

Personal Safety Nets® e-Newsletter



Personalize For Effectiveness

April 2010, Issue 28

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Letters, We Get Letters. . .

With our focus this month upon "effectiveness," it's funny that we received this note from a friend telling us how she's making her own personal safety net more effective. Anne has ideas we wanted to share.

Dear Safety Nets Team:

You might be interested to know that I've modestly formalized my "personal safety net." After finally updating my will, I wanted to be responsible and follow standard advice to review it regularly. I wondered, though, since it took me eight years to revise my will this time to omit a former husband, what were the odds of my actually following the advice? I needed a strong incentive.

Tell Your Story/Paint Your Picture

After trying to define Personal Safety Nets® for a Human Resource Director, I looked into the eyes across the table from me. Of course, I knew **Personal Safety Nets® (PSNs) are the resources we weave together to create a more caring, connected, and community-minded circle for ourselves, our friends, family, and workplace** but apparently I had not succeeded in my effort to explain this. I interpreted total silence as evidence of confusion. A mission and goal that had become second nature to me seemed to be falling on deaf ears.



On the day in question, however, I thought I needed to act fast.

I needed something to enhance my presentation. I needed practice and preparation, not just about facts and figures, but to make this entire subject understandable. My mind quickly focused on "effectiveness" - one of our core values. Were my actions and words adequate to accomplish a purpose

and produce the intended or expected result? Was I providing a deep or vivid impression? I told a story.

Effectiveness wasn't in more definitions or in louder explanation of our goals. It consisted of making my presentation personal - focusing on real examples and personal stories - connecting to feelings and thoughts, and painting a picture that would unlock the path to clarity and get us both on the same page. It may sound simple, but focusing upon the right kind of effectiveness was going to, and did, make me much more successful.

This is counter to something I recently read on-line. "The pursuit of increased effectiveness in life is a somewhat illusive practice. The very act of working on being "more effective" consumes time and energy that might otherwise be spent on getting "important work" done People spend an imbalanced amount of time and money every day on the administration of their life - thinking about their long-term plans, short-term plans, goals, projects, to-do lists, schedule, personal mission statement, and the necessary rescheduling of tasks that weren't done today because the day was spent thinking about effectiveness." . . . **Really?!**



We don't think so! Planning and preparing are important, as with all things, within a reasonable framework.



So, combining the advice with the idea of a personal safety net and a sense that dates I make with others have a special power suggested I could turn this into an annual party. **I identified a group of about ten people who either have some responsibility in my will or health directive or are willing to help if necessary** - daughter, close friends, next-door neighbor, attorney. I wanted a date that I didn't have to set every year and that avoided big annual distractions like year-end holidays and summer. **I settled on the spring equinox, which is a favorite anyway, and I call the group my "equinox team."**



At the gathering each year, **I figured, we could have a short, serious time to discuss any big changes or see if general thinking about such things had changed.** We could make sure everyone had everyone else's contact information and **I could give them basic information about who has what responsibility, who other key people are (like my doctor), and where to find important documents.** But then we could just eat and drink and celebrate the coming of spring.

This year, a little research beforehand turned up lots of



One of our goals at Personal Safety Nets® is to help you reject the idea that increasing your effectiveness is a waste of time. Our goal is to help you focus upon how to make your life better - beginning today, following a clearer, more organized, planned and knowledgeable path.

Thinking about effectiveness causes you to think about the framework of life that is both visible and invisible to your conscious mind. This is done through your efforts and those around you. The framework consists of daily contacts, practices, habits, paths, tools, methods, thought processes, mental patterns, and emotional cycles. **What do you really want out of life? Are you planning for it? What may and can happen to you? Are you planning for the known, as well as preparing a solid base from which to encounter the unknown?**

No matter how personal safety nets® are defined for you, they will never mean much to you until the definition, meaning and use are personalized. Come visit our website, read some stories, see what others have done with the planned and unplanned events of their lives. Maybe then you'll see that **your effectiveness can be more enhanced when you paint your own picture and gain control over the expected and unexpected results.**



For those still a bit confused!

Given a few moments to introduce myself to a group of businesspeople, I mentioned my name, my position and the company I work for. That's what everyone else did. **As I spoke someone broke in, "Personal Safety Nets, is that fishing safety stuff or general safety equipment?"** I chuckled, but before I was able to answer, the next person started to introduce himself.



During free time, I found the questioner, provided a definition of the company and quick concrete examples of our work. Then we both laughed.

