

***Crossing Borders, Making Connections:  
Service-Learning in Diverse Communities***

**Experience of Students in Service-Learning for  
Prisoner-Patients with HIV/AIDS  
at Taipei Prison, Taiwan: A Case Report**

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- ▶ Introduction
  - ▶ Prosocial behavior
  - ▶ Service learning in Humanistic Psychology
  - ▶ Service for HIV/AIDS Inmates at Taipei Prison, Taiwan: A Case Report

# Introduction: Why prosocial behavior?

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- ▶ Human curiosity has drawn scientists and researchers to study human beings from different perspectives, such as biology, psychology, politics, human interaction, communication, and human development. Studies on helpfulness, kindness, benevolence, charity, thoughtfulness, cooperation, altruism, and empathy can contribute to **an understanding of human welfare and the quality of life**. Helping behavior is generally called “prosocial behavior” and is behavior which promotes individual welfare and well-being and improves the quality of interpersonal life (Bar-Tal, 1984; Staub, 1984). Gould (1977) even suggested that **altruistic behaviors** are the cement of stable societies.

# Historical Perspectives on Prosocial Behavior

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- ▶ After World War II, the interests of researchers focused on altruism, helping behaviors, generosity, and other positive aspects of human morality during war time, as in the study on rescuers of Jews in Nazi Europe (Oliner & Oliner, 1988).

# Theoretical Perspectives on Prosocial Behavior

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- ▶ Prosocial behavior has been studied from a wide variety of perspectives. Three broad explanatory theories:
- ▶ learning theory,
- ▶ egoistic theory, and
- ▶ decision-making theory.

# 1. Learning Theory

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- ▶ Learn by observation. Bandura (1986) noted that vicarious learning is an important process by which individuals acquire new information. Information is acquired by watching both the behaviors of others and the response or reinforcement consequences; by internalizing these observations; and by creating one's own anticipations. For example, studies showed that children learn prosocial behavior through watching television (Sprafkin, Liebert, & Poulos, 1975; Ahammer & Murray, 1979). Rushton (1984) found that modeling behavior significantly influences adult willingness to donate blood.

## 2. Egoistic Theory

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- ▶ Personal benefits gained from prosocial behavior can be external or internal:
- ▶ External rewards include material, verbal, and nonverbal benefits.
- ▶ Internal rewards include self-congratulation and the avoidance of shame and guilt from not helping (Bandura, 1977; Hoffman, 1981). Rendering help in order to ease one's uncomfortable emotions of anxiety and tension was also a personal gain. Smith, Keating, and Stotland (1989) believed that prosocial behavior is motivated by empathic joy. Thus, internal egoistic reward can lead to prosocial behavior.

# 3. Decision-Making Theory

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- ▶ The helping process involves complex interactions between cognition and behavior. Taylor, Peplau, and Sears (1994) noted helping behavior is preceded by four cognitive operations:
  1. Perceiving a need
  2. Taking personal responsibility
  3. Weighing the costs and benefits
- ▶ Deciding how to help



## (a) perceiving a need

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- ▶ Shotland and Huston (1979) found that potential helpers were more likely to render assistance if they perceived an event as an emergency as opposed to a non-emergency.

## (b) Taking personal responsibility

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- ▶ Clark and Word(1972) found that **90 percent of those with specific skills rendered help**, whereas only 58 percent of those with no skills rendered help in a situation which required specific skills.
- ▶ An individual who was asked to **”watch my things “** was more likely to stop a thief than a bystander who had not been asked to keep a lookout on the belongings (Moriarity,1975; Maruyama, Fraser, & Miller, 1982).

## (c) Weighing the costs and benefits

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- ▶ **pros (gains) and cons (cost):**
- ▶ A person was more likely to help when the net benefits of helping were greater than the costs (Lynch & Cohen, 1978; Piliavin, et al., 1981). For example, if the costs of helping involved inconvenience or physical danger, a person was less likely to render assistance.

## (d) Deciding how to help

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- ▶ The process of this cognitive-behavioral interaction is called decision-making. Once the individual decided to help, the final stage was to determine the kinds of help. Help could be **direct, indirect**, for an **ordinary situation**, or for an **emergency situation**.

## Service Learning

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- ▶ The Department of Clinical Psychology, College of Medicine, Fu Jen Catholic University, **Humanistic Psychology, the third Force** in psychological studies. The paradigm it establishes emphasizes optimistic, positive, and healthy attitude toward life, but at the same time, it also reinforces the importance of a balance between freedom and responsibility.

