

Growing Places



Starting This September!

Women's Circle

This is for women looking to make deep connections with other women. Provides an opportunity for self-revelation in a supportive environment, through various activities designed to discover who we are and identify the gifts each of us holds within. Activities will

include collage, personal sound track, treasure mapping, listing, reading and much more.

Email

[growingplaces@fronti](mailto:growingplaces@frontiernet.net)

ernet.net

if you are interested or have a preference in time



Paint Extravaganza

Participants will experiment with watercolor, acrylic, crayon resist, marbling, printing, string, straw, spatter, and blot painting, with an emphasis on watercolor and acrylic.

Reconnect with the child in yourself before her creativity became inhibited. This is extremely fun and completely non-threatening!

Date: **Monday September 10, 17, 24 &**

October 4

7-8:30 pm;

non-members: \$60

members: \$48

Fresh Flower Arranging

with Rodney Johnson

Wednesday September 19 at 7pm

Fee: \$25, includes supplies

Member: \$20

Writers and Friends

3rd Wednesday of the month

6:30-8:30 pm

Starting September 2

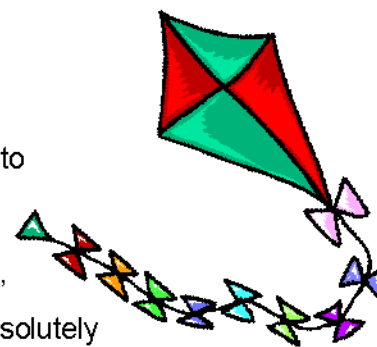
Fee \$5

Members: Free



The Art of Letting Go

My first conscious experience of letting go was when I was in college needing to get to a final exam on the other campus, and the shuttle bus was running late. I was fervently praying for the bus to appear, *willing* the traffic to make way for us, the lights to be green, when it occurred to me that I would be late and there was absolutely nothing I could do about it.



Things like this happen every day as we scurry through our lives. We're in a hurry at the grocery store and get stuck behind an old woman shuffling along at a snail's pace and there's no getting past her. Or you're feeling desperate to get your youngest potty trained and he absolutely refuses. Or you need to make a connection and the first leg of your flight is delayed. A hurricane threatens your wedding day. Your car breaks down. Your teenagers are making bad choices and your job becomes to let them learn their lessons the hard way if need be. You're involved in a relationship that is not progressing in the direction you were hoping for. You're awaiting the results of a medical procedure. You can't get your spouse to stop drinking. Someone you must have contact with on a daily basis can't stand you for no apparent reason. The world seems to be falling apart and there is nothing you can do about it.

Time passes, our lives ebb and flow; we each have our highs and lows. The important thing to remember is that no matter how bad things get, they always change, and usually for the better. When things are especially difficult and I feel that there is no way to survive the pain I am in, The Serenity Prayer becomes my mantra. There are days when I repeat it over and over and over to the exclusion of the negative thoughts that are making me miserable. And compartmentalizing a situation makes it tremendously more manageable. Accept the things we cannot change; change the things we can.

When an obstacle crosses the path of our daily round, it forces us to stop and take notice of the fact that these are just tiny details in the grand scheme of things. It all comes down to this. All we can do is put one foot in front of the other and do the next right thing. We can't change the way someone feels about us, but we can change the way we feel about ourselves. We can't change the state of the world but we can make a difference in the life of one person at a time. - RDW



I love deadlines-
especially the whooshing sound
they make as they fly by!

Created by Ruth Witte for Growing Places * July 2007

Steering Committee

3rd Wednesday, 7:00pm

Join us in making this oasis for women
whatever you need for it to be!

"If you build it, they will come.
Involve them in building it,
and they'll already
be there."

Creativity Lost (or is it just misplaced?)



How do you respond when someone asks for your creative involvement in a project? Too many times when I mention to women the possibility of dabbling with paper and pencil, paints, or scissors and glue, the response is, "I don't have a creative bone in my body- I can't draw a straight line!"

How sad! I usually feel all thumbs myself when asked to put brush to paper. Not always, but usually. And certainly it goes back to when I was a child and thought that my art was quite lovely until the teacher had her particular pet, the lovely and talented Jane Colony, and it was her work that was spot lighted to the exclusion of... me. Then, one of my favorite drawings, a winter wonderland pastel in fifth grade, was touched up by my well-meaning and adored teacher and transformed into a *masterpiece* having nothing to do with my work, in my mind. Not only that, but someone tore it off the wall in the hallway and it got trampled. The perfect metaphor for what happens to most of us as we feel the creative genius of early childhood suffocated.

There is a time in our lives when suddenly self-consciousness squelches the radiance of who we are meant to be. We become so concerned with what other people are thinking about us that we come to fear the full expression of who we are because someone might laugh or disapprove or disqualify us- if not in reality, certainly in our minds. So we hold ourselves back, disqualifying our thoughts and creations before someone else can. When in reality it doesn't matter what anyone else thinks.



