



**The Storehouse**  
OF COLLIN COUNTY



# MY PROJECT HOPE TRAINING JOURNEY

A Volunteer's Perspective, by Larry Maguire

Editor: Benjamin Skye, LPC



## What is Project Hope?

Project Hope (PH) is a transformational program with a mission to support our neighbors through relationships. The overarching goal of Project Hope is to eliminate hopelessness for women in crisis by offering a community of support focusing on key areas. To achieve this, Project Hope incorporates, under the Director of Project Hope, PHriends to walk alongside participants. Also, through partnership and engagement in authentic relationships with our neighbors, Project Hope also aims to foster awareness and growth in volunteers as well.

### **“You’ve got a PHriend in me...”**

*A Note from Deborah Hill, LPC, Director of Project Hope*

**“PHriend”** is the term used to describe volunteers who have committed their time, talents and willingness to partner in mutual growth to support our neighbors in need. Although we recognize that there are vital moments when a PHriend may play the role of a mentor, advocate or cheerleader, the program encourages the PHriend to recognize our neighbors as equal. We find that when volunteers recognize the intrinsic value of each participant, the relationship is primed for both to experience a successful partnership.

## Why is training important?

As you read about my journey, it is my hope that you will recognize why the training and preparation is so critical before you volunteer as a PHriend. In my training, I realized how an untrained volunteer could side-track any forward movement of participants in attaining their proactive goals due to a lack of knowledge or empathy. I have come to believe that volunteers need to maintain an openness to increasing one’s understanding of the unique background, history, culture, and journey of the individual neighbors.

In Romans 12:6-8, we are told about our God given talents,

*“...having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith; if service, in our serving; ... the one who leads, with zeal; the one who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness.”*

As a starting point for explaining my PH training, I found it helpful to first examine my gifts, learned abilities, and background upon entering training and what I did and did not know about the community I was about to enter. My education and experience were in the engineering and accounting disciplines, management skills and strategies, marketing psychology, and leadership roles in corporate organizations. While I did possess some of the core competencies detailed in the training materials, I learned quickly that I was unquestionably lacking in the fundamental knowledge of the journeys and experiences of the participants that I would be working with.



## Getting Started: The Introductory Meeting

*Time: Approximately 1.5 - 2 Hours*

*Objective: Review program overview & determine if volunteer is a good match.*

Volunteers meet with the Director of Project Hope for an introductory session where the collaborative mentorship program is explained. Volunteers are shown how PHriends can share their gifts and talents with those in need and be enriched by the PH community's openness and learning environment.

This meeting spans a couple of hours and covers select pertinent subjects in the Training Manual. The following section delves further into the manual. After the introductory meeting, it is also a good time for a volunteer to reflect on whether Project Hope is a good match for those individuals looking at all Storehouse opportunities.

## RESOURCES & READINGS

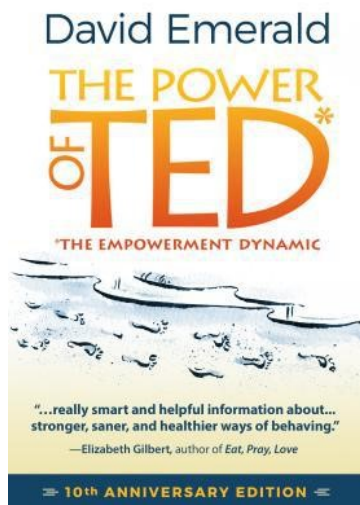


### Project Hope Training Manual

The PHriend Training Manual is Project Hope's operating manual which should be read in its entirety as operations are designed to influence and determine all major decisions and actions, and all activities take place within the PH boundaries as described in the manual. This manual of approximately 40 pages of policies, procedures and training instructions contains a vast number of subjects and, among other areas, includes:

- ◆ The therapeutic environment of participants and appropriate ethical boundaries,
- ◆ The Intake Process, how PH levels of care are determined, and next steps to becoming a participant,
- ◆ Suicidal ideation and/or alarming conversations and actions to be taken,
- ◆ Additional facts on poverty and survival and the holistic, relationship-based program model,
- ◆ Introductory conversation on societal class dynamics and racial reconciliation,
- ◆ Core competencies a volunteer must possess for being a PHriend and attitudes to avoid.

The Table of Contents lists 29 topics so additional study time should be set aside to thoroughly read, reflect, and absorb the material presented.

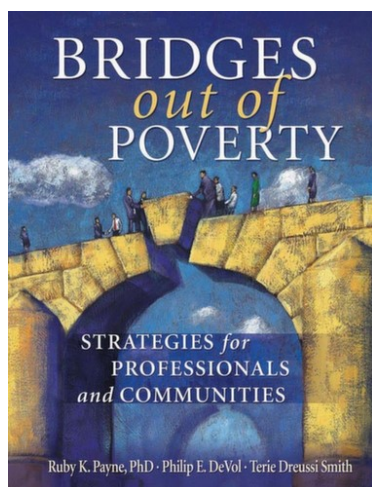


## The Power of TED\*

*Author: David Emerald*

As previously mentioned, some volunteers may have limited education training and experience like mine for the “serving” mission ahead. For those of us with this limited exposure, it doesn’t necessarily follow that our prior training will extend to the empowerment dynamic detailed in the TED book. TED focuses on interpersonal relationships with individuals who may be trapped in victimhood and enablement. It addresses how one might move from feeling like a victim to being a creator of his or her own life, become more vision-focused, and have the clarity to pursue one’s desired outcomes.