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- ▶ *'For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, a stranger and you welcomed me, naked and you clothed me, ill and you cared for me, in prison and you visited me.' I say to you, whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me.*  
(Matthew 25: 35-40)

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- ▶ This course aims to help students establish a better understanding about **human dignity** and familiarize them with ways of interacting and caring for the marginalized groups in the society. The sub-objectives of service learning in the course of humanistic psychology include:
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# Objectives of Humanistic Psychology:

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- ▶ heightening students' awareness of their social responsibility
- ▶ encouraging students to apply and practice the theories and professional learning in a real situation
- ▶ developing students' ability to integrate the knowledge, service and spirit of humanistic psychology
- ▶ helping HIV/AIDS inmates at Taipei Prison





# Participants:

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1. The juniors enrolled in the class of Humanistic Psychology in the Department of Clinical Psychology.
2. Lourdes House for AIDS Patients
3. Administrative staff at Taipei Prison, HIV/AIDS inmates at Taipei Prison

# Stages of Service-earning:

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1. Preparatory StageP About 2weeks
2. Service/Action Stage: About 9 weeks
3. Reflection/Examination Stage,  
Sharing/Feedback Stage: About 9-10 weeks and
4. Celebration: 1 week



# Figure 1. Summary of Stages

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Stage	Unit	Content and Activities
Preparatory Stage About 2weeks	Enquiry/Content/ Activities Flow	The instructor makes general enquiries and recruits students who are willing to participate in the service-learning.
	Instruction on regulations of the prison, HIV/AIDS related knowledge and professional skills of group work.	Strengthen the students' knowledge about criminal psychology and drug abuse.
	Discussion of the design of activities	Students discuss the plan for activities.

Stage	Unit	Content and Activities
Service/Action Stage  About 9 weeks		Reminders for Participating Students: I. When conducting activities at the HIV/AIDS pod in Taipei Prison II. When planning activities for the HIV/AIDS Inmates III. Pre-Service Meeting: group rehearse
Reflection/Examination Stage  About 9-10 weeks		IV. After-Activities Discussion: An evaluation is scheduled right after each group finished the service-activity. The venue for the discussion is at a conference room in Taipei

Stage	Unit	Content and Activities
<p>In-class Sharing/Feedback Stage 9-10 weeks</p>		<p>**Channel I: How does the case touch my life?</p> <p>**Channel II: What is the problem of the case?</p> <p>**Channel III: What kind of professional skills have I or my group applied when serving the HIV/AIDS inmates?</p>
<p>Celebration/Presentation Stage 1 week</p>	<p>Semester-End Celebration</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Invite volunteer teachers, staffs, sisters and the whole class to share each others' experiences.</li> <li>2. Celebrate and recognize the efforts and fruit of each others' work.</li> </ol>

# Yalom's Curative Factors of Group Treatment

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- ▶ **Instillation of Hope** - faith that the treatment mode can and will be effective.
- ▶ **Universality** - we are not alone in our misery or our "problems".
- ▶ **Interpersonal learning** - receiving feedback from others and experimenting with new ways of relating.
- ▶ **Development of socializing techniques** - social learning or development of interpersonal skills.
- ▶ **Altruism** - opportunity to rise out of oneself and help somebody else; the feeling of usefulness.
- ▶ **Imitative behavior** - taking on the manner of group members who function more adequately.

# Yalom's Curative Factors of Group Treatment

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- ▶ **Imparting of information** - didactic instruction about mental health
- ▶ **Corrective recapitulation of primary family group**- the opportunity to relearn and clarify distortions.
- ▶ **Catharsis** - opportunity for expression of strong affect.
- ▶ **Existential factors** - recognition of the basic features of existence through sharing with others.
- ▶ **Direct Advice** - receiving and giving suggestions for strategies for handling problems.







# The selected reflection essays

## I. By the students

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- ▶ By Chang

- ▶ From the relationship of mutual help, I came to appreciate my personal feelings, emotions, and thought, but more importantly **to know more about myself**. It was also a great opportunity for me to think about my future career; the service at Taipei Prison gives me a chance to consider the possibility of working as counselor at prison.



# A depressed student

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- ▶ ...after visiting the AIDS prisoners, they taught me to realized how precious the life....I am not physical ill, now I should wake up to live my life.....and be responsible...

# By Hsiao

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- ▶ It was a rare opportunity to work at Taipei Prison and had some contacts with the prisoners. At the beginning, my attitude toward this project was that it was an assignment for us to fulfill, therefore what I did was to try my best to help the prisoners have a good time when we conducted the activities there. Yet, after face-to-face contacts, I realized that we were **not the only party that was giving; from the prisoners, we learned about their stories and were deeply moved, way beyond what I can imagine.** Thanks to this service-learning activity!

