VISITING VIGNETTES

A monthly newsletter to all Mended Hearts & Mended Little Hearts members.

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Mended Hearts National Visiting Chair

A popular holiday song "It's the most wonderful time of the year" goes on to say "when friends come to call". For the hundreds of heart patients who have recently experienced a heart event, this might not be the "most wonderful time of the year". On a personal note, my heart journey started in July 2008, but along the way for the next 10 months were numerous bumps in the road, intersections, dead ends, setbacks and December in my world definitely was not the most wonderful time of the year.

But, what did make a difference was having a phone call from another heart patient with encouragement and a word of support that it was ok if I couldn't do all of my favorite things.

This e-newsletter is about challenging each Accredited Visitor who all have hearts of gold and want to give back in various ways to reach out to a patient, a family, a caregiver, or a parent you have met along the way this year. For some people, volunteering is about giving. But for Accredited Visitors, it is a way of living. By speaking with a trained patient or parent volunteer who has survived these same difficult situations, patients and parents in crisis can work through their overwhelming emotions as they focus on the vital medical decisions at hand. Accredited Visitors give the most expensive and priceless gift anyone could have ever given - hope and encouragement.

My wish is that as visitors, we make a concerted effort to reach out and focus on the heart patients we have visited during the past months. The true spirit of this season is when we give back to others and in Mended Hearts, we do so by giving the gift of hope to all heart patients and their families. A word of encouragement
goes a long way. My wish for each of you is that you add on your "to do" list one phone call to a heart patient.

showing the love

The rewards are not all one-way though, because as an Accredited Visitor, you can receive tremendous joy from your visits. Accredited Visitors have the opportunity to see the sparkle return to the eyes of the patient or family member. By making visits, Accredited Visitors know the true meaning behind the goals of "giving back and helping others" and "empowering families affected by congenital heart disease."

Yes, we can pat ourselves on the back for providing hope and encouragement to hundreds of heart patients and their families. Yes, while it is true that Mended Hearts Accredited Visitors not only provide this hope and encouragement by giving to others, I think we are all grateful for what patients and families give to us.

Here are some of the gifts I believe we receive from our heart patients and families:
♥ An acceptance into their lives at a very personal time in their lives
♥ An opportunity to make a difference
♥ A demonstration of the resiliency of human beings
♥ An opportunity to gain a deeper appreciation of our own lives and relationships.

So, yes let's take time at this special time of year to appreciate each other and the valuable service we provide to the hospitals and heart patients. Let's also pause and appreciate those who have allowed us into their lives at a difficult and sometimes frightening time. We are thankful that heart patients and their families have been a part of our lives. They have inspired us to think a little harder and smile every chance we get.

Thank you for volunteering and striving to make a difference in the lives of heart patients and their families so that their lives too will be filled with the spirit of giving, the importance of family and friends and a sense of healing, renewal and new opportunity!

You are all vital to the continued success of our Accredited Visitors program and your support is more important than ever as we face the various challenges ahead for ways to recruit more visitors in order to support all types of heart event patients. Another year has swiftly passed and this brings us to the brink of a new year but we are resilient and stand ready for the challenges facing us. I sincerely wish you all a wonderful holiday season and look forward to working with you in 2019.

My gift suggestions for the season:
Heartfelt Regards,

Dr. Fredonia B. Williams  
National Visiting Chair  
Southern Assistant Regional Director

Future Questions/Topics

We want to hear from you!  
Other challenging questions for this newsletter may be emailed to fredoniabw@att.net

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