The early chapters of the TED book explain the “Dreaded Drama Triangle” model, which was new to me. It describes the victimhood thought process and the mindset of an individual trapped in it. The latter chapters of the book move to the transition and empowerment dynamic, which explains the journey to creativity, self determination and the how to begin to achieve the desired direction and outcomes. This book also needs to be read slowly to absorb the lessons it offers. It is relevant reading for anyone seeking to support another person and for self reflection as well.



## Bridges Out of Poverty

*Authors: Ruby Payne, PhD, Philip E. DeVol, Terie Dreussi Smith*

At the beginning of the training path, I believe that it is very helpful to read judiciously the book, Bridges out of Poverty. Key takeaways are virtually in every chapter and include:

- ◆ Definition of Poverty: extent to which an individual goes without resources,
- ◆ Role of Language: the role of formal and informal/casual register,
- ◆ Hidden Rules among Socioeconomic Classes: cues and habits of groups. Also, one must have a solid grasp of the 15 rules in poverty that encompass money, personality, social emphasis, food, clothing, time, education, destiny, language, family structure, world view, love, driving forces, and humor,
- ◆ Patterns in Generational Poverty and understanding Situational Poverty
- ◆ Role Models and Emotional Resources,
- ◆ Support Systems, Mentoring and Bridging,
- ◆ Discipline, Choices, Consequences, Resources and Resiliency.



My awareness of what was ahead increased with every chapter I read. Upon completing this book, my response back to the Director of Project Hope was the following:

“Bridges was a very slow read for me as virtually every page had information that I had little to no knowledge of. All my management classes and experience in the middle-class business world that I worked in gave me no clues on the culture and impact of poverty.

“Obviously, the media reports on disasters such as Katrina and Harvey and all the short-term needs that arise as the circumstances occur. However, generational and long-term poverty is rarely highlighted or reported.

“In Chapter 3 on “Hidden Rules,” I did not check any of the 18 boxes in the quiz on poverty. Not only did I make an F on this little quiz but the F was a zero! In Chapter 1 on “Definitions and Resources,” I tried my best to put myself in the shoes of the people in the seven scenarios presented.

The feelings I had were “I’m trapped, there is no way out, this is hopeless.” To say the book is eye-opening doesn’t really convey all the feelings of a reader that cares and can empathize with people in poverty. The book is very emotional and leaves one continuing to reflect long after the book is finished.”

## **Waking Up to Peace: Monthly Workshop**

*Facilitator: Deborah Hill, LPC-S*

*Date: Every third Saturday of the month, 9:00am - 11:30am.*

This gathering is a monthly meeting of the Project Hope community including PHriends, participants, and prospective participants with the Director of Project Hope in the role of instructor and facilitator. Waking Up to Peace is a Christ-centered philosophy that addresses the importance of healing relationships by abandoning our own identities for a true identity in Christ.



**A Waking Up to Peace Workshop in session. Attendees share their relationship struggles and encourage one another to find balance.**

- ◆ My observation was the instruction on the communications model at the beginning of the meeting established the foundation for what was to follow. The facilitator encouraged the attendees to furnish words for the marker board to better help describe behaviors. This brought most individuals into the discussion and set the stage for the dialogue and experiences that followed.
- ◆ After the opening instructor presentation with participation by the group, discussions centered on individuals' current challenges. Some workshop participants chimed in with personal stories sharing supporting comments and similar experiences.
- ◆ Some of the experiences that were shared with the group were very emotional to the point of tears. I would say this sharing made for a powerful meeting and helped others that were present. Individuals could reflect on their own challenges and realize that everyone is there to grow toward centering and taking more control in their lives.

This instruction coupled with the discussions and storytelling, made for a very engaging meeting. This is definitely a session that all new volunteer PHriends should attend going through training. I can say sitting face-to-face and hearing each others' stories pulls at your heart when you are in the group setting. For a PHriend, I would say attending other Waking Up to Peace group sessions with participants is a good way to stay immersed in this caring ministry. It reminded me that we are all in this together.

### TRAINING SUMMARY:



In my view, there is no shortcutting the training program developed for PH volunteers. The two books, the PH Training Manual, the Waking Up to Peace group session, the sexual abuse awareness course, and the multiple training and discussion meetings with the Director of Project Hope are paramount for being prepared to support, embrace, and guide participants in setting and achieving practical life goals.

Also, touring The Storehouse during open hours and observing the missions of Seven Loaves and Joseph's Closet was very enlightening to me. While the website is informative, the old adage, *"a picture is worth a thousand words"* rings true here. This tour is a helpful step in helping one see the totality of the mission of Storehouse to feed, clothe, and care for our neighbors. This mission aligns with the scripture in Mathew 25 where we read that

***"When the Son of Man comes in His glory ... the King will say,  
For I was hungry and you gave me food,  
I was thirsty and you gave me drink,  
I was a stranger and you welcomed me."***

## CLOSING THOUGHTS



The above observations highlight specific aspects of my training journey to become a PHriend. For those that choose to pursue this opportunity, I would suggest going into the training with the realization that you have to establish an informed and firm foundation of relevant knowledge by studying and completing the program materials made available to you before you move forward in the role of a PHriend.

You have to fully understand the journey of the participants, be ready to create friendships and mentoring relationships built on mutual respect and sharing, and to put into practice what you have learned.

If you passionately pursue this journey and prepare yourself, you will also likely discover you have grown in your own Christian faith and your own life has been enriched.

Best wishes on your journey,  
*Larry*



**Larry Maguire**

## THANK YOU

The Storehouse Team is thankful to Mr. Larry Maguire for sharing his personal journey in learning more about Project Hope and becoming a PHriend. Larry currently serves as a Money Habits PHriend working with neighbors towards financial empowerment.

If you have been inspired by Larry's journey and would like to get started in becoming a PHriend in Project Hope, contact us:

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