What matters is the sense of peace, the sense of connection with something much greater than our selves (or the greatness of our self!) when one is able to let go of outside distraction and focus on the creative spirit that is within each of us.

One never truly loses the creativity that each and every one of us has been blessed with. It just becomes so deeply buried within our inhibitions that it needs a bit of coaxing. (See **Paint Extravaganza**, front page) Growing Places is a fine place for re-discovering your creative gifts. It is an oasis where one is allowed to

leave the fear, heave a sigh of relief, and find your own personal niche. Please join us! RDW



"Nobody can make you feel inferior without your consent." -Eleanor Roosevelt 1884-1962

Gracious Acceptance

One of my very favorite movies is *Pay It Forward*. It is about a young middle school student challenged by his social studies teacher to develop and implement a plan to make the world a better place. The boy takes in a down and out homeless person and helps him get on his feet, making a huge impact on the quality of this young man's life. He in turn is required to have a part in improving the lives of three other people in need, who are required to do the same, and so on. I love this story.

Throughout our lives, there are times when we are faced with the necessity of accepting help from other people. My biggest issue happens to be with transportation. Newly independent, I used to leave the house at 3:30 a.m. to walk the six and a half miles to the town where my ride to work lived. He insisted on coming to pick me up; I absolutely refused on the grounds that I could never impose on someone like that. So he felt guilty, and I felt exhausted.

Late one night years later, my husband and I were driving to visit a friend who lived in the middle of nowhere, and the battery on our car became so run down that we had no headlights to speak of. We were crawling along the pitch black and twisting road when a young couple came along and offered to guide us to

our destination. It involved these people going 30 miles out of their way. They insisted, assuring us they had nothing better to do. Upon our arrival, they turned to go back from whence they came, and being quite broke, all we could do was to wish them the same good fortune one day. It was an amazing experience for all of us. Now, every time I have a chance to do something extraordinary for someone else, I think of those two kids.



It is not easy to accept help or a gift, but it can be done. Someone offers to help us do something we would not otherwise be able to do (physically, financially, or through any number of limitations) and we feel beholden to him or her to return the favor or gift. It is not necessary or expected in most cases. People are good. They want to help. Doing something for someone else feels good!

We need more random acts of kindness in this world. If we are on the receiving end, we need to learn grace in acceptance, and remember the pleasure we derive from an opportunity to do the same. Let someone do something extraordinary for you. There will be plenty of opportunity for you to do a good deed for someone else.-RDW

Things that truly make a difference....

Nurturing One's Soul

In our day to day whizzing about, our feet hit the floor running. Work; kids; relationships; meal planning, shopping, and preparation; laundry; cleaning; errands; ferrying people about; making and keeping appointments; volunteering; providing a shoulder to cry on... We give and give and give, sooner or later to have the well run dry. Then where are we, and all of those who depend on us, when we reach the end of our rope yet are expected to keep on going like the energizer bunny?

In the end we must rely only upon ourselves to provide the nurturing our soul so desperately craves. To expect it from someone else leads only to disappointment and resentment. How to go about doing that? Baby steps. Only we know how to fan our inner lights.

- * Go to a beauty salon, or just find someone who will quietly brush your hair
- * Luxuriate in a bubble bath, and pamper yourself with exquisite lotion
- * Find a day book of meditations that speaks to you
- * Sit under a tree in your back yard and stare into the branches
- * Close your eyes and listen to beautiful music
- * Sit in a comfortable spot and watch the weather
- * Take a walk in the woods
- * Make your own list of ideas for when you just can't take it any more!



-RDW



THE SERENITY PRAYER

GRANT ME THE SERENITY

TO ACCEPT THE THINGS I CANNOT

CHANGE

THE COURAGE TO CHANGE THE THINGS I CAN



Must Reads for Your Developing Self

Feel the Fear and Do It Anyway—Susan Jeffers

"In this internationally acclaimed best-selling classic, Susan Jeffers inspires us with many dynamic techniques and profound concepts that have helped millions throughout the world grab hold of their fears and move forward with their lives. Inside 'Feel the Fear and Do It Anyway®' you'll learn what we are afraid of...and why and the five surprising truths about fear. You'll also learn how to let go of the victim mentality, the secret of making 'no lose' decisions, how to expand your 'comfort' zone, how to create more meaning in your life...and much more. With understanding and humor, Susan shows you how to become powerful in the face of your fears—and enjoy the elation of living a more creative, joyous, and loving life."

Ravenous Readers

2nd Thursday 7:00pm

Fee: \$2

Book of the month is as follows:

8/9 - Water for Elephants by Sara Gruen

9/13 - Discuss your favorite Jodi Piccoult book. Bring copies to share, if available.

Come Devour a Book With Us!

