

Personal Safety Nets® News

July 2008

4th of July Independence & Interdependence

IN THIS ISSUE

1776 TO 2008 - From Independence to Interdependence

I CAN'T DO IT ALL - Should I even try?

TONY STARTS OUT ASKING FOR HELP - Then finds he's able to help others

SIGN UP - For a summer class

Dear Linda,

Fourth of July and hot dogs! Waving flags and ice cream cones. Small town parades and big city fireworks - our country has a basis in communities made up of folks relying on each other. It's not so different today. In this issue we'll explore how strong communities are made up of strong safety nets. A way to get started is by **joining our class** starting July 16th at the UW Women's Center.

1776 TO 2008 - PERSONAL SAFETY NETS

Our nation celebrates the adoption of the Declaration of Independence on July 4th, commemorating America's freedom from British control. The right to self-rule was thus established for the European settlers, though this freedom was enjoyed by neither the Native peoples who lived on these shores, nor by the slaves brought to work the fields.

Moving from 1776 forward to 2008, many Americans have continued to define "their way" as being that of independence - freedom from the control of others, often neglecting to see the value that exists in interdependence - mutual support and reliance. What we need to do better is to learn how to engage others without overwhelming them or subjugating them in any way. We know that none of us will go through life without a change or challenge that exceeds our personal resources. *To help you develop your Personal Safety Net quickly and effectively - follow our four tips:*

Today, a strong personal network requires:

- Choosing to deliberately create your personal network
- Understanding and valuing diverse skills
- Regular contact with others by phone, text, email, and in person
- Shared and clearly-stated commitment to each other

Q. I CAN'T DO IT ALL - SHOULD I EVEN TRY?

My colleague, a single mom with no family in town, has one toddler, and just had another baby. She's sleep-deprived, feeling depressed, and so overwhelmed that she's thinking about quitting work. I want to help, but it all is SO BIG!

A. First of all, don't try to do it all!

To borrow from Sightline Institute's advice, start slowly and concretely

1. **Get started:** one positive step will be a springboard
2. **Ask others:** for ideas and to participate
3. **Get organized:** create a checklist & prioritize
4. **Set your own limits:** respond rather than react

"Stress is when the demands on an individual are greater than the resources" (Sheldon Solomon).

Increase the resources, decrease the stress.

TONY STARTS OUT ASKING FOR HELP, THEN FINDS HE'S ABLE TO HELP OTHERS

For years, Tony had been trying to get his business to run predictably, but the challenges kept him from making a profit. **A breakthrough came** when one of Tony's respected associates suggested he **call together** several other finance savvy people to **brainstorm ideas** for confronting business challenges.

Over the next few months, Tony addressed the barriers, one by one. One associate helped managed the billing, another assisted Tony in responding to requests for discounted work. When it came time to face big questions, the group would meet together and discuss suggestions until they found a solution Tony could live with.

The results:

- **His finances took a decided upturn.**
- **The time came when Tony could help others!**

By asking for help, he received so much good advice and support that he prospered and could then in turn help others.

UPCOMING CLASS BEGINNING IN JULY

There's still room - please join us for a lively and informative 6-session class to sharpen your skills and set in place your own Personal Safety Net!

Getting to the Life You Meant to Have!

As important as reckoning with death and mortality has always been, most Americans today avoid the subject until they can't. We'll go at our own pace looking at our personal and professional safety nets. By the end of the six sessions, we'll each end up with a personal plan designed just for us.

Life Long Learning Program, University of Washington Women's Center, Cunningham Hall, Seattle WA. 6-8 PM, July 16/23/30, August 6/13/20, 2008. Please register by phone with the Women's Center: 206-685-1090. Open to the public. \$160 includes both the book and companion workbook.

QUICK LINKS

[Table of Contents](#)

[Order the book or the workbook](#)

[Useful links and resource list](#)

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In 2008 we continue to need each other. Life can be overwhelming or dangerous if you are new to the country or community, or experiencing a life changing or challenging event. When more seems to be asked of you than you can give, remember the four steps to regain balance in your life:

- *Get Started*
- *Ask Others*
- *Get Organized*
- *Take Action*

Happy 4th!

Judy, John and Linda
Personal Safety Nets