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# Chairperson's Corner

By Brian Pauley

**A**ware of my level of involvement, people frequently ask why I volunteer my time for the Society of Actuaries (SOA). I spent many years taking exams, work is busy and includes frequent travel, and life is otherwise full of various obligations. While all of this is true, I accepted something I learned from success expert Zig Ziglar, who said, "You can have everything in life you want, if you will just help other people get what they want." In other words, helping others is the key to personal fulfillment and success. If we focus on we want and need up front, we ultimately end up with less.

Volunteering for the SOA has exemplified this important lesson to me. As I sit here today, I cannot imagine where my life would be without the experiences and relationships built from being an active SOA volunteer. When you read this, I will be wrapping up my three-year term as an elected member of the Health Section Council, which is concluding with a year as chairperson. This has been an extremely valuable and rewarding experience to me as a professional and a person. If you are not a SOA volunteer, I encourage you to examine if you might be able to. What you volunteer to do doesn't have to be anything major, but it can be something. You

just never know where that something might lead you. In October 2009, a co-worker asking me if I was available to grade for an actuarial exam that fall has led to something greatly fulfilling to my life. And, just eight years into my volunteer career, I know there is much more to come. I can't wait to experience the rest.

Those closest to me know I have been through some significant life challenges in the last 12 months. The most notable part of my year as Health Section Council chairperson is that it has overlapped with my most challenging one personally. This has certainly made the experience unique. My SOA staff and volunteer family have been among the most supportive and helpful to me as I use these challenges to forge myself into being the strongest, most positive person possible.

In closing, I am a big believer in vulnerability. It helps us be humbler and allows us to use our personal stories to add value to others. As a John Maxwell Team certified leadership speaker, trainer and coach, I am taught to use *adding value to people* as my decision-making filter. I chose to be vulnerable with my story today to add value to you. Volunteering for the SOA is also a choice to add value to people. When you add value to people, you help them get what they want. And, when you help people get what they want, you will get what you want.

I hope to cross paths with every one of you on the journey. ■



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