

Volunteer Handbook



GRACE HOUSE

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Grand Rapids, MN 55744

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www.gracehousemn.org

Dear Volunteer:

This Handbook has been prepared to inform you about the Grace House shelter's history, philosophy, practices, and policies. Although no handbook can answer every question, we have attempted to cover the major points of volunteering at Grace House.

We ask that you read the Handbook carefully and refer to it whenever questions arise. Please always feel free to call (326-2790) or stop in at Grace House to get further clarification or to share your questions or concerns with staff or the Executive Director.

Grace House utilizes the support of volunteers in all aspects of its program and services. Volunteers are an integral part of providing adequate services for the guests of Grace House including direct care, fund raising, and community support. Shift volunteers provide coverage during the morning, evening and overnight shifts. Hiring staff to cover these shifts would be financially prohibitive; we couldn't afford to do it; we would have to close our doors or drastically cut services. Grace House is an example of a community program that could not exist without volunteers.

In addition to the monetary value of our volunteers, there is another, less tangible benefit: you are demonstrating to our guests that there are people in our community who really care about other people and are willing to donate their precious time and energy to providing housing, companionship and compassion to those going through difficult times. We have heard many comments from guests who are amazed at the fact that people from the community are willing to give up their time to be here for them! Many people who pass through our doors have never before experienced this type of unconditional kindness and caring from strangers. We know you are all busy people and have many other things you could be doing, but you have chosen to volunteer here, working with people struggling through some really tough times. Please know that the Director, Staff, Board, and especially the guests really appreciate your presence!

We hope this handbook will allow you to feel comfortable with Grace House. Again, please don't hesitate to ask questions; we will gladly answer them. We also welcome your ideas for ways to improve our service. Feel welcome to stop in any time or call us at 326-2790. We believe you will enjoy your volunteer work here and get to know and appreciate your fellow volunteers. You will also get to know and appreciate the guests, people who are experiencing homelessness, but who are working towards a better life. We hope you will find Grace House a rewarding place to volunteer.

On behalf of our staff, guests, and Board, thank you in advance for the time and energy you are about to give to Grace House and your community. We look forward to getting to know and work with you.

Welcome to Grace House

Grace House is a project founded by Action through Churches Together. (ACT) This was a group of representatives from various churches in the Grand Rapids area who met over the years to work on specific projects that would be of benefit to the people of this area. The group determined that one of the unmet needs in our county was a homeless shelter, a place for people who were temporarily without housing to receive shelter and services.

Grace House became a “dream in the making” by this grassroots group of individuals who witnessed a need for a safe place for people who are experiencing homelessness. ACT formed a committee to begin to help understand and address the problems facing homeless people in our community. The vision and mission of Grace House was formed, committees worked separately and together to move towards the founding of Grace House.

Grace House was created by this group of concerned citizens. It is a special place that provides care, concern and assistance to homeless individuals and families in Itasca County. We provide a safe environment and supportive services for the people we serve.

Grace House opened its doors on 5/21/06; we were initially housed at Zion Lutheran Church in Grand Rapids; on 12/26/11 we moved to our new home at 501 1st Avenue SW. The location at Zion was initially planned to be quite temporary, only a year or two at the most. Due to difficulty finding an appropriate space, adequate funding, etc. the stay at Zion lengthened to over five years. We will always be very grateful and appreciative to Zion Lutheran Church for their patience and kindness to us over the years. They truly lived the gospel message of “shelter the homeless”.

Grace House has a Board of Directors and is an independent 501©3 non-profit organization. Donations to Grace House are tax-deductible.

Grace House Philosophy

The philosophy of Grace House combines numerous ideals in an effort to further support our mission and values. Those ideals include:

- (1) A commitment to confidentiality,
- (2) A commitment to the guests served,
- (3) A responsibility to treat all people with dignity, respect, and with ethical standards,
- (4) A commitment to Grace House, and
- (5) A commitment to professional competency.

Grace House seeks to:

Give Hospitality
Rest & Renewal
Access to Resources
Compassion
Empowerment

Mission

“To provide safe, temporary shelter for individuals and families who are experiencing homelessness, and connect them to community resources.”

Values

Grace House values and beliefs are guidelines for role modeling positive behavior and working relationships as a team with our staff, our volunteers, and our communities.

Stewardship

Grace House is accountable for the success of the shelter as a whole. Grace House conducts its business in a fiscally and ethically responsible manner.

