

Personal Safety Nets Agenda Sample – 90 minutes  
Understanding & Using Personal Safety Nets



**Start with a short personal intro – your choice**

**1. What is a personal safety net?**

- A Personal Safety Nets provides a way of understanding a balance in your life that will make it possible for you to RESPOND, rather than to REACT to the predictably unpredictable changes or challenges that inevitably arise.

*a. Philosophy behind a PSN:*

- *Replacing fear and isolation with security, connection and community.*
- *Knowing how you are interconnected helps you work with others - to help them connect!*
- *Change from “Sitting/Reacting” to “Acting/Responding/Planning” (and Avoiding Denial)*

*b. Make up of a PSN – The Definition: (handout: [A PSN Diagram](#))*

- 1) You, yourself:** your capacities and qualities - for instance:
  - \*courage, \*tenacity, \*organizational skills, \*being a good listener,
  - \* having the ability to engage others
- 2) Others: Family & Friends**
- 3) Community: organizations, businesses, professionals**
- 4) Plans**

*c. Exercise: Starting Your Own PSN (handout: [Columns of a PSN](#))*

**\*\* BETWEEN knowing what supports your PSN – having a team to help is an ASK!**

**2. (use: [A Personal Survey](#))** – Question #1-4: imbalance between most who want to help and the smaller number who are willing to ask for & receive help.

**3. Things get in the WAY of reaching out / ASKING (handout: [Things That Get in the Way](#))** – Teacher can review the list, or if time allows, ask students about what specifically stops them from asking others.

Know it's your right to **ASK**:

- YOU MATTER, and so does everyone else (*We need to get others involved – which means asking for help.*) *We need to get others involved (they need us too)*
- You matter to you, as leader in your own life, in others' lives, in work, in community – **You will need to get good at asking!**
- We all have basic needs: 1) to be seen 2) to be heard 3) to matter to someone else

4. So how do you go about **ASKING EFFECTIVELY**? ([handout: Steps to Successful Asking](#))

- **Try to be authentic!**
  - **When you ASK**
    - Set the stage with a SHORT picture of what's going on
    - Give background – set the tone (include them in “your” team)
    - Include “the ask”
  - Allow for “no” – Ask, don't demand
    - Don't take the particular answer personally – be grateful for AN answer
    - Think about 11 “other” reasons why you received a “no”
    - Think of a time when someone said “no” to a request...
  - Accept what happens!
- **When you are THE “asked”:**
  - Listen to the entire request
  - Consider your response – if needed, can you think of alternatives & phrasing, ie.
    - You want to help and can't/won't (limits?)
    - You don't want to help this person/ this time/ this request
    - You want to do your part.
    - Respond: Yes or NO –
- **Both of you:** Say thank you to each other (for a response, or for being asked)
  - Review ([handout: Steps to Successful Asking](#))

- Using Your PSN to Organize & Create your first TEAM (a small safety net)
- **“Wallet Cards”** – [hand out samples to all.](#)
- Review ([handouts: Using Your Wallet Card; What To Say To Others About Your Wallet Card](#))

**5. All of PSN is based upon willingness to:**

- *Believe in abundance*
- *Value integrity and reputation*
- *See the power in choice*
- *Look at the stories we tell ourselves*
- *Recognize the importance of involving others in our lives*

**6. Evaluation & Q & A**