

My Work is Meaningful to the Extent That I Contribute to the Good and Happiness of Others

By Stephen Camilli, FSA

My Professional Call

Actuarially, I believe that my work is meaningful to the extent that I contribute to the good and happiness of others. In a varied career, I have regularly asked myself, *Am I putting my talents to the right use for the good of others? Or is this where I can give the most right now?* These questions have led me to leave traditional actuarial work for work in non-profits to feed the hungry, to become a high school teacher, to return to the profession with a role in actuarial publishing and content development, and finally, to my current role as a university lecturer in actuarial science. Actuarially, I believe asking these questions challenges and molds my career choice and helps me to do whatever I choose to do for the right reasons.

Many luminaries and religions speak to our need to contribute to the good of others or the good of society in order to find meaning. Mahatma Gandhi said, “The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others.”

Milton S. Hershey said, “One is only happy in proportion as he makes others feel happy.” Actuarially, I believe that I have a responsibility to examine my work to see if what I do is contributing to the good of others and society, or, at the very least, is not harming others or society.

As an actuary seeking to contribute to the common good, I have come up with a few ideas to best utilize my own efforts and talents. I have chosen to become a teacher to enable me to interact with and inspire future leaders. I have sought to learn about and contribute to literature in the area of microinsurance to increase access to insurance for the underserved. I have educated myself about the opioid crisis and spoken with multiple actuaries to try and understand what we, as a profession, can contribute to help confront this problem.

Actuarially, I believe that we, as a profession, have a significant and active role to play in lending our own unique contributions to society’s pertinent issues. I believe that actuaries cannot stand on the sidelines of big issues as neutral players sharing analyses and facts without making specific recommendations. What can we propose as a specific solution to healthcare costs? What should be done to solve the social security underfunding issue? How can healthcare be insured and managed better? It is a difficult, but beneficial path to put in the work toward reaching closer professional consensus.

Actuarially, I believe that, to be the best actuarial version of myself, I need to seek out that place where my skills and interests intersect with society’s greatest needs. If actuaries make this commitment, in great enough numbers, we will fulfill, as a profession, the vision inscribed in our Code of Conduct, “...to fulfill the profession’s responsibility to the public and to uphold the reputation of the actuarial profession.”