Respect

Grace House treats all people with dignity, valuing individual and cultural differences.

Integrity

In the spirit of mutual trust, Grace House is open, honest and ethical in our actions.

Innovation

Grace House advocates for all people served through guiding principles rooted in our vision and mission.

Excellence

Grace House believes and strives for best practices in shelter care.

Purpose and Function Statements

Grace House is a short-term shelter serving homeless and transient individuals and families. For the purpose of these policies and procedures, “homeless” means an individual or family that lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence.

Grace House recognizes that many people may end up homeless as a result of situations that can be related but are not limited to: fire, poverty, inability to secure affordable housing, inability to secure a living wage, and lack of skills and/or resources.

Grace House is a program designed to provide meals, immediate shelter, safety, as well as referrals to and networking for resources for guests served.

Grace House is a private non-profit program licensed by the Department of Health.

Grace House does assist the various guests served by offering, with written permission, the ability to network and make referrals for services. Continuing education is offered to staff and volunteers.

Grace House believes in involving the guests we serve in the process of helping themselves to lead independent and self-sufficient lives.

Grace House believes in the rights of all people to live and make choices that bring them optimum happiness, good health, and wellness while honoring their rights and responsibilities for their actions.

Grace House believes that family systems are of great importance to the success of the community-focused program. Guests are invited and encouraged to participate in working with our staff and volunteers on their individual goals towards a safe and secure life.

We are committed to making your involvement with Grace House a safe, secure, and comfortable one. The following procedures and rules are designed to serve you and our fellow guests during their stay with us.

COVID-19 PROTOCOL

Due to elevated risk and to protect the safety of staff, guests, and volunteers we will be strictly enforcing the following rules.

Volunteers are to maintain proper social distance (6 feet) (this includes while smoking). Volunteers must wear a mask in all public areas of the shelter, except while eating or in the volunteer room. Volunteers must sanitize hands and have permission to be in the upstairs office. Please cover all coughs and sneezes and notify staff immediately if you experience any symptoms of illness. Temperatures will be taken daily and logged. Shoes are to be worn in all public areas of the shelter, No Bare Feet! Volunteers are

REQUIRED to sign in and out of the building. NO visitors allowed on the property. This includes the building and the grounds.

Volunteer Responsibilities

Each volunteer position has certain specific responsibilities. But all volunteers should conduct themselves in a mature, professional manner. We must respect the dignity of each guest and support the Grace House mission.

Shift responsibilities include the following:

Morning Shift: 6 a.m. – 8 a.m. Volunteers relieve the overnight volunteers. They will share information with you, including number of guests, any special needs for the morning, and any significant problems from the previous night. Guests can sleep until 7 a.m. on weekdays, 9 a.m. on weekends and holidays. Breakfast table should be set up downstairs; when there are two morning volunteers, one can supervise upstairs and one downstairs. When there is only one volunteer, set up breakfast table and send guests down when ready. Staff should arrive by 8 a.m.

Responsible for breakfast meal count Binder located in the kitchen.

Evening Shift: 4:45 p.m. – 9 p.m. Volunteers will work with staff person and follow their directions. They may prepare a meal or go pick meals up from a local business, community café, etc. They will help with clean-up after the meal. They will interact with guests as needed; they may visit, play games, watch a movie, etc. When there are families with children, volunteers may assist parent with child care and supervision.

Overnight Shift: 9 p.m. – 6 a.m. You may visit, play games, or watch movies with guests, but volunteers will have to enforce quiet time around 8 p.m. Lights out and TV/Phone off by 10 p.m. (Midnight on Friday and Saturday nights) Staff will give medications before 10 p.m. every night. Volunteers will not be expected to do so. Volunteers may sleep during the night, using either a bed or a cot, but must be able and available to wake up if needs arise during the night. Please use a sheet from the linen storage room to cover the bed or cot. Volunteers may bring their own linens. In the morning, please put Grace House's used linens in the hamper downstairs to be cleaned.

Volunteers are responsible to ensure the safety and well-being of the guests, monitoring interactions and providing a comfortable, safe haven for them. Volunteers will be responsible to maintain the rules of Grace House and interact with guests in a positive manner to enforce these rules. Volunteers will also be responsible for handling any emergency situations that may arise as outlined in the Emergency Procedures located in the Volunteer Manual. Emergency numbers are posted in staff/volunteer area. First Aid Kit is in the kitchen and staff/volunteer area upstairs as well.

