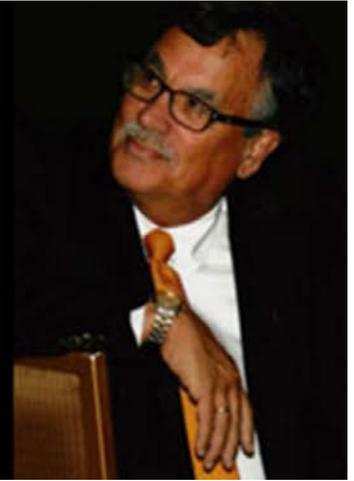


MY VIEW



Founder Wayne Fortin



HOME BASE

For years I have been listening to what our clients say and write about their TIP experiences. What clients say about the profound affects TIP volunteers have on their lives is what has kept me going... "This is why I do what I do."

Our clients have described their experiences with TIP volunteers in many ways including... *"She was an angel," "She was my rock," "He was my guide that day," and "I couldn't have gotten through those awful hours without him."*

I thought I had read just about every possible description of how our clients experience TIP volunteers. But recently a TIP Leader sent me a quote from a TIP client (who I'll call Dave). Dave wrote: "While everyone on the scene had a job to do, TIP volunteers were my **Home Base**."

Home Base... I had never heard TIP volunteers described by a client in that way. Those 2 words... **Home Base**... struck me when I read them and have stayed with me since. They ring so true about what TIP volunteers bring to survivors of tragedy.

On most TIP calls, volunteers encounter clients whose **Home Base** has been shattered. The client may be in an unfamiliar environment (hospital ED); their home may be filled with strangers (police/fire/coroner); and their familiar support system may not be in place. They are truly "strangers in a strange land."

TIP Volunteer(s) respond to these situations and quickly establish a temporary **Home Base** for their clients. How do they do it? How do our volunteers build temporary **Home Bases** where their clients feel safe and protected?

Our volunteers are expert **Home Base** builders. They become **Home Bases** for their clients by being calm, confident and grounded; by giving survivors their full attention by respecting their client's autonomy and desire to reestablish control; by protecting clients from danger and creating a "safe place"; and by giving or getting clients good solid information about "what's happening" and why the emergency system is working the way it is.

Is it any wonder that clients like Dave perceive our volunteers as their **Home Bases**? Volunteers nurture them, protect them and provide information that lessens their fear and increases their understanding of the chaos around them.

Just as the Red Cross and other organizations provide temporary shelter to those affected by major disasters, so to our TIP volunteers provide temporary shelter (a **Home Base**) to survivors of daily disasters. These **Home Bases** are not brick and mortar structures. They are invisible. But they provide every bit as much of protection, comfort and stability as the shelters we see in major disasters.

The **Home Bases** TIP volunteers build are temporary. But our clients' grateful memories of the TIP volunteers who were their **Home Bases** when they were adrift and "homeless" last forever.

Just ask Dave.