding.

The only way a giver can reap the full benefits of service to others is if the service comes out of the goodness in his or her heart, and not out of need. We cannot expect a return of goodness if we are not sincerely serving.

The concept of fulfilling your mission through service is actually very simple, but it isn't simplistic.

What you want to receive, give to others.

If you want love, learn to give love. If you want attention or appreciation, learn to give attention and appreciation. If you want joy then learn to give joy and happiness to others. If you want abundance, help others find abundance.

Service is the mind-set.

The decision to give something to every person we meet reminds us that although everything else might be going badly, we are not. This gives us a good sense of self-esteem, power, and control. And, from these feelings we will begin to reap our rewards.

A hobby can offer an opportunity for service. For example, I volunteer with disabled children using horseback riding to help them with physical dysfunction. I am there to help serve the needs of the kids, parents, and therapists. I always leave there feeling happy, satisfied, and full of joy.

Make the decision to serve. The service we offer does not have to take the form of material things. A smile, a compliment, some encouragement, or a prayer is often the best gift. In fact, the most powerful forms of service don't involve money. They are just gifts of pure caring, attention, and unconditional love.

In business it's important to pay attention to your cash flow but without paying attention to your people flow your business will go under. It's the people who make a company successful and help it to succeed or fail.

Using service to fulfill your mission is the essence of leadership. It means that you are willing to go out ahead, to show the way, to be open to the unusual, to follow inspiration.

Service transforms your sense of mission and attracts followers. Other lives are touched. Others see more clearly what is best because of your example. Your task as a leader is to put the law of service and reciprocity into effect daily, not just to help ourselves but to show the way for others.

Make service the center of your conscious activities rather than an occasional or random act. Service needs to become the lifeblood of fulfilling your mission.