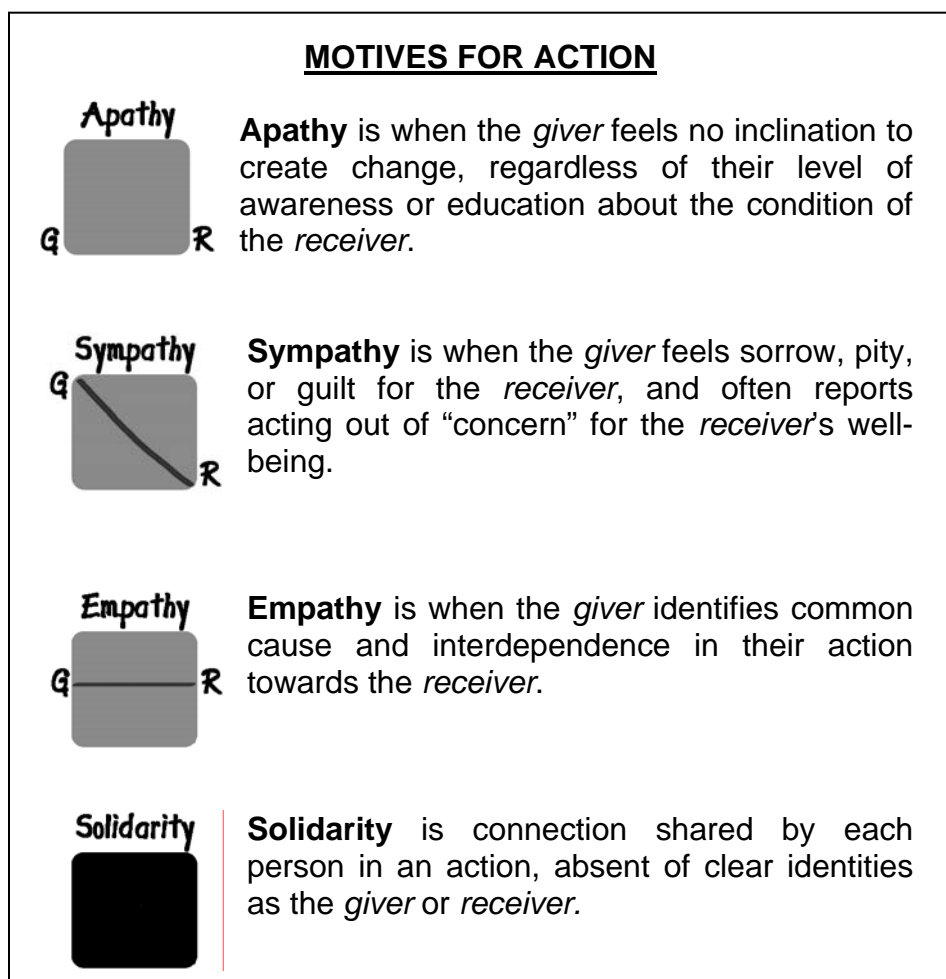


Check Yourself: What's Your Motive?

Introduction: Every action that we take is informed by our *motives*; that is, the political and cultural assumptions, beliefs, knowledge, experiences, ideas, and opinions within us. When we take *any* action we expose those motives, whether or not we intend to. The recipients of that exposure may or may not be consciously aware of those motives; regardless, they are still affected by them. It is your responsibility to become aware of your motives, and to challenge, change, and progress yourself towards working in solidarity with the people around you.

Explanation: The following section illustrates four basic motives for action. The terms *giver* and *receiver* are used loosely here; they must be reinterpreted in every context.

- A *giver* is a person who *does* an action, including volunteers, teachers, community organizers, social workers, etc. (G)
- A *receiver* is a person whom an action is done *to*, such as children, youth, the handicapped, low-income people, illiterate people, etc. (R)



Conclusion: This worksheet is meant to serve as a tool for critical self examination. Use it to explore your own motives and those of the programs you work with. You can learn more about motives for action in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* by Paulo Freire, *Where Do We Go From Here: Chaos or Community* by Martin Luther King, Jr., and *We Make the Road by Walking* by Myles Horton and Paulo Freire. Also read the short essay by Ivan Illich entitled, “To Hell with Good Intentions,” online at www.bicyclingfish.com/illich.htm