

The Importance of Being There

When an MCCF student meeting is scheduled it is almost never convenient to drop what you're doing and attend. It is especially difficult when you find yourself wondering if the students really care or if the time you take away from your work can be justified.

Don't underestimate the power of your presence. Just by being there at MCCF student meetings you are making a statement: This is important to you. This is a priority to you. But more importantly, the students are important to you. You've made time for them and by your presence you have made a profound statement to the students, who may be struggling with all that they aren't getting done as well.

Don't forget the power of your influence. The message you send when you involve yourself with students and their meetings is a powerful affirmation of your commitment to Christ and the spiritual needs in your own life. To the students you practically walk on water. You have mastered all that medical or dental school could throw at you and survived. Yet for all your achievements, you place a priority on time with the Lord and cultivating your spiritual life. Someday a busy practitioner will take time to pray over his day and patients because of a professor who modeled the heart of a humble disciple.

Don't forget the power of your witness. Remember what it was like when you last felt under the pile and a colleague shared an encouraging word with you? It was like the world was lifted off your shoulders. Don't forget how a timely word of encouragement and concern, or offering to pray with a student may be the one thing she needed to fight back the waves of doubt and fear.

Don't forget the power of friendship and hospitality. Inviting students into your home sends a message of friendship. Your home becomes an island away from the demands of training. It provides a time and place to relax and discover that there is more to oneself than being a student. Marvin Jewell, MD invited students from Wayne State Medical School to bring their musical instruments and voices to his home. Amid good food, laughter, and rich fellowship, students played their instruments and sang and for a while medical school was a distant memory.

Don't forget the power of your story. Drs. Charles and Loraine Kelly have invited clinical students and residents from Indiana U into their home for over 30 years. They have chosen to invest their lives in the countless men and women that have passed through their doorway, and the Lord has allowed their example to influence many to choose career or short-term medical missions. Rick Donlon, MD, a Campus Advisor for the U of Tennessee medical students, decided to move his family to the inner city of Memphis, TN so that he could earn the trust of the patients he sought to reach with the gospel: His example and that of Art Jones, MD in Chicago have influenced many to consider the needs of America's third world.

So when you look at the clock or the calendar and notice another MCCF student meeting approaching, remember the importance of being there. In a disconnected, postmodern world, your commitment to humbly walk with students in their journey through medical or dental school may have a profound but an entirely unknown impact. Be encouraged, Jesus invested Himself in twelve students and they changed the world.

Modified from Allan Harmer, ThM, CMDA Midwest Regional Director