

Serving the Song

What is the value of experience and expertise? Here is a different way of looking at both: They are valuable not only for what they enable you to do, but you also benefit from what they free you from doing.

The late Rosemary Clooney, a highly respected jazz singer, was once asked why her voice and performances seemed to improve with age, even after she had reached the point where her vocal range and breath control were less acute than they had been.

She gave this answer: “Oh, that’s easy. I don’t have to show off anymore. I just have to serve the song.”

In the same way, an actor might serve the script, a teacher might serve her students and her subject, and anyone in our centers might serve the residents, fellow associates and the company.



An example is Tonya Breeden, dietary manager at Northwood Hills Care Center. The facility had a resident on hospice care “and we all knew she would not be with us much longer,” said staff member Candi Rice. “Tonya got on the Internet and searched throughout the night until almost the next morning until she found the resident’s son and grandson, enabling them to see her before she passed away.” That’s serving the resident.

At its best, experience helps one develop individual excellence and then put it to use beyond oneself.

– Beecher Hunter