

Personal Safety Nets® News

December 2008

Winter Solstice Gives Time to Pause & Reflect

IN THIS ISSUE

Giving Thanks Beats the Blues

Fill Your Cup First

Q.& A. Down Time in Life Tilts Up

Seasonal Holiday Sale

Start the New Year with a Class on Building Your Personal Safety Net

Dear Linda,

With the winter solstice approaching on the 21st, it's time to **bring to the fore the lights of appreciation and gratitude** for all that is good in our lives. The dark days of late fall will be giving way to increasing minutes - then hours - of light, and having **"an attitude of gratitude" will increase our ability to recognize resources (the lights) in our lives.** Our Personal Safety Nets® will be stronger and more available.

Giving Thanks Beats the Blues

Recently, **Dr. Maya Angelou told a story about being suicidal when she was a young woman.** She ran to get help at a clinic, but wasn't comfortable with the clinician. **Utilizing her Personal Safety Net, Maya contacted her singing teacher** for advice and direction. He asked, "What is wrong?" She told him she wanted to kill herself or somebody else! He responded "No, what is WRONG?" She said, "I told you! I want to die. I want to kill myself!"

Dr. Angelou's **teacher handed her a yellow legal pad** and said,

- Write down how you can see this yellow pad.
- Then write about the people who can't see.
- Read the words aloud and then write about those who cannot hear words.
- **Write about the people who cannot read nor write words on a yellow pad.**

In thinking about others, and of her relative good fortune, Maya's depression was eased. The physical act of writing helped too.

Dr. Angelou continues to speak of being thankful. **Her favorite prayer is "Thank you!"** She says this prayer very often. "I walk around my house and look at the abundance and say: thank you, thank you, thank you!"

By using her Personal Safety Net, **Maya was able to find help and receive support** from an unexpected member of her team - her singing teacher.

Think of people YOU know.

1. **Help and support may come from unexpected places.**
2. **Take time to appreciate what you find.**
3. **Find ways to support others.**

This story was retold by Sheree Rensel, Artist, on her blog at Attitude of Gratitude - Maya's story - Sheree Rensel, Artist

Fill Your Cup First, Then Give to Others

When your cup is empty, can you pour something into the cup of another? NO. This is also true when applied to your energy. You cannot give from emptiness. **Discover what it is that "fills your cup."** Is it time in the garden, nature, prayer, writing or reading poetry? Whatever it is that is healthy and nurturing for you, make time to fill your cup. If this is difficult, **get people you trust, your Personal Safety Net, to help you figure out how.** Ask for and accept support. Then, when your cup is full, you can give a drink to others.

Q: Julie P. writes: "Right now I can't think of a single, solitary thing I'm grateful for! My partner left, and the kids are acting out. My job may be cut. The tax assessment just came in, and I don't know how I'll keep the house. I'm angry, burnt out and resentful. What can I do?"

A: We asked around our office about how we had coped with stress and dejection. How did we keep gratitude in our minds in those times? Our ideas will help you if you're having trouble finding gratitude.

Memories are mood dependent. There are actions you can take to change a down, angry or resentful mood.

1. Write down, every morning or evening, two things for which you are grateful. Watch your list grow
2. Help someone else or volunteer for your local non-profit
3. Go into nature
4. Eat healthy food
5. Watch a video that brings up happy feelings
6. Exercise
7. Keep a list of favorite people, sayings, or messages

Every choice you make will help you lift your mood. Try some of these, and let us know of any others that are effective for you.

Medical issues may contribute to feeling "down". See a doctor about acute depression, or if your mood is affected by decreased daylight, it may be that you have the winter blues or Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD).

Seasonal Holiday Sale *for you or those on your list!*

Holiday Trio - \$35 Book, Workbook & Wallet cards
(tax + S & H included on the Holiday Trio only)

Hardbacks - \$20 tax incl + S & H
(regular price \$29.95 save 33%!)

Companion Workbook - \$10 tax incl + S & H
(new this fall, half price when ordered with book)

Wallet Cards A big gift for a little price! - \$5 tax incl + S & H
(pack contains 4 cards - one for you and 3 to give out to members of your Personal Safety Net.)

Tuck these nifty cards into your wallet and those of your Personal Safety Nets® team members. Complete them with the names and contact information for the 3 people you rely on in your *Personal Safety Net*. In an emergency, the people you've listed will be the first to be called. Even if your cell phone is missing.

Bulk order book discounts are a great way to spread the word to employees, business partners and those you hold dear!

Upcoming 2009 Events Open to the Public

Ready to start a class in the New Year? You'll find all our upcoming events on our Website in our Events page.

Bringing Order Into Your Life

Join Judy for a 3-session 2009 program at the UW Women's Center. Starts Jan. 13, 20 & 27, 2009. Register by phone, 206-685-1090

Contact us to schedule your own event or presentation.

QUICK LINKS

[Table of Contents](#)

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This issue marks the one-year anniversary of our newsletter. Your feedback has been heartwarming. During the upcoming winter months we'll be sending a survey to you to find out what parts are most useful to you, and what you read first.

With the short days surrounding our Winter Solstice, it's a good time to take stock of our own personal blessings. If your mind starts to shift to shift toward fear and loss, counting those blessings does help. Ease your heart and turn to an attitude of gratitude.

Judy, John, Linda and Nate
Personal Safety Nets

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