



CMSV 100 Reflection Essay

1000 words (usually 3-4 pages) minimum, double-spaced

Choose ONE of the following passages and reflect on the context of its message in terms of your service this semester. It is not necessary to put the entire passage in your essay, just refer to the passage # listed below. Consider the following questions as you write your essay:

- How did you feel your perspective change while being actively engaged with a community?
- What is your value as a single person who is connected to many larger communities?

Please incorporate memorable experiences, challenges, emotions, and observations of your service experience in your essay. It might also be helpful for you to consider the CMSV 100 outcomes as you write your essay:

- Acquire and apply skills, abilities, and knowledge to serve an organization that benefits the community.
- Gain an understanding of a community by building reciprocal relationships within a community organization.
- Develop an empathetic understanding for other people and life situations.
- Build confidence in one's ability to contribute to the common good.
- Understand one's responsibility to be an active citizen in society.
- Add a positive value to one's college experience.

Passages- taken from *The Impossible Will Take a Little While*, edited by Paul Loeb

1. "I do not believe the wicked always win. I believe our despair is a lie we are telling ourselves. In many other periods of history, people, ordinary citizens, routinely set aside hours, days, time in their lives for doing the work of politics, some of which is glam and some of which is dull and electoral and tedious...and the world changed because of the work they did. That's what we're starting now. It requires setting aside time to do it, and then doing it. Not any single one of us has to or possibly can save the world, but together in some sort of concert, in even not-especially-coordinated concert, with all of us working where we see work to be done, the world will change." - *Tony Kushner, p. 170.*

2. "I know how easy it is to lose perspective. One day I get swept away on an updraft of hope—often tainted by an illusion of my own prowess—that things are getting better and better. The next day I get swept under by a tidal wave of despair—often driven by some blow to my ego—as the mindless or intentional cruelty of the powers and principalities overwhelms me and everything I care about. If I stay trapped too long in this kind of whiplash, I grow weary of it and start looking for escape, not engagement. That is not the way I want my life to be. I want to see things steady and see them whole—see both the world and myself that way—so I can stay engaged with the struggle." - *Parker Palmer, p. 117.*

3. "Will we be remembered by how many material things we can manufacture, advertise, sell, and consume, or by our rediscovery of more lasting, nonmaterial measures of success—a new Dow Jones for the purpose and quality of life in our families, neighborhoods, cities, and national and world communities? Will we be remembered by the glitz, style, and banality of too much in our culture, or by the substance of our efforts to rekindle an ethic of caring, community, and justice in a world driven too much by money, technology, and weaponry?" - *Marian Wright Edelman, p. 39*

4. *"When despair for the world grows in me
and I wake in the night at the least sound
in fear of what my life and my children's lives may be,
I go and lie down where the wood drake
rests in his beauty on the water, and the great heron feeds.
I come into the peace of wild things
who do not tax their lives with forethought
of grief. I come into the presence of still water.
And I feel above me the day-blind stars
waiting with their light. For a time
I rest in the grace of the world, and am free."* - *Wendell Berry, p. 92*