# By Yoa

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- ▶ What I have learned today was but the tip of an ice-berg; yet **its impact upon me was immeasurable**. I am grateful to those who facilitated this service-learning curriculum, and to the people we serve. Thank you for giving me an experience that helped me to grow. Even though we were strangers, but I earnestly hope that this short encounter would become a beautiful page in each others' memories.
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# By Anonymous

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- ▶ There are many choices one has to make in his/her life... They made mistakes, committed crimes, and went astray before; but they could lead a brand new life if they could commit themselves and engage real change in their lives. Ultimately they could be tolerated and accepted. Through this service-learning, I learned about true tolerance and acceptance. Every one desires freedom, but he/she does not always know that it comes with responsibility too. The time in prison is for them to realize and learn to take responsibility for the freedom they used to have. I earnestly hope that they can start a new life after they are discharged.
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# By Anonymous

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- ▶ Now I know how dangerous is the one night stand affair...
- ▶ I will never do it.....


# **The Rainbow of Life**

## **Lyrics/Music: Tien-Xian Gau**

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**Hesitations with pacing back and forth,  
Our past is too dark to retrospect.  
Repentance for going astray,  
Our dimmed life also craves for respect.**

**Who can be free from mistakes?  
The true mistake is to duplicate mistakes.  
Let bygones be bygones  
Life ahead is worthy and should move on.  
Reveal the smile in heart to  
Search for the rainbow of life.  
Discharge the Soul  
From the mistakes made in the past.  
Reveal the smile in heart to  
Search for the rainbow of life.  
Discharge the Soul  
So we can shine bright tomorrow.**







## II. By the Inmates: By Ah-Dong

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- ▶ The need for love and concern are innate, especially for the people who are imprisoned in the “prison of the prison.” Love could be very simple, sometimes an eye contact, a short greeting, a warm hand, and a cordial hug; from one of these small gestures, love can ripple endlessly. In the past seven weeks, every scenario was touching, and every fragment should be something to be proud of in your life. You helped the AIDS prisoners to have an even more profound understanding and feeling about life. There is an old saying, “The direction of the tree is decided by the wind; the direction of your life is decide by yourself.” With your love and care, we would work hard to thrive... To you my dear friends, my best wishes and my heart-felt appreciation. Take care!

By Ah Tu

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- ▶ It seemed rather awkward to see you as “intellectuals”, or how could you have accepted us without hesitation or **how could you have gathered together with a group of criminals without reservation?** How could you spread such laughter and give us so much love?



By Ah Chiu

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- ▶ Through the gatherings, I felt a happiness that I have not felt for many years. You were like angels who came to fill the missing part in my heart with love. Seeing your youthful vitality and candid love, I was deeply touched. I could not thank you enough. Your presence made me feel that I was not alone. Your support, love and concern certainly heal me by mending the losses. Health is the greatest treasure of life. Hope you can take care of yourselves. Thank you!!
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## By Hsieh

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- ▶ When I first walked the activity area and saw their expressionless faces, I was so nervous that I could not even clearly articulate myself. Yet, after two-hours, my opinion was completely changed. I witnessed that there is an **innocent and friendly side of each of them**, and under their tough appearance, they could be vulnerable and innocuous. I came to realize that how us human beings can be blinded by our stereotypes.



# By Ah Yao

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- ▶ I have not had a good laugh for long. The life in the prison, segregated from the outside world, is quiet but monotonous. The chance to interact and know the students from Fu Jen was almost a luxury for most of the prisoners. These students chose to walk out of the campus and learn to serve with humility. Their spirit was a great exemplum for the youngsters of this time. They are serious, earnest and ambitious learners. In our interactions, they offered unreserved kindness, and by doing so brought us great joy. The compassion and love warmed our hearts. Out of my gratitude, I want to say that the students of the Department of Clinical Psychology, “You are a great and outstanding group!”
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## Results of Service Learning

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- ▶ Both the students of Clinical Psychology and the HIV/AIDS inmates at Taipei Prison benefited from the experiences this professional service-learning curriculum. Students expressed that they learned not only from class but from the inmates also. Students also expressed through the service learning they discover that they are warm, assertive, energetic, and experience positive emotions.

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- ▶ Students tend to be tender-minded and other-centered and show care for the welfare of others by their generosity, consideration, willingness to help and tend to be self-disciplined.
  - ▶ The inmates were very happy because they felt concerned and respected by students.
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# Video

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我們還有一個任務

Special thanks to:

**Sr. Loewe**

**Tsai Cheng En, Kuo,**

**Bro. Pu & Cheng**

