



**PARTNERING WITH CVCCS:
“Charity Revival: Meeting
Needs, Biblically.”**

CONESTOGA VALLEY
CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY SERVICES

THE LANDSCAPE- FACTS & STATS:

Here are some surprising facts that apply to our sweet, charming, scenic community known as Lancaster County:

-- 10.2% live **below** the poverty line in our **county**.

(This stat is **higher** within the CV School District).

-- The Central PA Food Bank distributes on average over **5.5 million** pounds of food each month, more than **67 million** pounds per year, through 1,000 partner agencies and programs, which includes CVCCS.

CONESTOGA VALLEY
CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY SERVICES

THE CHALLENGE- EXAMPLES OF DIFFICULT CLIENT SCENARIOS:

- Client says he/she will **harm themselves** if they don't get immediate help with their situation.'*
- Client is in a **panic** and **demands** assistance **angrily or aggressively.**'*
- Client asks for help but also mentions that a family member previously met the need.'*
- Client is pregnant and says she's about to be on the streets... Or they say their significant other is pregnant and they're both about to be on the streets.*

THE GOAL-

To equip the body of Christ, so we'll know **HOW TO HANDLE CHALLENGING SITUATIONS LIKE THESE, NOT IF, BUT **WHEN** THEY ARRISE.**

OF COURSE, CVCCS IS HERE FOR YOU TO SEND CLIENTS OUR WAY SO WE CAN ASK THE TOUGH QUESTIONS. HOWEVER, as Christ followers, we are ALL called to be salt and light in a lost world.

CONESTOGA VALLEY
CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY SERVICES

BUT DID YOU KNOW...

There is actually a **right way** and a **wrong way** to be charitable.

In our zeal to help others, believe it or not, we can actually do **harm** to those we're trying to help.

The logo features a central shield with a white cross, flanked by two hands holding a white cross. The shield is set against a blue background with the letters 'C.V.C.S.' in a circular arrangement. Below the shield, the text 'CONESTOGA VALLEY CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY SERVICES' is written in a light blue, sans-serif font.

CONESTOGA VALLEY
CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY SERVICES

MAIN POINT-

You can't meet the need unless you have a **Biblical** view of charity.

In the slides ahead, we'll illustrate and define CRITICALLY IMPORTANT aspects of Biblical charity.

CVCS

CONESTOGA VALLEY
CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY SERVICES

1. DON'T ENABLE

Ask yourself- Am I helping or enabling?

Keys to DISCERNMENT:

-- **Gather enough information to make an informed decision.**

In John 10:6 Jesus said, *Remember it is I who am sending you out ... prove yourselves as wise as serpents, and as innocent as doves.*

What does Jesus mean here? A wise person anticipates their course of action, and then plans Biblically based strategic actions accordingly.

-- **Avoid inattentional blindness-** Assume nothing! Withhold your personal assumptions. Let the facts wash over you.

IMPORTANT CONCEPT- That which is presented as a crisis RARELY IS!

Don't get swept up in **urgency**. Step back and get the whole picture. **Ask good questions:**

*How long has this been going on? Why aren't you working?
Where else have you found help before?*

It's ok to ask personal questions if someone comes to you for help! It they can't or won't answer, that is a RED FLAG.

Discernment is impossible if you don't know the context of a person's situation.

JOHN 5:1-6- *Some time later, Jesus went up to Jerusalem for one of the Jewish festivals. Now there is in Jerusalem near the Sheep Gate a pool, which in Aramaic is called Bethesda and which is surrounded by five covered colonnades. Here a great number of disabled people used to lie—the blind, the lame, the paralyzed. One who was there had been an invalid for thirty-eight years. When Jesus saw him lying there and learned that he had been in this condition for a long time, he asked him, “**Do you want to get well?**”*

NOTE- Jesus asked the question ‘DO YOU WANT TO GET WELL’ **BEFORE** He did **ANYTHING** for the man.

WARNING! BEWARE OF...

- Pushy and aggressive tactics.*
- Unable to provide reputable details.*
- Inconsistent story.*
- Excessive playing on your emotions.*
- Strange names, phone numbers, email addresses, duplicate information.*
- Cash only.*
- Refusing to better their situation.*
- Refusing to go to a shelter.*

CONESTOGA VALLEY
CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY SERVICES

APPLICATION-

At CVCCS we partner with an organization called **The True Charity Initiative from Joplin, MO.**

One of their clients admitted it was easy to take advantage of well-meaning people that lacked discernment. As a result, they were able to continue in the cycle of destructive addictions. It's all they knew.

The truth is, most people feeding an addiction don't know any other way. Instead, we need to **SHOW** them a **BETTER WAY.**

2. ASK ABOUT RELATIONSHIPS

Believe it or not, we can **weaken** someone's social connections (aka- social capital) by our *'good intentions'* to help meet their *'needs.'*

Ask yourself- Can we point the person back to their *'natural'* relationships, as long as it's not an abusive or toxic situation?

