

# A person of belief

Religion



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Armed with my preconceived notions about how it would be I was in for one of the most monumental shocks of my entire life. Additionally, the experience worked to impress upon me one of the most valuable ethical lessons I have yet learned. So powerful was this experience and the ethical ramifications thereof that it has partially reshaped the way I live my own life.

Supposing that I would be surrounded by a team of part-time “do-gooders” that were more interested in the exotic local than the needs of the villagers, I soon found myself enveloped by a world I could never have imagined nor believed had it been explained to me. What was really going on was that each and every one of the volunteers were taking time from their own highly paid jobs in the United States to volunteer their time, energy, and money (medical supplies were covered by those that were volunteering) to alleviate the suffering of those that did not have access to a hospital or medical clinic within 85 miles.

It was during this time that my view of the world and how ethical behavior should look like began to form. I cannot say that I have seen the light and now the needs of fellow humans have turned me into the perfect example of a humanitarian; however, what it did do was shatter my expectations regarding what life was really like and why people performed such selfless and costly acts of service. From a spiritual perspective, I was able to relate to what the volunteers were doing. In fact, from a spiritual perspective, nearly all persons of faith can relate to such selfless acts of caring and virtue.

Sadly, with respect to why I chose to do such a thing, I chose to do it for all the wrong reasons. I was curious, I was bored, and I was impetuous.

However, I have to say that now that I have been, I look forward with great

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anticipation of the ability to go and repeat such a process either in Peru or elsewhere during my next break. Again, this is not born out of a desire to travel or to see exotic places, but out of the huge sense of satisfaction I received knowing that I am helping to alleviate the pain and suffering of others; if even in a small way. Although such actions might not be for everyone, I would highly recommend to everyone to at least volunteer their time in such a way as to experience the feeling of satisfaction and self-worth that alleviating human pain and suffering can provide.