That led me to wonder if others have a confused definition about Personal Safety Nets and what we do. So I'm thinking some examples and stories will help me be more effective, and help you understand.

1) A personal safety net is a cul-de-sac of [brand new duplex-type town houses](#), an unlikely collection of new home owners who are gathering to discuss who will start a community bulletin board, how they will help each other's security, who will host the next joint meeting, and how to best ensure that garbage or noise from one home doesn't negatively impact neighbors.

2) A personal safety net is a group of alumnus stepping in to form an [alumni association](#) - not to share stories about past success, but to help the Principal, create opportunities for students and help return a school to its former glory.

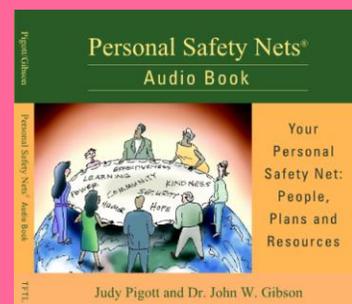
interesting information about the spring equinox, about the cycle of life, death and rebirth, and Greek gods. Eggs, seeds, and pomegranates are among the holiday's symbolic foods and showed up in the meal I put together. **We had a great party!**

The proof, of course, will be in the annual follow through. We'll see.

Anne Focke

How About A Trade?!

We'd like to make a trade with you! If you read the "letters" section of our e-Newsletter, you read a variety of stories and interesting questions that are provided to us. Starting this month, if you write us your Personal Safety Net [story](#), or ask us a question, and we answer in our e-Newsletter, we'll trade you our [Audio Book](#) - a \$35.00 value, yours free.



Not sure if your story is a good one? Of course it is! Every story is a help to another - so please share. You and your story may serve as part of another's Personal Safety Net - providing valuable help, guidance or experience.

We'll use your story in one of our [e-Newsletters](#), in our [Stories Section](#), or in our [blog](#). And you'll get the satisfaction of knowing you've helped someone else and for all your hard work and thoughtfulness you've received

3) A personal safety net is [a group of women](#) who decided to get together once a month to accomplish several goals: expanding the donor base for this wonderful non-profit program while having fun in the process; weaving together a networking using the dinner hour, and spreading the cost.

4) A personal safety net is a cadre of [seven caregivers](#), put together by a spouse, who come in and out of an apartment in any given day, with each welcomed in for both the care he or she provides and for the company that is enjoyed.

5) A personal safety net is a [man seeing a neighbor](#) in her 80s and offering help for something she cannot do - simply changing her license tags and exchange her old metal plates for new ones - crouching down by her bumpers and cranking off the old rusty bolts.

Upcoming Workshops/Seminars

No One is an Island

April 29th from 6:30 - 8:30 pm.

The Kenney

7125 Fautleroy Way SW
West Seattle, WA 98136

Registration is required (206-933-2733) but **FREE**
(underwritten by The Kenney Foundation),

light snacks are provided

As part of [The Kenney's](#) 2010 Wellness Forums, we will present a workshop to assist individuals and families as they look at current and future challenges and changes, understand and use a Personal Safety Net, and the safety net role a Continuing Care Retirement Community can provide.



Pulling It All Together

A 3-Session Workshop

May 3, 10 & 24 from 7-9 pm.

St. Cecilia's Parish

1310 Madison Ave North,
Bainbridge Island, WA 98110

Register at 206-842-3594 or 659-0665

Fees are normally \$150 per person - this event, just \$75 each, or \$125 per couple, for entire 3-sessions.

an Audio Book in trade.

You can [email](#) us your question or story, or simply share it directly to our [website](#). Happy trading!

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Bainbridge Island's InterFaith Council, InterFaith Volunteer Caregivers and St. Cecilia's Parish serve as your co-hosts for this [3-session seminar](#). Those joining Judy Pigott will receive her book **Personal Safety Nets®: Getting Ready for Life's Changes and Challenges**, and workbook **Personal Safety Nets®: Get Ready/Get Started**, as well as learning or enhancing your own Personal Safety Net.

For any questions about either event, please contact the Personal Safety Nets office at 206-659-0665.

BLOGGING?

Many of you are telling us that providing information, tips, guidelines, sources, links, and personal safety net stories once a month through our e-Newsletter just isn't enough.

You want to stay more connected and work towards building a more informed community. We couldn't be happier!

So we [blog!](#)



What we're also seeking is information, comments, news and stories from YOU - and with our new blog, you can give us instant feedback and insight into your lives and the world around you.

**It's easy to [BLOG](#)
Please join us!**