If you have any questions, concerns, or if you have ideas for how our services can be improved, contact the Grace House site staff or the Director or use the suggestion box.

Volunteer Disciplinary Policy and Procedure

Disciplinary action will be taken against a volunteer for, but not limited to; behavior or actions opposed to the goals and mission of GH, for negligence in performing volunteer functions, for behavior detrimental to the operation of GH, for failure to maintain professional boundaries with current and former GH guests and/or creating conflict among staff, guests, and other volunteers.

Disciplinary actions will also be in place for not following the newly implemented COVID Protocol AND Return to Shelter Plan for Grace House.

Steps to resolve the above policy may include any or all of the following:

- A verbal discussion will be held with the volunteer to discuss the action with the Volunteer Coordinator and/or the Executive Director.
- A written notice will be given to the volunteer to outline the action by the Volunteer Coordinator and/or the Executive Director.
- A probationary period allowing for corrections of a volunteer's actions may be established by the Volunteer Coordinator and/or the Executive Director.
- The Volunteer Coordinator and/or Executive Director will review the volunteer's conduct at the end of the set probationary period. If further action is needed, steps will be established by the Executive Director and Volunteer Coordinator.
- If steps to correct the action do not lead to a positive result, a written notice will be given to the volunteer ending their volunteer service to Grace House.
- If the action is a gross misconduct of duties, the Volunteer Coordinator and/or the Executive Director will be responsible for ending the service of the volunteer immediately. A written notice must be given to the volunteer.

Volunteering: Policies and Procedures

When you are a new volunteer at Grace House, you may feel a little strange in your new surroundings. This is a normal feeling and is expected. Your fellow volunteers and the Grace House staff want to help you get off to a good start. Feel free to ask them for help or for clarification if there is something you don't understand. Occasionally, slight changes are made in the policies/procedures at Grace House. You will be advised by staff or through e-mail of any changes. Changes will also be kept in the Volunteer Manual, in the staff/volunteer work area.

Application/Training: Volunteers must complete a Volunteer Application and attend orientation and on-going training as requested by the Director. A criminal background check will be done on each volunteer at no cost to the volunteer.

Attendance: Sign-in sheets are necessary for our program for us to keep an accurate record of your contribution to Grace House. We ask that you sign in and out each time you volunteer. It is very important to be punctual when you arrive for your shift; 20-30 minutes early is recommended to give an opportunity to exchange information with volunteers from the previous shift and staff as well as to get a chance to meet guests.

If you are unable to cover your shift, please call the office at 326-2790 as soon as you know you will need a substitute.

Boundaries and Limitations: Please maintain proper boundaries with guests; being kind and compassionate is important. Becoming too friendly or intrusive can lead to serious problems. The primary focus on one's work at Grace House must be service to the guests, not fulfillment of personal needs. If personal issues arise in your life that may cause difficulty in fulfilling your responsibilities, it may be best to take a break from volunteering.

Confidentiality: Confidentiality is critical when working with people in vulnerable situations. Whatever is shared with you at Grace House must remain at Grace House. Please read and sign the Confidentiality Policy.

Conflict Resolution: Should you have a difficulty with another volunteer or staff member, contact the Grace House Program Director or Executive Director. A meeting will be arranged to hear the concerns and a plan devised to resolve the conflict. If your concern is with the Executive Director or you do not feel the conflict has been resolved, you may contact the Grace House Board Chairperson.

ZERO-TOLERANCE POLICY

Grace House has a ZERO-TOLERANCE Policy. This means you cannot use or have on your possession any drugs, alcohol, drug paraphernalia, guns, or other weapons. Guests and volunteers will be told to leave immediately if they violate this policy. Law enforcement may be called if necessary. Staff has the right to tell a guest or volunteer to leave for suspected drug or alcohol use based upon behavior.

Grace House reserves the right to administer random drug and alcohol testing. If the screen is positive, the guest or volunteer will be told to vacate Grace House immediately. The staff may make a referral and/or contact a local agency for assistance.

Equal Volunteering Opportunity: Grace House provides equal volunteering opportunity for everyone regardless of age, sex, color, race, creed, national origin, religious persuasion, marital status, sexual orientation, political belief, or disability that does not prohibit performance of essential job functions. All matters relating to volunteering are based upon ability to perform the job as well as dependability and reliability.

