

## TIMEBANKING VERSUS VOLUNTEERING

(Kent Community TimeBank, Inc., March, 2012)

One of the hardest myths to combat about timebanking is that it adds a "reward" that pure volunteerism shouldn't have. You might find this argument particularly relevant with churches who feel it is the intrinsic reward and responsibility of the fellowship to provide hours of service to the church and the community. We at the Kent Community TimeBank, Inc. have decided that while timebanking feels like volunteering, technically, it is not. With a little help from Edgar Cahn and *Time Dollars* (pp. 11, 62, 63, 69) we can use the following points to help explain how timebanking is better than volunteering.

1. Research shows that most timebankers never volunteered before joining a timebank. Having a place to earn Time Credits creates the spirit, desire and environment to contribute.
2. Many timebankers will turn around and donate their Time Credits directly back to the organization that "hired" them.
3. By earning Time Credits, members can get more help from other members of the timebank community and, therefore, giving them more time to "volunteer"!
4. Research also shows that earning Time Credits makes members happier and healthier and more able participants in the community.
5. Many timebankers won't even record their hours when "volunteering" for an organization.
6. When people are timebanking, they are not only helping out the recipient of the exchange, they are helping an entire program be successful in offering opportunities for those who might not have the financial means for certain opportunities.

Edgar Cahn writes in his book, "Timebanking may appear to compromise the spirit of volunteerism, but that is mainly because we have drifted so far from a sense of real community." It is our opinion that when one earns Time Credits volunteering, not only do they receive an intrinsic reward, but, in turn, are helping out other members of the timebank who depend on earning and spending Time Credits.