

## ***Voluntary Action***

“Voluntary action, volunteerism or volunteering, in its conceptual form, includes the individual or collective efforts of willing individuals, known as volunteers, to act in ways which work toward the betterment of oneself, other individuals, communities, and/or society.”

It is the most fundamental act of citizenship and philanthropy in our society which involves offering time, energy and skills of one’s own free will. It is an extension of being a good neighbor and transforming a collection of houses into a community, as people become involved in the improvement of their surroundings and choose to help others. Thus by caring and contributing to change, they decrease suffering and disparity, while themselves gain skills, self-esteem, and change their own lives. As people work to improve the lives of others and, in return, enhance their own.

Moreover, voluntary action takes many forms and is performed by a wide range of people. Many volunteers are specifically trained in the areas they work in, such as medicine, education, or emergency rescue. While others serve on an as-needed basis, such as in response to a natural disaster or for a beach-cleanup, etc.

But whatever may be the case, in order to promote voluntary action or volunteering in the community following pre-requisites should be ensured:

### **Pre-requisites for the Voluntary Action:**

#### **a) Discontentment:**

Discontentment refers to “the state of being uneasy in mind; uneasiness; inquietude or discontent.” It means, to be discontent, is to desire circumstances different from what we have or to restlessly long for circumstances that we think are better than what we have, being dissatisfied. So it is the most important element for initiating voluntary action in the community because it is only when the community people are discontented with their present situation that they will do something to change it. As a popular phrase says, *“Nobody ever made any progress by being contented or satisfied. Discontent is vital to growth and development whether we are talking about one person or a whole nation.”*

Although discontent is often considered to be synonymous with strife, in reality, it is a harbinger of progress. Because without discontent, no one would seek a better way to complete their tasks and human invention would come to a stand-still. Men like Leonardo Da Vinci would cease to exist, and revolutions such as America’s civil rights movement would never occur. Rather men would simply accept oppression unquestioningly and contentedly.

So there must be discontentment on the part of the community people. They should be thankful for the many things in their lives but they should not be satisfied with them completely. Because, when we look at ourselves honestly, we have to admit that there is still need for personal growth and change. There is much more that we can do for the promotion of our well-being. Thus discontentment provides us chances for further success and advancement.

This fact is not only psychologically sound but has also been stressed by our religion Islam. As it is said that God does not want us to be content with less than what He wants for us.

He calls us to continue to wrestle, meditate, look, consider, resist, submit, follow, and pray so that we may reach the heights of development.

## **b) Participation:**

In community development, the concept of participation refers to the involvement of community people in different activities and programmes of the development of their community. It is based on democratic values and the principle of equality and liberty. It makes people free from different hurdles and obstacles which generally stand in the way of the improvement of their community and is of great importance. Because when people would be engaged in every programme or project meant for their well-being and their opinions would be respected, they would show positive response toward such programmes. There will be ownership on their part and they will utilize all their resources, capacities and abilities to achieve the goals and targets of these programmes. Otherwise, they will not only reject such programmes but also try to create different hurdles in their way to success. That is why, participation is considered essential for voluntary action. Because as we know, it refers to the willing contribution of the people towards the development of their community. So as much participation of the community people will be ensured so good results could be achieved.

## **c) Motivation:**

Motivation is to give reason, incentive, enthusiasm, or interest that causes a specific action or certain behavior. It is one of the most important factors that lead one to their goals. It is a zest and determination with a kind of excitement that leads one to persevere to reach greater heights, in no matter what avenue of their life; be it – personal or professional.

However, the factors that motivate an individual keep changing as one climbs the ladder of age and maturity. And also, achievement of one goal sets the ball rolling for another one to be achieved. Thus, to be motivated is a constant need. Because there are times when one faces a period of de-motivation and everything seems bleak. It is then that they need to be encouraged through motivation to bring them back into action.

Therefore, motivation constitutes an important pre-requisite of the voluntary action so that the people may continue working for the development of their community and any failure or problematic situation does not prove to be a hurdle in their way to success.

## **d) Coordination:**

**Coordination** is the process in which different people or things work together to attain specific goals or aims. It is of great importance because a strong interaction and mutual understanding is very necessary for the attainment of the goals and coordination is the only way through which people can be made to work together and to cooperate with each other to attain their final aims. It reduces conflicts among the people because of the understanding and also makes them to move equally for attaining the objectives. It increases the capability of the people to solve the problems and makes the prospects of success quite easy. Not only this, it also helps to avoid wastage of resources and overlapping of the services. Therefore, coordination among people is considered essential to promote voluntary action in the community.

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