



Personal Safety Nets® e-Newsletter



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August 2013, Issue 62

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UPCOMING WORKSHOP: Nurturing Bodies, Mind, Hearts and Spirits.



A little while back, Judy Pigott, founder of **Personal Safety Nets®**, and **Trudy James**, founder of Heartworks, created a partnership to offer **workshops that are designed to guide and empower women to take charge of creating and maintaining circles of support.**



"Extending Your Inner & Outer Resources to Build Community," the next workshop offered by Judy and Trudy, will be held on **Saturday, September 14th from 10 am to 4 pm.**

What We Know

Sometimes readers write to tell us they have taken the PSN ideas to heart and started on the road to interdependence. But for others, a personal safety net is not yet a road traveled. So as the wonderful summer months (assuming you like sun and for some, heat) continue, we're focusing upon helping you review the reasons for having and using a personal safety net. We hope you'll take some time to review, reflect, inquire and discover. Reflect upon what power and opportunities await you, and perhaps you'll find answers to questions: Finding a way to make a journey smoother; discovering new motivations, reasons and benefits of building or re-building your community - all would be nice as we head into fall.



Your Foundation: We often celebrate what we call our own independence, while neglecting to see the value that exists in interdependence. **When we learn to accept help from others without overwhelming them in any way, we've taken a big step!**



None of us will go through life without a change or challenge that exceeds our own personal resources - so why wait to start identifying where you'd turn IF something arose? Yes, **you can choose the path of engagement - deliberately building plans and resources - a strong personal safety net - right now.**

Some tips:

- 1) understand and value the diverse skills of yourself and others;
- 2) make regular contact with others by phone, text, email and in person;
- 3) share and clearly state your commitment to each other.



Come to this workshop if your body, mind, heart or spirit could use some TLC. Those who have attended in the past have commented on leaving the workshop feeling rested, energized and hopeful, with a renewed purpose and clarity, along with a new or enhanced skill or two.

The workshop, for women of all ages, will be held at Our Lady of Guadalupe Church in West Seattle. Cost for the full day, including a delicious, organic homemade lunch, is \$70.00 per person.



If you've never attended a workshop with Judy and Trudy, you're missing an experience you will not soon forget. So, if you're one of the people who've asked us: "When is your next seminar?" Here it is! Don't miss out.

Who Doesn't Like Something For Free?!

Readers and workshops attendees often say, "If you'd just put a list together of all the things I need to do and need to have, my life would be much easier, and part of my personal safety net would be much closer to complete."



Power and You: It's easy for most of us to feel powerless when things in our lives change rapidly. It's natural to focus on all we've lost and the challenges ahead. But **by building up your Personal Safety Net you emphasize the personal power you possess** - which is inherent in the many choices that exist for you: You can ask for help, You can gather information, You can choose whom to tell, You can invite the opportunity for others to learn, You can say "no" when it's appropriate. **Remember, it is your life. You have the power to learn, share and move ahead.**



Communicating: When thinking of a personal safety net

- whether creating or evaluating yours or someone else's- you'll want to make sure it's well-supported and available when needed. **Some tips to help: First, acknowledge and nurture the people and resources you do have:**



1. Make a list of the people that you've turned to (or could turn to) - whether for big things (help with moving) or small (a smile at the bus stop).
2. Appreciate the different gifts.

3. Let them know.
4. See what you can offer in return.
5. Find ways to laugh and/or celebrate.

Second, identify areas where more support would be good and try to diversify. To do this, you can consider inviting:

1. People who are friends, but not best friends
2. Those who are not family members
3. Family members of different generations
4. Friends of family, friends and neighbors.

A Balanced Life: To paraphrase the words of Sheldon

Solomon, professor of psychology at Skidmore College "Stress is when the demands on an individual are greater than the resources. With time, education and outside help, this balance can always change."



Even when all is in chaos, you'll be better able to remain calm and to experience better results if

you've put effort into creating a plan, a Personal Safety Net, to guide your response.

Take a look at our **free Workbook:** Get Ready / Get Started, as well as some of our "**cool free downloads**" (CFD) to help you get started. Take one step at a time. It's never too late to start, and going slowly may help.

The effectiveness in our Personal Safety Nets is similar to the effectiveness of a fire department. It is both an

Well, it takes more than a list, although this may be just the thing to get you going. So while we want you to read up and work on your skill base - learning to ask, learning to plan, and learning to use a group to accomplish goals and needs - we have put together a list. We hope it helps.

Therefore, here is a simple list to get you started. Print it out and start organizing and completing the check list to know that you'll be better prepared when those unexpected challenges and changes come your way.



And because this is beginning list, we're leaving up to you - our readers - to send us ideas of things that you think should be included to make this list more complete and useful to all our readers. Let's make this one big personal safety net goal!

Letters & Stories . . .



One of our readers and friends asked us **whether our website had information on planning to move two families in together.**

We suggested they consider using our **TWO questionnaires** on sharing housing. It was to assist planning ahead, and to avoid the need to handle some crises, that these were forms were created. After they did, we received this reply.

individual and team effort and involves multiple ingredients.

Moving Ahead: Sometimes it's time to "prune" your personal safety net. **You may not realize it but this "pruning" may not only encourage new growth but will strengthen your personal safety net. Here are some ideas:**

* Cut those relationships that drain you or are no longer reliable.



* Listen to your gut - is something amiss? Is someone no longer able to help? Ask if they still want to

participate. People sometimes say "yes" when they really ought to be saying "no."

*When pruning, remember that there will be more focus on what remains. It also allows for grafting on new facets.

