

# The Choice Connection

~ PARTNERSHIPS... The Smallest of Teams ~

Constructive Choices, Inc.  
Discover and acknowledge your strengths...



Jean Strosinski  
MA, PCC, CPT



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Greetings!

**CHOOSE TO... PARTNER... TEAM UP... COLLABORATE**

CHOOSE your partner... learn each other's strengths

Clarify how those strengths will really show up...

Declare your goal for the partnership... listen to their goal for the partnership...

Clarify the expectations...

Share the success, joy and fun you both have a potential for.

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## Partnerships... The Smallest of Teams



In the last nine years working as a sole proprietor, I have had the opportunity to create partnerships or be asked to be a partner for many, many initiatives. These partnerships have resulted in speaking engagements, collaborative work products, and coaching strategies and engagements to name a few. Sad to say, there have been a few instances where the partnership was dissolved shortly after it began. And yet, more times, than I can remember, the partnership has flourished and I continue to be attracted to the collaborative energy - I so prefer to have a partner at my side than going it alone.

I have often been asked to provide guidance on how a good partnership can be developed, and while I am not THE expert, I have created some tools, guidance and structure to partnerships I now consider being a member of. First, know that partnerships by



## Jean's Latest Choices

- Show my true colors -this month they are red, white and blue...
- Reflect on past and current partnerships and shine with the best.
- Consider the goal not being achieved and determine the partner that may be missing.
- Share a weekend with friends from CA...
- Share the memory with a previous office partner of just how she saw my potential and put me on a path to coaching.  
Wow! What a difference partners can make in your life.

### Quotable Quotes

*"There are two ways of spreading light: to be the candle or the mirror that reflects it."*  
~ Edith Wharton

*"Two kinds of people on earth can be seen: The people who lift and the people who lean."* ~ Ella Wheeler-Wilcox

*"The achievements of an organization are the results of the combined efforts of each individual."*  
~ Vince Lombardi

*"When building a team,*

definition are a pairing of individuals working together for a common cause or goal. I often think of partners as 2, but there certainly are partnerships that have more than 2 members. Regardless, by the nature of there being more than one person in the partnership, it also qualifies as a team.

So... like a team, the partnership also requires a progression through some development stages. A good reminder for all of us is the five (5) stages of a team's growth - *Forming, Storming, Norming, Performing and Adjourning* (B. Tuckman, 1965; Tuckman and Jensen, 1977). A simple partnership may not require much time at all in the forming and storming stages if the personal connection between the partners is already strong. But do know that if one of the partners is a bit hesitant with an element of the partnership, then there is more work to do to move forward successfully.

Additional work by others over the years has identified six characteristics to help define and clarify which stage of development you are currently working in. These characteristics are too important to be dismissed lightly. They are purpose, communication, commitment, trust, involvement and process orientation. You can imagine that each of these characteristics are more developed and demonstrated more strongly as a team flourishes. If a team is floundering, then it is always possible to engage in a dialogue to identify which of the characteristics the team needs to address and strengthen. For a download and more information on this tool, you are invited to explore a team self-assessment using these characteristics available at the following link and presented in a recent ISPI article. Look for the *Trendspotters* section in the article at <http://www.performancexpress.org/>

Are you currently working in partnership? And is the partnership achieving what you had intentions for? If yes... consider what more the partnership can honor for the two of you! If you are struggling or believe your partner is struggling and not sure if the partnership is in your best interest... STOP, take a deep breath and ask yourself:

- Are we providing honest communication to each other?
- Am I committed to this partnership's objectives - do I think my partner is?
- Are we clear on the purpose of the partnership - do I understand that purpose?
- Am I full engaged in our strategy and tasks? Do I trust my partner? Do I believe they trust me?
- Are we clear about our processes and structure?

It may be time to start that conversation.

As most of you know I am also passionate about individuals in any collaborative effort knowing their strengths and sharing these along with their definitions. The same goes for a partnership. It is imperative that the partners communicate their strengths and consider how these strengths will complement the others'. There is no one right way to do this - only that they be shared with respect. There are many tools available to discover your strengths and some are noted in the *"Reading Choices to Check Out"* section of this month's newsletter.

My wish for you this month, is that you discover or reengage a partnership that lifts you up, makes you whole and celebrates the best you have to give to our world!

*I always search first for people who love to win. If I can't find any of those, I look for people who hate to lose." ~ H. Ross Perot*

### Additional Tips For Partnerships

#### Ten Tips for Partnerships - with a Coaching Approach

1. There is clarity for what we want to achieve together.
2. We schedule time for regular and planned communication.
3. We share our goals and desired results from our partnership.
4. I listen first and talk second.
5. I am aware of all the things that we have achieved that I could not have done on my own.
6. I keep confidentiality when it is necessary.
7. We acknowledge each other's strengths and celebrate the differences.
8. We have discussed how to handle the disagreements.
9. We laugh ... and we laugh together.
10. We keep it flowing by letting go of what is not working.

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Warm Regards,  
Jean

Jean Strosinski, MA, PCC, CPT  
Constructive Choices, Inc.



### Jean Recommends

#### Now, Discover Your Strengths

by Marcus Buckingham and Donald Clifton.

Buy the book, and take a simple on-line survey, the Strengthsfinder, to identify your Top 5 professional/workplace strengths. You will see yourself in a whole new light.

#### Strengthsfinder2.0

by Tom Rath.

The newer version of what was originally published in Now, Discover Your Strengths. I still love the last section of the first book which gives some great insight on how to manage a person with specific strengths.

[www.authentichappiness.com](http://www.authentichappiness.com) - Go to this site and take a free survey called the VIA - Values in Action. It will identify your top 5 character strengths.

PRINT® Survey - Discover how you react and how you relate. PRINTS are at the core of what motivates us and what drives us crazy. PRINTS determine our getting what we want and reveal our life's challenge. They provide us insight and understanding about others. Check this out at

[http://www.constructivechoices.com/print\\_strategies.htm](http://www.constructivechoices.com/print_strategies.htm)

Radical Collaboration - Five Essential Skills to Overcome Defensiveness and Build Successful Relationships by James W. Tamm and Ronald J. Luyet

### Albuquerque ISPI Fall Conference 2008



### Administrivia

#### My Constructive Choices Audience...

- Professionals wanting to be at choice in their career and daily work
- New Managers (and aspiring leaders) transitioning to establish a leadership role in their communities
- Individuals wanting to sort through the choices, build a more fulfilling life, lift their voices, and...
- Coaches who choose to step out, show up, and say - *YES, it IS all about YOU!*