

Volunteering is not an obligation, but a commitment

Hello, my name is Manoli and I would like to talk about when, how and why did I make the decision to become a volunteer. Fifteen years ago I heard on the radio the need for volunteers. Back then I was in a moment of my life I felt like doing something for others. I signed up for the course without really knowing the meaning of the word Alzheimer's; I had no family nor friends suffering from the disease. After taking the course I was very excited about becoming a volunteer. The very first day of work I had a lot of doubts but I was lucky enough to get to meet an incredibly talented professional who guided me very well. We empathized a lot and the two of us, along with other volunteers formed a great team.

Of course I wish Alzheimer's didn't exist, but because it exists I would ask all those of you with a little bit of free time that you joined some NGO in need for help. The sea wouldn't be salty if it weren't for all the grains of salt in the water; each grain is necessary. Together we can do great good in our society.

As a volunteer I have to say that I don't do anything of special, I just try to be who I am, that is not a difficult thing to do. However, what I know for sure is that the people I help give me a lot in exchange. I get the best hugs from them, they know how to make me smile, make me feel emotional whenever they give me a Kiss without having asked for it... They bring out the best from me and that is worthier than a thousand words.

If I had to make a list with the pros and cons of my experience as a volunteer during these past fifteen years, without a doubt, there are more pros than cons.

What I am telling you about is just a summary, because my life as a volunteer is full of amazing anecdotes with which I would be able to fill in a lot of pages with good and sad moments; just like life itself.

Finally, I cannot finish this testimony without my unconditional support for all the families that are helping their ill relatives twenty four hours a day, with patience, some frustrations and a great dose of love. You have a lot of merit.

I hope science moves forward and that in a short period of time there is solution to Alzheimer's.

Hugs for all,

Manoli Táboas

Volunteer in Afaga