Pruning of people in your safety net is natural and respectful. Honor with recognition what has been given.

The end result is to have a stronger Personal Safety Net and a model for all participants. **As time progresses, rejoice in the new growth of old and new relationships.**



It's Your Life: Are you part of someone else's personal safety net? If you are, you **should make it an experience that is positive and holds no resentment.**

Here are some ideas for protecting everyone and enjoying yourself:



1. Do your best to **offer and do those things that you can do willingly, and for only as long as you feel mostly good doing them.** Setting a time limit can be really helpful.

2. **Focus on those things about your friend that bring**

you joy or laughter - be they memories, conversations or activities you can enjoy together now.

3. Recognize that **you are stepping into your friend's life, not creating it;** and that if this becomes too much, you can, in fact must, step back. This is where an important choice exists, and seeing it as a choice often helps.

4. Also **do some things that really take care of YOU.**

5. In any case, **find or create humor and perspective where you can, and this will help.**



Finally, sometimes you have to say no to a request. While

"Thank you so much for this. **We went through the questions together tonight and it really helped us think through some important pieces to the equation, a great many of which would not have been apparent things to ponder until it was too late - or later than would have been helpful.** You have done us a great favor with this list and it is significantly affecting our decision here (and the lives of two families).

- Sarah



We also recently heard from one of the organizations that we've worked with. Together Center brings the ideas behind Personal Safety Nets to their staff, the organizations under their umbrella, and their community.

Their director wrote:

"We have been slow to move on personal safety nets, given a number of challenges, but we are excited to have selected an intern **to interview all of our agencies regarding their referrals not related to basic agency services (where can I park overnight?, for example) and how they use the personal safety nets of clients.** Thanks for all your support."

Pam Mauk - Executive Director, TOGETHER CENTER

Remember: It's never too late. Now is the time to arrange for us to come to work with your staff, family or organization. We'll help you get started making personal safety nets part of your life.

we've given you tips for protecting and enjoying yourself when helping others, we also ask that you **be conscious of the "how" when you're asking.** People ask us all the time: "When someone asks me to help them, and I say 'no' won't I hurt the feelings of someone I can for?" **Our advice is to look at the way you say "no." This is often the determining factor in the feeling you leave behind.** When you find yourself wanting to, or having to, or choosing to say "no" (remember, it's your life and your choice), you might try saying/adding:

- * How much you would like to help, but why it is simply not possible right now
- * Or why this particular task isn't one you'd do well.
- * Help find alternative resources

You can add that you're really glad to have been asked, and hope you'll be asked for something else in the future.



Seen & Heard

Personal Safety Nets is delighted to again be a sponsor for **YES! Magazine's 3rd Annual Celebration at Town Hall Seattle. This event is open to the public and will be held**

Thursday, September 12, 2013, 7:30pm (Doors open at 6:30pm, with general seating. Drinks will be available for sale.)

YES! Magazine's 3rd Annual Celebration at Town Hall Seattle (1119 8th Ave (at 8th & Seneca. Convention Center parking is \$4 when validated by Town Hall.) features Vandana Shiva discussing, discussing *The Future of Food.*



This is a rare opportunity to hear world-renowned biodiversity and global justice activist Vandana Shiva in Seattle. **The Future of Food discussion will be particularly relevant given the impending vote in Washington State on Initiative 522,** which would require labeling genetically engineered foods. Dr. Shiva will share her insights on developments from around the world about genetic engineering, biodiversity, and living in tune with (rather than at war with) nature.



Share Your Story

We're always seeking Personal Safety Net stories - how YOU have dealt with a situation by building a network, or gathering with others to solve problems; putting plans, people and resources together to make a task or journey easier.



What has worked, or what has not -- either way, your experience can inform others, and we'll be grateful.

When you have some time, do lots of people a favor and send us a letter or email, or use your smart-phone to **tell us your story** face-to-face. If you use the video option, upload it to info@personalsafetynets.com or you can write out your story by clicking here.

Sharing is a wonderful thing and your story will certainly be a helpful learning tool to many others!

As with the past YES! Magazine's Annual Celebrations at Town Hall, we're expecting a full house, with over 800 members of a vibrant cross section of the Seattle community. **A dessert reception will follow in the lobby, with live music from Mercy Crow, book signing, and locally-sourced refreshments.**

All proceeds from this evening will benefit the nonprofit YES! Magazine. Donations made that night will be matched, and are tax-deductible.



Tickets are \$20, (on sale now), which includes a one-year subscription to YES! Magazine for non-subscribers. If you already subscribe to YES! Magazine, be sure to use your subscriber number as your "member code" to get the special \$15 ticket price. A limited number of tickets are also for sale for a dinner with Vandana Shiva, the board of YES! Magazine, and other YES! supporters.



Something to think about . . . **AARP Magazine** reports on research conducted by the **Cornell Food and Brand Lab**. **At a buffet, diners served themselves about 24% MORE food when they were offered light food on WHITE PLATES, as opposed to dark colored plates.** The reason: contrasting colors increase our awareness of how much we consume, so dark-colored plates are best if you're serving foods like pasta, rice or potatoes. For other fun and interesting "key discoveries" about foods made by Dr. Brian Wansink and his team, **check** here.



Seth Allen, Dean of Admissions at Pomona College, presents this **question to ask your high school or college student: What do you believe is the purpose of your education?**

- To learn a certain set of knowledge
- To qualify for an appropriate job
- To develop the ability to ask the right questions.
- All of the above
- None of the above.

Before they head out the door, maybe it's time to have this discussion - good luck! *PS, Seth says the **correct answer** is c.*