



Personal Safety Nets® e-Newsletter



Isolation - Is It Ever Good For You?

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How Many People Do I Need? Is This Even the Right Question?

Here's a question that we're frequently asked: **"How large does my network or team need to be?"** It's a good question, so we'll try to answer...**It depends...**

First, a particular network of support will be different for each person, because of individual needs and preferences. Second, each personal safety net (or network) is made up of three sorts of resources - people, plans and all other sorts of inner and outer resources that are available. A healthy, full life has many parts or "corners": family, healthcare & staying healthy, legal, spiritual, financial, career and so on. Each "corner" then benefits from having various kinds of support, one sort is the people. So, now to get back to these people...



Let's set the stage: Let's say you wake up one morning. Your room seems to be spinning out of control and you can't even stand up.

Your first thought would likely be "who should I call?" (**A PEOPLE QUESTION**). You actually have a

FREE 3-Part Workshop in February



EXCITING NEWS! We're starting off the New Year with a FREE Personal Safety Nets workshop for all interested individuals. **It's a 3-part series workshop that will take place on three Tuesdays: from 11:30 am to 1:00 pm, February 27th, February 14th and February 28th.** Open to the

public, with limited space. Call 206-659-0665 or register [online](#) today!

Once again we're partnering with our friends at [ALKI ARTS](#) to present Personal Safety Nets in a very cozy, relaxed and friendly atmosphere. We're getting out of the office and giving you a chance to come during lunch hour to stretch your mind and "asking muscles" as we suggest ways of replacing fear and isolation with security and connection.



There are three sessions - they build on each other, and we encourage you to come to all three (though you can come to only one or two and will gain from attendance). Remember, this introductory series will be absolutely FREE!



Bring your own lunch, a beverage, or just come as you are. We'll bring the handouts and information and together **we'll introduce ideas, build skills and offer some guidance on creative ways to build and maintain strong networks of support and creativity in personal lives, community, and work places.**

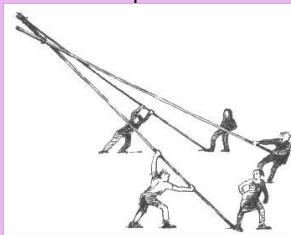
Isolation: Is it Good for Anything or Anyone?

Editor's note: Has it ever happened to you or someone you know? Something happens to you and it's as though everything becomes "just too much"? You pull inward, you retreat from everything, you hole up in your own little corner? Well, if so, you're normal. **And we wondered, is this ever helpful? hurtful?** Our friend, **Sue Mackey, from The Mackey Group & ArchSkills** gave the following thoughtful response. **Read on ...**

"When life happens, with all those unplanned life events and circumstances intruding upon



phone nearby (**A PLAN**), dial, and get a message (**An external RESOURCE**). Darn! But you're generally optimistic (**An Internal RESOURCE**). So you try a second number (**PEOPLE #2**) and that person is dealing with her own issue, out of town. So you try a third time (**PEOPLE #3**) - **BINGO!** On try number three you reach someone close to you, he knows the other two, and together they brainstorm ways to help - **to PLAN** - and to involve other **RESOURCES** (your faith? your healthcare professional? your family & friends? ...). And **THREE PEOPLE**, is the answer to the question.



THREE is the smallest number we'd recommend. Like a tripod, three provides stable footing. From here you can grow the network as you like, depending on how many people you want to keep in the loop of your life in general, and on whom you can call for various needs. But having **THREE PEOPLE AS A BASE** is a great start.

And don't forget to invest them with durable and medical power of attorney: the easy and legal means of ensuring that they can be of assistance should they be really, really needed if, for instance, you cannot speak for yourself.



Some "corners" of your personal safety net such as "Health" may dictate that you gather not only people, but a team of professionals and others to assist you when there are problems.