Gifts, Tips, Soliciting: Do not accept any tips or gifts from guests, their families, or friends. We do not want to create an atmosphere where our guests feel obligated to reward Grace House staff and volunteers for doing a job. Also, you may not promote or solicit your own business enterprise, political agenda, or religious beliefs while volunteering with us. Solicitation for a private charity is also prohibited.

Guest Interactions: It is the policy at Grace House that volunteers do not lend guests money, give gifts to the guests or transport current guests (active in program and staying at facility or in overflow status) or any previous guests who have not been out of the program for a period of (60) sixty days. This includes social media and personal contact. If you choose to do so, Grace House accepts no responsibility/liability for these actions, and you may be asked to resign your volunteer position.

Harassment: Sexual harassment or harassing conduct will not be tolerated at Grace House. If you feel you have been harassed, or if you observe harassment of a guest, report your concerns immediately to the Grace House Director.

CHILD AND VULNERABLE ADULT PROTECTION

Grace House is a mandatory reporting agency for child and vulnerable adult neglect and abuse. A report must be made to the Department of Human Services by any individual (staff or volunteer) who has concerns about the welfare of a child or vulnerable adult. A vulnerable adult is defined as an individual over the age of 18 who is of diminished capacity due to health, age, or disability.

If staff or volunteers witness physical or sexual abuse, they will call 911 immediately. Guests witnessing any abuse should report immediately to a staff or volunteer.

Incident Reports: Volunteers will be required to document any unusual incidents that may occur on a shift on the Incident Report. Copies are in the Volunteer Handbook Manual. (Examples of incidents that need reporting include: volunteer or guest injury, medical emergency, serious disagreements or conflicts, law enforcement involvement, and any other unusual situations.) If a serious situation arises when staff is not present, you may call the Executive Director or Program Director at home for support and consultation. Never hesitate to call 911 in an emergency.

Parking: Grace House does not assume any liability for loss or damages your car may sustain while parked in our lot.

Meetings: Volunteers may be required to attend meetings on occasion as determined by the Executive Director to discuss changes in policies, overall functioning of GRACE House and/or other topics of significance. There will be occasional Volunteer Support meetings that will be opportunities to discuss situations and brainstorm solutions with other volunteers. These meetings are optional, but a good opportunity to share concerns and ideas for improving services.

SMOKING POLICY

There is no smoking in the facility. Smoking is only allowed in the designated area out the smoking door only. No smoking is allowed by the front door or in the parking lot. All cigarette butts must be thrown into ashtrays. Staff and volunteers may ask guests to clean up cigarette butts around the grounds.

Grace House doors are locked at 10:00 P.M. Sunday-Thursday. Last cigarette break is at 9:45 P.M and 11:45 P.M. Friday and Saturday. Under no circumstances are doors to be propped open for re-entry. Guests must use the side entry door to smoke.

MEAL TIMES FOR GUESTS

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|------------------|---------------------------------|
| a. Breakfast | 7am (9am weekends and holidays) |
| b. Lunch | 12pm |
| c. Dinner/Supper | 5pm – 6pm (approximately) |

Volunteers are invited and encouraged to eat meals with the guests. Guests are expected to eat downstairs together and cleanup together as well. Staff and volunteers *may* ask for phones and electronic devices to be put away and hats to be taken off during mealtime.

Tuesday and Thursday night Community Café is served at Keisler Wellness Center (KWC). Guests may choose to take the bus or drive themselves. Guests must call for a bus by no later than 4pm. Meals are to be eaten at KWC and Grace House will not be making dinner these nights.

Guests are not allowed downstairs or in the kitchen without permission.

OVERNIGHT ABSENCES, CURFEW, AND LATE PASSES

Guests must check in each evening by 8:00 P.M. Check-in times after 8:00 will only be approved for verified employment, an approved meeting, or other reason specifically approved by staff/director. A guest must have a “Late Pass” to enter the building after 10:00 P.M.

There can be NO absences from Grace House without prior approval from the program director. On a very rare occasion, overnight absences may be approved for employment, pre-arranged visits, or for emergencies at the discretion of the director.

SLEEPING ACCOMODATIONS

Sleeping rooms offer as much privacy as possible, but privacy is not guaranteed.

GUESTS ARE NOT ALLOWED IN OTHER GUEST’S ROOMS FOR ANY REASON AT ANY TIME

MORNING HOURS:

- Monday through Friday: Guests must be up by 7:00 A.M. and rooms must be completely cleaned, beds made, and curtains open by 8:00 A.M. Saturday and Sunday: Up at 9:00 A.M. and rooms must be completely cleaned, beds made, and curtains open by 10:00 A.M.