RESIST the urge to jump in and solve the issue. **Ask questions and investigate-** *Where is your family? Do you have friends or neighbors who should be aware of what's going on?*

JOHN 5:7- *Sir, the invalid replied, I have no one to help me into the pool when the water is stirred. While I am trying to get in, someone else goes down ahead of me.*

Note the man's response to Jesus- 'I have no one to help me...'
True Charity Initiative defines the essence of poverty this way:

"Poverty is complex and is caused by a myriad of factors, but essentially comes down to broken relationships."

Think about that! You and I can introduce people to something they may have never known- **love, hope, stability... a BETTER way.**

Like Jesus exhibited, we can be a lifeline for those starved of healthy relationships.

Additionally, what should our motivation be for encouraging others to restore estranged or fractured relationships in the first place?

-- In **Phil. 2:4** Paul says, "Look out for another's interests, not just for your own."

-- Jesus says in **Mat. 5:9**, "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God."

CVCCS
CONESTOGA VALLEY
CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY SERVICES

APPLICATION-

There was a client that went for help at a Bible believing, Christian organization. After she successfully completed one of their programs, she commented on what made the difference for her finally overcoming poverty and addiction...

She experienced **unconditional love, genuine people, and real relationships**. As a result of seeing the Church act like the Church, she surrendered her life to Christ. The Lord gave her a burden to help those headed down the same destructive road she was once on.

Her thriving relationship with Jesus and others set Biblical discipleship in motion which acted as a domino effect.

3. DON'T MISS THE ACTUAL NEED

Be careful not to mis-categorize someone's need. Ensuring we really are helping is just as important, if not more, as having a benevolent heart.

Ask yourself: Does this person need **RELIEF, REHABILITATION, OR DEVELOPMENT?**

CONESTOGA VALLEY
CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY SERVICES

RELIEF: Meeting an urgent need. Temporary; not meant to be long term solution. **Tragically, in charitable circles, most cases are treated as relief situations even if someone is not truly in need of relief.**

REHABILITATION: Working on helping them become stable, self-sustaining. Working to help them become stable. Guiding them back on track.

DEVELOPMENT: Working with them towards ongoing, long-term change. Getting them to a better position than before. Biblical discipleship.

4. AVOID THE 'TONGS' APPROACH

Dr. Marvin Olasky's book "*The Tragedy of American Compassion*" establishes 2 principles of charity:

#1. **Charity with tongs:**

Not getting involved, no touching. Contrary to how Jesus cared for those in need.

#2. **Charity without tongs:**

Reciprocity: Engage in real, genuine conversation.

Accountability: Speak the truth in love (when trust is breached or damaged).

Boundaries: Tough love when necessary. Setting healthy limits. Truly showing unconditional love means setting and sticking to healthy boundaries.

The body of Christ and non-profit organizations particularly STRUGGLE with this because-

- It takes time.
- Your shoes may get dirty.
- Your carpet may get stained.
- It's uncomfortable.



CVCCS
CONESTOGA VALLEY
CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY SERVICES

5. ACCOUNTABILITY IS GOOD!

It's NOT ungodly to have expectations of people!

However, in many charitable circles this is not a popular view because of the factor of entitlement.

The LORD is...

- **Compassionate (Isa. 30:18, Jas. 5:11b).**
- **Just (Pro. 22:22-23, Eze. 22:29).**
- **Expectant (Deu. 30:1-4, 10).**

Furthermore, it's NOT unloving to expect people to do their part. Just the opposite. It's cruel to send the message that a person has nothing of worth to offer (Imago Dei). Being needed is the ultimate affirmation of human worth.

JOHN 5:14- *Later Jesus found him at the temple and said to him, See, you are well again. Stop sinning or something worse may happen to you.*

-- Verse 14 is often taken out of context, inferring that Jesus required sinless perfection from the man. The entirety of Scripture refutes this, as only Jesus was sinless. **The proper context is Jesus gave the man accountability and expectations.**

CONESTOGA VALLEY
CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY SERVICES

APPLICATION-

The True Charity Initiative described another client who was involved in a program called 'The Worth Shop.'

This program allows clients to work at their facility and earn a week's worth of food. Instead of a handout, this exchange **preserves dignity and awakens worth in people, while also making a small break in the cycle of dependency that traps so many.**

This particular client paired up with a volunteer from 'The Worth Shop' to make jewelry. The jewelry is sold to further the mission. As a result, she earned food for the week. She described the experience by saying, **"I didn't know there was something I could still do."**

Lest we forget, remember where the true struggle lies in all of this...

Paul notes to the Church in Ephesus in **Eph. 6:12**, that *our struggle is not against flesh and blood...*

Our battle is not primarily physical or tangible but **spiritual and unseen. The spiritual addresses the hidden root causes which is why the devil does not want anyone getting out of destructive cycles.**

CVCS
CONESTOGA VALLEY
CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY SERVICES

QUESTIONS

CVCCCS
CONESTOGA VALLEY
CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY SERVICES



Bibliography: True Charity Initiative, Joplin, MO. www.truecharity.us.

