**Needy People**

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Several years ago, I had a conversation with a woman whose grown children lived all over the country - or even the globe, I think. When I asked her if that was hard for her to be so far away, she said, "Not really. I guess I don't really like being needed."

At the time - as a new mom with one baby boy - this kind of appalled me. I mean, what kind of mom would miss being needed? Fast forward several years and a couple more kids, and I see where she was coming from. Never more clearly than these past first few weeks of summer. The weather's been beautiful and my kids and I have had a lot of fun, but the "neediness" of my kids has hit record levels. I swear I get "Mom, can you??" and "Mom, where's my?.?" and "Mom, help me find?." flying at me from three directions nonstop for what seems like all day - and a long day, that can be. If you have kids, I'm sure you've been there.

But what days like this tell me is that I - like the woman from a few years back - am not that much of a fan of being needed myself.

Don't get me wrong, I love, love, love my kids and am there to answer most of their requests and want to meet every need I can (or should), but the continual requests and needs and "Mom! Mom! Mom!" can make me batty.

Truth be told, it's not just with my kids that I wrestle with neediness. I have a hard time with "needy" people in general. More than once in my professional or volunteer career, I've wanted to shake those people who ask, ask, ask, and need, need, need and yell at them: "Can't you just figure this out yourself? You don't need me to do this!"

While I've never shaken anyone, I'm sure the look on my face or tone of my voice has betrayed my annoyance and resulted in some not-so-shining moments as a me as leader - or as someone who's willing to help.

But the trouble with needy people, I think - or at least my trouble with them - is that they get in the way, right? I mean, we have our plans laid out, our things we need to do, our big purpose for the day, week, year, or whatever, and these requests take us away from what's important.

But here's what I need to remember: I first heard Carolyn Custis James touch on this back at Gifted for Leadership's incredible [Synergy](http://www.synergytoday.org/) conference in April (the next one - a do-not-miss! - is this March 6-8), but read it again in her latest book, [The Gospel of Ruth](http://www.christianbook.com/Christian/Books/product?item_no=263913&p=1134425). About Ruth and her mother-in-law, Naomi, Carolyn writes: "Even their ordinary activities are laden with significance. ? What looks from their vantage point as simple acts of loving and caring for one another will actually take on cosmic proportions. They labor and sacrifice to bring blessing to each other, and simultaneously bring blessing to the world."

I should really tack that up on my wall. Because what's being talked about here is the significance of meeting needs. And while Naomi and Ruth's needs aren't exactly "ordinary" in the sense I'm talking about (we're talking survival, not shoe-tying!), Carolyn's words ring true. Because laboring and sacrificing for others, as she writes, is what need-meeting is all about. And in doing so we bless not only the people we're helping, but also the world beyond them. We may never know how so - Naomi and Ruth didn't know a king would run in the family, or the Messiah for that matter!

But what a wonderful reminder that those "needy" people, those demands for our time and attention and help for even the "ordinary," those things that seem like annoying interruptions, taking us away from what's important turn out to be the Big Important Thing. Even if we can't see it now, meeting needs - no matter how small or how many - blesses, sometimes with "cosmic proportions." Seems I should start liking to be needed more.

What do you think?