EVENING HOURS:

- Quiet time is observed at 8 P.M. All TV/Phones/Electronics shall be put on silent (unless it’s an emergency) by 10:00 P.M. Guests may have their lamps on until 11:00 P.M. weekdays and Midnight on Fridays and Saturdays (as long guests remain quietly in rooms).

Guests are only allowed an allotted amount of items that will fit neatly and orderly in their rooms. No food or beverages (other than water) allowed in rooms. Fans are also not allowed.

Grace House Hospitality Code

- 1. It is nice to hear your name**, so learn the names of our guests, too.
- 2. Labeling people creates invisible barriers**; remember that guests are guests, not “the homeless”. Labeling – whether spoken or printed on a posted sign – creates divisions and can foster an “us” and “them” syndrome.
- 3. Personal questions can be tough to answer**; don’t put guests in awkward positions by asking personal questions. If guests need to talk, give them the chance, but don’t pry.
- 4. We all like to keep some things to ourselves**; all information about guests is confidential. Don’t discuss guests’ situations with other people.
- 5. Everyone can use a little privacy**; our shelter is a temporary home for our guests. Knock before entering a guest’s room.
- 6. Sometimes we need to spend time alone**; respect guests’ needs for quiet time alone or with family.
- 7. We all have bad days**; depression, sadness and hopelessness may come. Allow guests the space to deal with their emotions. Be prepared to forgive outbursts without judging guests ungrateful.
- 8. We understand and care for our children**; allow guests to do the same. Avoid contradicting guests’ instructions to their children. Always ask parent’ permission before giving things to children.
- 9. Parents need a break**; offer to tutor, play with, and plan activities for interested children while their parents take a break.
- 10. Adult guests should be treated like adults**; although our guests are in situations that may make them temporarily dependent

on others, remember that they are adults who are capable of making their own decisions.

ADDITIONAL RULES AND REGULATIONS

- Guests must turn in a detailed Daily Report Form by 10 A.M. Guests must be actively searching for employment and/or housing, working on their Individual Plan, and updating staff or program director of any changes or needs.
- Guests must maintain good personal hygiene and wear proper and modest clothing at all times. Guests may be asked to change at the discretion of staff or volunteers

SHOWERS: Monday through Friday: Showers must be completed by 8:00 A.M. and not used again until after the evening meal and with staff approval. Saturday and Sunday: Showers should be completed by 10:00 A.M. and not used again until after the evening meal and with staff approval.

LAUNDRY: Guests must ask permission to do laundry downstairs and will be required to sign in and out. Guest needs to be considerate of others and complete their laundry in a timely manner.

- Guests are asked to take part in daily chores assigned by staff. Staff will try to be accommodating and rotate chores as necessary.
- Parents are responsible for their children at all times. Please do not leave children with other guests, staff, or volunteers. Grace House requests that parents develop a nightly bedtime routine. Do not parent or discipline other guests' children.
- Computer may be used by guests for employment and housing purposes only.
- No sexual activity is allowed at Grace House. This includes personal gratification.
- There will be no threatening/arguing/fighting, abusive behavior, racial slurs, or foul language permitted. This may result in immediate discharge.
- Movies and DVDs must be rated PG or PG 13. No exceptions.
- Guests should not take or use any property that is not their own. If a guest wishes to use Grace House's property, permission must be obtained by the person in charge.
- Personal gifts are not allowed between guests, staff, or volunteers. This includes cigarettes.
- Any guest may be asked to move to the Overflow hosting site (local church) to accommodate families at Grace House.
- Guests may be asked to switch rooms at any time during their stay in order to accommodate to other guests.

- Guests must follow recommendations from Grace House staff and volunteers. If there is a problem, guests may discuss it with the Program Director for clarification.
- Be respectful towards staff, volunteers, fellow guests, and all Grace House property.
*Intentional damage to property or damage resulting from carelessness will result in designated volunteer hours or a fee/payment of a designated amount.
- Grace House is reliant on donations from the community for food and supplies. Please be frugal with supplies.

All rules are up to staff discretion. Rules may be added/amended at any time by the program director or executive director.

Communication

How NOT to communicate with Grace House Guests: (Or children, neighbors, students, friends, co-workers, etc.)

In talking with guests at Grace House, it's important to avoid certain types of responses that block communication and put the guests in powerless positions.

