

WHATEVER YOUR HAND FINDS TO DO, DO IT WITH ALL YOUR MIGHT!

INTERNATIONAL SERVICE DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Cindy Schad, Chair & Mary Hanzel, Co-Chair

Warmest wishes of the Season to you! This time of year finds all of us pulled in so many directions. There are parties to attend, shopping to be done, foods to be prepared, letters to write and decorating to be done in many of our households. The world seems a little brighter with good tidings and great cheer spread to our fellow man. It is a time when generosity towards others is more prevalent than at any other time of the year.

As Altrusans, we carry this generosity throughout the year by our acts of service. It amazes us to read of the wonderful service projects completed by Altrusa Clubs. These acts of service touch so many lives in a positive way. To these acts of Altrusa service, we say **“thank you”**.

During the past two months, Cindy heard two statements that had a great impact on her. Both of these statements can be applied to all Altrusans.



Statement #1 – “Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with all your might.” The speaker asked the group to hold their hands in front of them. He then spoke the above statement. What do you see when you look at your hand? If you see a hand of leadership, then lead with all of your might whether you commit to serve as a committee chair or officer in your local Club, in your District or on the International level.

Leadership is about the way you perceive and treat yourself and how you perceive and treat others. Personal leadership involves the former; social and organizational leadership involves the latter. The two are interrelated. The perception you have of yourself is part of your worldview. It involves such issues as your personal accountability, values that matter most to you, your personal mission in life, and the importance of self-discipline. It also defines what you must do to hedge against leading an inconsequential life.

The late Robert Greenleaf, retired Director of Management Research at AT&T, said that organizational and social leadership is about making the people around you grow as persons, and be **healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous**, which in turn will make them more likely become **leaders**.

If leadership is what you see when you look at your hand, do it with all your might. Very few are born with natural leadership abilities. Your leadership skills will grow as you take on more responsibilities in Altrusa.

If you see a hand committed to service, then give all you can with all of your might. The reward that comes from helping others is much greater than the time and commitment given.

Statement #2 – “Do not dwell on your past failures or rest on your past successes.” This speaker asked the group to let go of their past failures and challenged the audience to continue to remain active in service and leadership. It is not enough to say “I did that once,” or to say “I tried that once and it failed.”

Consider the following:

Abraham Lincoln received no more than five years of formal education throughout his lifetime. When he grew up, he entered politics and had **12** major failures before he was elected the 16th President of the United States of America.

Thomas Edison developed many devices that greatly influenced life in the 20th century. Edison is considered one of the most prolific inventors in history; holding 1,093 U.S. patents to his name. When he was a boy his teacher told him he was too stupid to learn anything. When he set out on his own, he tried more than **9,000** experiments before he created the first successful light bulb.

Albert Einstein was a theoretical physicist widely regarded as the most important scientist of the 20th century. He was awarded the 1921 Nobel Prize for Physics for his explanation of the photoelectric effect in 1905 and "for his services to Theoretical Physics." However, when Einstein was young, his parents thought he was mentally retarded. His grades in school were so poor that a teacher asked him to quit, saying, "Einstein, you will never amount to anything!"

There can be a disservice done to others when we rest on our past successes. If we feel that we have contributed enough in the past, and we no longer feel the need to be involved, our Clubs suffer. Also, clubs that do not develop new service projects periodically may fall into jeopardy by the loss of members. If the same projects are done year after year by the same people, there is no opportunity for other club members and new members to grow. Keep your members involved by surveying them at the end of each club year to ask their input on completed projects and suggestions for new project ideas.

Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with all your might as you "Embrace the World" through service!