

## ENABLED, AND NOT PROUD OF IT

Dave came into our Care Center with a garbage bag of winter coats slung over his shoulder. He received them from another ministry. Dave didn't know to whom he would give them. He said he didn't really need a coat, since he had a good one on already, but you can never have enough coats. He also had a few for his niece and her kids. They were a free-for-all, so why not take them?

Lugging a big bag of free winter coats into our Care Center, some of them new, was a bit of a mockery at us since we minimally-price 90% of our clothing, and the 10% of items that we put out for free have the least quality. More concerning is what this does to Dave. He has been avoiding getting a job for over two years, in part because he can get so many of his essentials for free. In essence, Dave is enabled into deeper dependency.

Regarding enablement, I write with some experience, though I admit that it's different than Dave's. I am enabled too, and I feel entitled. Now over twenty-five years into our marriage, I don't appreciate, but rather, I take for granted, much of what my wife Amy does --- her cooking, cleaning, and doing laundry. I don't hold the view that those are her female-duties, but somehow a pattern has developed so that when she's away for a while, I face a dilemma of what to eat. Fortunately, I could survive a long time on raisin bran and corn flake cereals. But no, it's not good for our relationship.

### By Fred Wilgenburg

At Center of Hope, we have often seen that if a person is financially enabled, and feeling entitled, it can be devastating to the economics of them and their family. They often slip deeper into poverty. As well, children learn from their parents.

There are many contributing factors to financial enabling. The vast social service system, within which Center of Hope fits, can be a big factor. This is especially the case if communication is poor between agencies, and if agencies have differing views on how to help those who are financially and resource dependent. Generous donors can be factors contributing to financial enablement and entitlement. When we started minimally charging for our winter clothes and bikes-for-work, most complaints came from good, generous people who felt that since they have plenty, they should, and we should, just give away the extras to those who don't have enough. That's why Dave got so many coats. The local TV station produced a nice story with an appeal for coats when temperatures were cold, and many coats were dropped off at a few agencies who would give them away for free. Certainly, a contributing factor is the enabled person himself. Ultimately, it's my choice to help more around the house, and through that, to improve my marriage and my life. But, if Amy stops doing my laundry,

I will eventually wash my clothes. If she decides, for my sake, to stop cooking so frequently, raisin bran would get old, and honestly, I think I could enjoy learning to make lasagna, and even serving it.

At Center of Hope, we still enable dependency sometimes; it's hard not to when you desire to be compassionate, or when you try to patiently move a program along to become less enabling. **Also, it's important to note that in many cases, giving things for free can be encouraging and not enabling.** But, the problems of enablement and entitlement have been on our radar for a long time. Now in year 15 here, my goal this year is to take on more of the responsibility of affecting change within our local social service system, for the glory and love of our God, and for love of our neighbors.

I don't know where exactly to go with this goal, but for starters, I recommend some good books that had a big impact on our thinking at Center of Hope: [When Helping Hurts: How to Alleviate Poverty Without Hurting the Poor...and Yourself](#) by Brian Fikkert & Steve Corbett, and [Compassion, Justice, and the Christian Life: Rethinking Ministry to the Poor](#) by Robert Lupton.

Thanks for your time. May God bless you as together we seek to make a profound difference!

More on Page 2 

## What does the Center of Hope do? We...

This bullet point article is in the newsletter each month— it is our hope that it will give everyone a look into what ministry work happens at Center of Hope. A request with this would be that you would consider spending some time in prayer for these specific areas. This month we are also taking a look back over 2014. Please rejoice with us and give the God the glory for what has been happening.

We...

- 1) **distribute winter clothing** - 12,486 articles of clothing & **bikes-for-work at minimal prices**—735 and 402 visits to the Bike Shop .
- 2) **we meet most guests in our Care Center**—over 6,700 people who just came in for a conversation, a prayer, and/or a cup of coffee.
- 3) **we do many Pastoral visits**—982 official and many more unofficial ones.
- 4) **Sharing Christmas**—490 families helped with gifts for children and household items.
- 5) **Faith Community nursing visits 496 and 155 screenings and 97 Mother Baby Baskets** were received.

**Also there are many who are blessed by Restored 2 Life church, Sports Night for many young men, Bible Studies, Journey Camp for children, Work & Life Training Program, and “Iron Sharpens Iron.” articles.**

This work has been accomplished through your generous donations of items, prayers, and financial gifts. It has been helped by over 7117 volunteer hours in 2014. Thank you, for your partnership in this ministry. YOU ARE A BLESSING to us, to the Lord, and to the people in the Sioux Empire. Below are some of the friends we see at Center of Hope...



**Center of Hope is pleased to announce that with your help the Bike Shop Ministry will soon be expanding it's hours from 3 days to 5 days and with full time hours (11 am—5 pm)**

## MEMORIAL GIFTS & HONOR GIFTS

### *In Memory of:*

Jane De Boer, Ellene Jenson, Marion Judy,

Joel Klusmann, Jack and Arla Veldheer,

### *In Honor of:*

*Beverly J. Fischer and Steffen & Janet Helgaers*

Center of Hope has once again been blessed these Memorial Gifts and Honor Gifts. This is a wonderful way to recognize a love one or friend and to show the appreciation you have for them. These gifts remember a special person's life or acknowledged them at a time of celebration. It is a wonderful recognition at a birthday, an anniversary, a wedding or at Christmas time. Center of Hope does not take lightly the gifts made in someone's memory or honor. Through these gifts, it is our privilege to rejoice with you, give tribute to your loved one or friend, and to bring glory to Jesus through the work that is accomplished here. We thank those of you who have given this way in the past and encourage you to prayerful consider who you might honor in this way.

As always, we are happy to have you on our mailing list. Please let us know if you would like to be removed from our list or have your newsletter sent electronically.

**Save the  
Date...June 28th  
Center of Hope  
Benefit Concert  
featuring Doug  
Anderson and  
Michael English.**



CENTER OF HOPE

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