



# Personal Safety Nets® e-Newsletter



Chapter 5: Keep the Team Going

June 2011, Issue 40

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## Summer Reading - Taking & Making Suggestions



With summer upon us there may be time in your schedule for enjoying some interesting reading.

We're using this column for the next few months to focus upon a few new releases that will help you work on and build your Personal Safety Net.

As always, **we want to hear from you, so please send us some thoughts about your own book recommendation, or your Personal Safety Net story, or ask us to answer your PSN question.** For those who write to us we're offering a choice of: tickets to ArtsWest's production of David Hare's *Amy's View* (runs Sept 7-Oct 1) or a copy of the *Voices of Global Youth* book, "Many Voices from One Heart," or our *Personal Safety Nets* audio book.

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## CELEBRATING OUR FIFTH ANNIVERSARY

We want you to help us celebrate our fifth year and all you'll have to do is call!

We have what some would call a strange and unique way of celebrating - we're *giving away the company's services and books!*

Through June 2012, all our workshops and products will be free, almost-free, or for some multiple of \$5.00.



Judy's thoughts are this will not only be fun but will result in over 5,000 copies of our book being put into the hands of prepared people. It's our way for people to come find out why personal safety nets matters to them.



How do you get on board? It's simple. Call us at (206-659-0665) for more information or email us if you have an idea or are interesting in a PSN workshop at your workplace, neighborhood, community, or meeting venue.

## Keeping Your Team Going Forward

Thirteen years ago, Theo and Eve and their friends Tina and Susan were co-workers getting to know one another. . . they invited their friends for a house-warming party . . . over the years the dinners continued. . . (that) built a kind of safety net, supporting each other through difficult career moves, starting and closing businesses, divorces and marriages and caring for elderly parents. **(Read their entire story).** Like any team, over the years there were challenges to this group that were met with 1) setting a vision, 2) having ground rules, 3) supporting one another in asking for help, 4) appreciating each other's gifts and 5) playing together and saying thank you.



In Chapter 5 of *Personal Safety Nets: Getting Ready for Life's Changes and Challenges*, we begin our focus towards keeping your team going by noting that, though helping won't feel good all of the time because of a wide variety of reasons, **"people who have been part of TEAMS speak often, and with passion, about the rewards they experience: a sense of connection, a greater awareness of the gift and fragility of life, and new wisdom gained from working with others."**





Dee Marrella's **Everything About ME: A Guide for My Future Caregivers** (DCPress LLC, 2011, \$19.95) is intended to be filled out by YOU. It helps provides, quite literally, everything about you - to be passed on to a future caregiver. **The book gives you forms, lots and lots of forms, to help you describe your habits, likes, needs, and preferences - big things and little.** The book becomes your voice in your own care and allows your caregivers to function with much less guilt, frustration and stress. **Dee's point is that by filling out these forms and taking the time to share your information, you're actually giving a "gift" to those who would be left in the dark without the information - lessening their burden.**

Having met Dee, I know that she wrote this book with her three daughters in mind. Sure, they know their mother, but how well? And, what if they are not the ones providing care in a challenging situation?



Dee's ideas fit in nicely with those of Personal Safety Nets. **While we can't plan for health or other major crisis, we can set up information stops or road maps.** Of course we don't fathom ourselves or our loved one as being incapacitated or unable to speak. So the question she asks is: **"Will the caregiver be a guardian angel with guidance and knowledge, or a confused interpreter, with little or no input from you?"**

Working with this book allows you to be part of the help and not part of the problem. **Future**

Here are some strategies to maintain the goodwill within your care share team.

- **Schedule regular check-in meetings.** This is the place where folks can speak of all the feelings that arise out of participation, find compassionate listeners, and adjust roles and responsibilities.



**Encourage members to share experiences, concerns and scheduling conflicts. It's normal to feel and discuss burnout, change or cutting back.** You can reduce problems for one and all by discussing how to take a break, cut back or switch to less demanding roles.

- **Communicate.** Good communication begins with a team leader or designee who can take meeting notes, send them to everyone on the team, and use these notes as a tool for keeping everyone working together. **(Read Violet's Selective Communication). Open, rather than selective, communication avoids**



**the "left-out" feeling for some team members** - and can be accomplished through group emails or phone trees. In our day of social media - a Facebook or web page of information may also be an encouraging, supportive and useful tool. When including the care-share member, viewing the communication can sometimes be uplifting - knowing others are there helping - consider it.