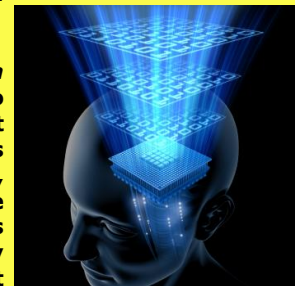
Your PLANS and RESOURCES, taken together with your PEOPLE, should make up the "team" that you need in place to give you piece-of-

our lives, many of us turn inward. **Often, when events negatively disrupt our peaceful existence, we isolate. We withdraw from people and from important social interaction.** The danger to our emotional, mental and physical (and, financial) well-being is that if we get stuck in our isolationism, it is not healthy for us. **It's the exact opposite of what we need to do - which is to reach out to those who love and care about us. We need their support, encouragement and their help with ideas and possible solutions.**



To isolate when the going gets tough may not be a problem for any of us if it's used as a time to think, to shut out the clutter and noise of our surroundings. This allows us time to assess and process what has happened and why (if there is an answer to why). However, **getting stuck in isolation allows isolation to become a permanent state of being. When we do nothing more than wish and hope our isolation will go away, we lose control, making the isolation more than a temporary state of being.** We lose control of our isolation and how long it lasts. Getting stuck in this emotional withdrawal also greatly impairs our ability to think and process information reasonably and logically.

What does this have to do with a Personal Safety Net? It has a lot to do with it! If we isolate, withdraw and get stuck in aloneness when life happens (good or bad), then those closest to us, our trusted important others, will be pushed away. They are the very ones who need to know. When needed, they will not know how best to help us get unstuck. We need their help in order to transition to a safer, healthier place.



Remember, each of us is unique. What works best for one may not work for others. Now is the time to think about needs prior to an event, and communicate them to our trusted confidant(s) - part of our Personal Safety Net."

Thank you, Sue, for holding one corner of the PSN Safety Net!

Beating the Winter Blues

Thanks to *Seattle University's Winter Magazine* for the following (edited) ideas of how to deal with the dark, bluesy and chilly days of winter. **We'd sure like to hear your ideas and tricks - email them to us so we can share.**

"... I like to whip myself up a latte on my espresso machine and get some tunes going on my surround sound and chill out, listen and sip away." (*Erin Lane, Student*)

"I go see a play or a musical I know I'll really like. I try to get into theater. It always works for me to take my mind off things." (*Kevin Maifeld, Professor*)

"I like to listen to a little Patsy Cline or George Jones. There's nothing like a heart-broken country song to help put one's own problems in perspective." (*John Popko, Librarian*)



News & In the News

**** UPCOMING SEMINARS/PRESENTATIONS:**

mind in planning for changes and challenges.



So, again, how big should your team be? The dream of one ideal size is impossible to attain. Why? Because **it's not about numbers - it's about resources!** It's about the **total package of what you put into place to help you cope, succeed and conquer.** What works for you is not always what works for your neighbor. What you need is not exactly what your neighbor needs. What you have and can do is not what your neighbor has and can do.

It's not numbers you want to focus upon but very simply: Do I have all the right RESOURCES in place for me? WHICH SHOULD INCLUDE AT LEAST A BASE OF THREE PEOPLE WITH THE INFORMATION AND LEGAL AUTHORITY NEEDED.



Editor's note: get started organizing your three people by [contacting us](#) to order wallet cards or request a presentation for you or your group.

February will find us conducting seminars at [South Seattle Community College's Transition Day](#), as well as with the staff at [Antioch University](#).

March you can find us speaking at the [Foss Home & Village Development Brunch](#), working with the [AmeriCorps Team at King County Housing Authority](#), and with the very talented counselors who will attend the [Aging Your Way Conference](#).



Now is the perfect time for you to pick up the phone (206-659-0665) or [email](#) and schedule a time for the staff of Personal Safety Nets® to come and work with your group or organization. Personal Safety Nets® is moving towards its goal of putting 5,000 copies of our book into prepared hands to remind people of how teamwork can help! **From now until June 2012,**

most seminars are FREE, and we include a free book for every participant.

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**** WALLET CARDS:**

Our new and improved wallet card is available for FREE to you, your relatives, friends and organizations. Simply send us a self addressed, stamped envelope and tell us how many of the new cards to send to you. (One first-class stamp will get you up to 6 cards). **Or invite us to come meet with your group - then you get not only wallet cards, but books on team building as well!**



These cards, all by themselves, though, are the very best way to gather needed information and prepare yourself for any immediate emergency, and all challenges that may come your way.

**Send your self addressed, stamped envelope to:
PSN, 4740 44th Ave SW, Suite 102, Seattle, WA 98040**

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**** WE LOVE TO TALK WITH YOU:**

Share your thoughts, tell us about yourself, and answer important question by joining us on our [blog](#) and [Facebook](#).



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**** READING MADE SIMPLE**

We've make it easy to read all the past issues of the Personal Safety Nets® e-Newsletter library - without having to have lots of papers around. Simply [click here](#) and happy reading!



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