New members are welcome!

The Frantic Woman's Guide to Life:

A Year's Worth of Hints, Tips, and Tricks

- Mary Jo Rulnick and Judith Burnett Schneider

"Simple Ways to Organize Your Family, Home, and Life—And Still Have Time for You! Frantic women everywhere, here's good news! Do-it-yourself expert Mary Jo Rulnick and organizing genius Judith Burnett Schneider have come to the rescue. Better than a 25-hour day, their compilation offers a full year's worth of amazing, timesaving tips and efficiency secrets that can eliminate clutter, turn your family into a cleaning team, organize your life month-by-month, and even find ways to save you money. From financial planning to redecorating your kitchen, you'll accomplish more than you ever dreamed possible—and still have time to smell the roses and give your kids an extra hug. Cleaning, Cooking, Taxes, Gardening, Interior Decorating,

Car Care, Child Care, College Planning, Romance...

It's All Here!"



Wanted: Names and descriptions of books that have had a tremendous impact on who you are today. Email your best reads to growingplaces@frontiernet.net.

Lessons In Life by Nancy Hussey

You should always...

*... look both ways before crossing.
Take a sweater or a jacket,
and go to the bathroom before you leave.
"Just in case".*

Be sure ...

*... to match the colors in your clothes.
Brush your teeth, comb your hair,
and polish your shoes.
Always look your best.*

Be thankful ...

*... for what you have.
Others are not so lucky.
Eat your peas, and clean your plate.
Children are starving in Poland.*

It's important ...

*... to be a good person.
Be generous, and kind to others.
Be punctual,
and always tell the truth.*

Remember ...

*...you can make your own laughter and
happiness,
while enjoying the quiet,
and simple things in life.
Have hope, and never give up.*

Don't wait ...

*... for good things to happen to you.
No one owes you anything.
Take charge.
God helps those who help themselves.*

Take care ...

*... and always work hard.
Take pride in what you do.
Read, study, and learn.
You can be anything you want to be.*

Don't forget ...

*...to be responsible.
Take care of yourself,
be independent and strong.
Have a positive outlook on life.*

Sometimes ...

*... we make mistakes.
Everyone does.
What's important is what you do next.
There's nothing that can't be forgiven.*

But, most of all ...

*... love your family.
Give them all you can.
Share what you have,
and know that they'll do the same.*

For ...

*... the examples you set,
as you live life each day,
will leave an impression so strong,
that they become a natural part of being.*

In loving memory of
Julie Konieczny (1922 -2006)
Thanks, Mom.
I love you!

Cheaper Than Prozac

Miracle Whip Cocoa Cake

This is a very moist cake and is easy to make!

- 2 cups flour
- 1 cup sugar
- 2 tablespoons cocoa
- 2 teaspoons baking soda
- ½ teaspoon salt (optional)
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 1 cup Miracle Whip (only use this, not mayonnaise)
- 1 cup warm water (room temperature)



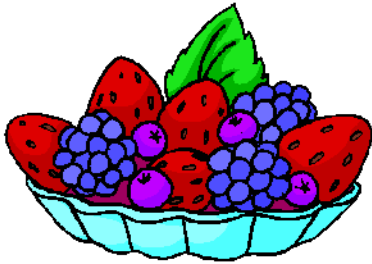
Sift all dry ingredients together. Mix in Miracle Whip, vanilla, and water slowly until smooth. Bake at 350 degrees in a greased 9" X 9" pan (35 – 40 minutes) until toothpick comes out clean. Serve with cool whip, whip cream, or Jan's Berry Whip (see recipe below).

Jan's Berry Whip

- 1 egg white
- 1 cup sugar

1 c. fresh berries (raspberries or strawberries work the best)

Put all ingredients in a bowl (leave enough room for it to fluff up) – whip until fluffy. Serve as a cake topping – it's especially good on chocolate cake!



Note: you can substitute frozen berries for fresh ones, but make sure to drain them well.

(from Janice Durbin who got it from Grandma Creger in Moravia, NY)

Wanted: To-die-for chocolate recipes. Send tested recipes to growingplaces @ frontiernet.net with brief story or history

Brownies

- 4 eggs
- 2 cups sugar
- 1/2 cup butter
- 4 1-ounce squares
unsweetened chocolate, melted
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 1 cup flour
- 1/2 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 cup chopped walnuts, optional



Beat together eggs, sugar, butter and chocolate. Add vanilla, flour, baking powder and salt, mixing after each addition. Stir in nuts. Pour into greased and floured 9x13 pan. Bake at 350* for 25 minutes. Let cool before cutting.

This is from the "Applehood & Mother Pie" Cookbook and I swear by it. You will never need another brownie recipe - Beverly Archer

Strength is the capacity to break a chocolate bar into four pieces with your bare hands and then eat just one of the pieces.

- Judith Viorst -b.1931
American Poet