- **Honor your commitments.** If you offer to help another, you have someone relying upon you and your promises. You need to be clear in your own mind, and with others, how much and how often you can offer help - and stick to it! **Sticking with tasks and schedules creates a safety net for care partners and the entire team.** Don't bite off too much. Each person will have different amounts of time, skills and areas of expertise. **What's important to remember is that all contributions matter!**



- **Build Trust.** For those who are receiving help, aid or care, trusting people who have come together to help can be a challenge. This kind of relationship can be new: relying upon others in ways he or she never imagined can be hard. **You can build trust by being consistent in doing what you've promised, maintaining confidentiality, and remembering to focus on your care partner's needs.** As confidence and reliance on good qualities, such as honor, ability, responsibility, fairness and truth increases, so will the trust levels.



- **Enter carefully into someone else's life.** Remember, you are a guest in the private life of the person you are helping. Maybe that's why so many refuse to ask for help. They may be asking themselves, "Do I really want you to know all about me



caregivers will be making decisions "with you, not for you."



## News & In the News

*We're spreading our wings again - this month to Arizona. We'll be presenting our workshop for the Maricopa County Public Health Department's Family Health Services. Remember, we'd love to come to your area next!*

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The work of the **Freedom Project** is to help prisoners learn the skills of non-violent communication while incarcerated and after release. These men and women re-emerge into their communities as assets and teachers, rather than drains upon its resources.



If you're in the greater Seattle area, they're having a fundraiser (just \$10) featuring special guest Dave Dahl (Dave's Killer Bread), Friday, July 15, 7-9 pm at the OM Cultural Center, 2210 N. Pacific Street in the Wallingford neighborhood.



Come hear Dave's inspirational story and learn more about how members of our community are shifting into positive action roles to make our community and the world a better place.

\* \* \* \*



Crisis Clinic was selected by the

and my family? Do I allow you near my possessions and provide you with "secret" information?" **It's an act of courage when your care partner opens her more personal, private life and needs, vulnerabilities and fears, hopes and dreams.** Be careful, go slowly and honor this special circumstance.



- **Take care of yourself.** When you help someone, even though you might be glad to do so, the effort can be demanding, especially if the commitment is long-term or there is no apparent improvement. **Don't be surprised to be emotionally drained. We cannot give what we do not have** - which means it's okay to experiment and figure out how to recharge your own batteries. Go for a walk, see a raucous concert, take time for your children - nourish yourself.

- **Respect boundaries and roles.** When there are specified and agreed upon roles with appropriate behaviors it is easier on everyone. For instance, a younger person, helping an elder as a team member, cannot violate boundaries by looking for personal gains or acting as a son or daughter. **You will need to try to understand and respect the expectations, sensitivities, customs, and needs of the care partner and his or her family system.** (Read "Only Friends"). A balance must exist between caring for feelings and personal boundaries. We call this "compassion with a backbone" doing what you do, within the limits you've chosen.



- **Play and rejuvenate.** Sometimes care givers come from different parts of a person's life and they may not know each other well. **Serving together may create an opportunity to get to know others who have similar values and goals and provide benefits you did not expect. Additionally, when the group can get together, look to celebrate and have some fun.** While we stress taking care of yourself, we also see the need for the group to find common ways to build its own identity.



- **Keep rituals and traditions.** Welcoming someone new onto the team, opening or closing meetings with a special saying or certain prayer, periodic celebrations, collecting items for a group scrapbook, writing group thank you notes, burning old papers that don't hold fond memories, keeping charts, creating a collage, sharing food, posting onto Facebook - **these are just a few of the types of rituals and traditions that a care group can use to maintain its' unity and clearly identify what each person has contributed to the group and to celebrate it.**



**Catch up on prior reviews of chapters in the Personal Safety Nets book!**



DSHS to operate a new Washington State-wide consolidated help line. Starting July 1st this new telephone service (The Washington Recovery Help Line) is available to anyone in Washington State.

**The Washington Recovery Help Line - for 24 hour help for substance abuse, problem gambling, and mental health issue can be reached by dialing 866.789.1511.** Teen Link is also part of the Recovery Help Line.

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**Westside Baby's STUFF THE BUS** diaper drive will be 10 - 2 on July 24th, at Viking Bank in West Seattle. Bring diapers to donate so kids stay dry!

**"In the Beginning" (Chapter 1 - January)**

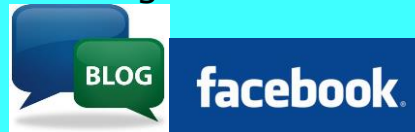
**"I Need You & You Need Me"  
(Chapter 2 - February)**

**"Your Internal Muscles" (Chapter 3, March)**

**"Putting a Team Together" (Chapter 4, April)**

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offer you the opportunity to gain up-to-the minute news on PSN content, ideas, and issues that affect us all, and provide a way for you to give us your ideas and feedback.