Examples of ineffective responses include the following:

- 1. Ordering, warning or threatening** – *“You have got to join the group”* or *“If you don't do it, you'll be sorry.”* This can produce fear, defensiveness, or resistance in guests and leave them feeling rejected and/or humiliated.
- 2. Preaching, moralizing** – *“Look on the bright side,”* or *“There's a reason why you're going through this pain.”* This can create guilt, resistance, and low self-esteem.
- 3. Reasoning, arguing, or persuading** – *“You're wrong because....”* Or *“You'd feel a lot better if you would only...”* Responses like this may produce helplessness and defensiveness and set up a win/lose situation.
- 4. Providing answers or solutions** – *“The best thing would be for you to...”* This takes away power from guests and it can foster feelings of inferiority or resistance.
- 5. Blaming or criticizing** – *“I think.....is your fault,”* or *“You're too trusting.”* Responses like this communicate a lack of respect and may engender feelings of inferiority and resistance or withdrawal in guests.
- 6. Sarcasm or teasing** – *“So you think the world's going to end if....”* Responses like this can hurt and humiliate clients, resulting in anger, resistance or withdrawal.
- 7. Avoiding or digressing** – *“That reminds me of ...”* This can communicate disinterest, leaving guests feeling ignored and/or rejected.
- 8. Labeling** – *“It sounds like you're co-dependent.”* This can make guests feel like they are being seen as problem types rather than individuals; it can produce feelings of inferiority, resistance, and anger.

There are other types of responses that must also be used with caution: They may block communication if they are not used carefully. Responses that have potential to be ineffective include the following:

- 1. Interpreting** – *“What you mean to say is...”* Responses like this imply that you know guests better than they know themselves. These responses can produce feelings of confusion, inferiority and frustration at not being understood. Stated differently *“do you mean...?”* can help clarify communication.
- 2. Questioning** – *“Why did you do that?”* Questions, especially if asked in a series, may come off as interrogation that produces defensiveness and distrust in others. Certainly, it is appropriate to ask some questions; to be most effective

questions should be open-ended (how or what questions...those not answerable by “yes” or “no”.)

3. Praising - *“I think you must be a wonderful mom.”* Praise coming from someone who barely knows you can sound very insincere and may have the opposite of the intended effect; this is especially likely when dealing with someone whose self-concept is low. On the other hand, it can be very helpful and effective to point out strengths you do notice in guests (*“I know it was scary for you to come here; I’m glad you had the courage to do it.”*)

4. Reassuring – *“Things probably aren’t as bad as you think.”* Or *“You’ll get through this.”* This kind of response may have the opposite of the intended effect. Guests may feel worse if they feel that their situations are being minimized.

Feelings that may be experienced by people who are homeless:

Anxiety: This is the most common feeling. Any substantial threat produces anxiety. Normal amounts of anxiety help one mobilize against threats in ways that are appropriate and healthy. Great or on-going anxiety, however, may produce confusion, distorted perception, poor judgment, and self-defeating behaviors.

Helplessness: People work hard to manage successfully and develop coping skills. To have the roof fall in as the result of an external disaster or a series of events may produce feelings of helplessness.

Shame: People are taught to be competent and self-reliant but during a crisis one can feel incompetent and may have to depend on others. This can produce feelings of shame.

Anger: This may be directed at others, the event, the support people, or turned inward on the person.

Ambivalence: A person in crisis feels ambivalent because of struggling with independence vs. dependence, self-reliance vs. reliance upon others, controlling emotions vs. losing control, and increasing self-confidence by managing by him/her vs. increasing vulnerability by reaching out to another for help.

Low Self-esteem: All of the above feelings can produce a decrease in self-esteem and leave the individual feeling extremely vulnerable. It is this decreased self-esteem and great vulnerability that make a crisis both a danger and an opportunity.

Clients in crisis may act on their feelings and how they think one ought to behave to accomplish something. This is why some clients act angry, demanding, and manipulative; these are feelings and actions which defend against their real feelings of anxiety, helplessness, shame and incompetence. Although the behavior is an attempt to regain control, it usually fails to obtain the necessary help or to restore control.

Caution for caretakers!!! Most of us at this point will have a pretty good idea of what we think the guest could or should do to resolve this situation. Although there are exceptions, it is very important to allow him/her to make the decisions about how to proceed. Offer suggestions about what you think the guest's resources are if you need to, but ask them to decide. Our purpose is to **EMPOWER**.