

# The CHOICE Connection

Positive strategies. Practical solutions.

constructive  
**CHOICES**  
Jean Strosinski, PhD, PCC, CPT



## September 2014 - In This Issue:

### Quotable Quotes

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### Sharing Our Gifts

.....

### Tools and Resources

.....

### Reflection

.....

### Choose To

.....

### Joyful Observances

.....

### Administrivia

.....

## Quotable Quotes

*"I slept and I dreamed that life is all joy. I woke and saw that life is all service. I served and I saw that service is joy." ~ Kahlil Gibran*

*"We make a living by what we get. We make a life by what we give." ~ Winston Churchill*

*"Kindness in words creates confidence. Kindness in thinking creates profoundness. Kindness in giving creates love." ~ Lao Tzu*

*"It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve first. Then conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead." ~ Robert K. Greenleaf*

Dear Jean,

Our guest author this month is Anna Watkins and I am so delighted to have her share her gifts and talents with us. I first met Anna when she came to Albuquerque to check out our fair city some years ago. She, like others I have met, checked out [www.findyourspot.com](http://www.findyourspot.com) and came here to find out more about of her 'top 25' places to live. A group of coaches got together to welcome Anna and yes, she made the choice to move here. What she missed from her previous home on the east coast was a venue to do what she loves to do - ballroom dancing. And it didn't take long for her to gather a group of others who have a passion for dance and reengage the ballroom dancing community. It continues to thrive to this day! Oh, what I so admire about Anna is her gift for getting others to see the possibility of what can be. And she models this daily. May you always see the possibility of what can be as Anna does and what she inspires me to see as well!

Anna Watkins is an experienced trainer and facilitator who has provided training workshops in communication, leadership, managerial skills, and career development in New Mexico and New

York. In addition to her training, Anna is a Certified Professional Career Coach. Her current full time role is that of Manager for Job Connection Services at Central New Mexico Community College, where she applies her career coaching skills to help students and graduates find meaningful work to match their education and interests.

Thank you, Anna!

In the spirit of sharing our gifts,  
Jean

## Sharing Our Gifts *by Anna Watkins*

This past January I chose a different approach to traditional New Year resolutions. I decided to select just one word that would allow for a range of meanings and actions, serving as an ongoing guide for the year. I wrote the word "Give" on a large sign and placed it on the door where I could see it every time I left the house. It makes me smile as I consider the many ways I can apply my gifts and make a difference every day. And - I find that I am definitely more giving because I am consciously looking for new ways to give each day.



Some of us are particularly fortunate because giving is an inherent aspect of our work. We get to use our gifts regularly in the way that we choose. It is indeed a privilege to incorporate our talents in such a gratifying way and to witness how others benefit from our sharing.

What are your gifts? Have you considered that question lately? Most of us go through the day taking our talents and gifts for granted, not realizing their importance. We finish a successful project, provide great customer service, produce quality work, and bring joy to family and friends. We fail to notice or we shrug off compliments with the attitude that anyone could do what we just accomplished.

How can we really pay attention and identify our talents and gifts? One possible way to begin is to acknowledge the gifts of others. They're often easier to spot than our own native gifts. Consider what you appreciate about the people around you. Whether they have similar or contrasting skills, you can learn by observing them. Would you like to cultivate a skill that you see in someone else? Tell them - and ask for their guidance. Most people would feel honored at the compliment. Perhaps you would just like that person to know that you appreciate his or her special gifts and talents. That's great, too - and it is the wonderful gift of affirmation!

## Tools and Resources FROM THE BOOKSHELF

[Now Discover Your Strengths](#) by Marcus Buckingham and Donald Clifton

This book outlines a program to help readers identify their talents, build them into strengths, and enjoy consistent, near-perfect performance.

[The Power of Giving: How Giving Back Enriches Us All](#) by Azim Jamal & Harvey McKinnon  
Simple and easy to use, The Power of Giving provides a wealth of down-to-earth ideas, exercises, and real-life stories that reveal to each reader the unique gifts he or she has to give including kindness, ideas, advice, attention, hope, and more and the many ways you can benefit from giving them, from better health to better job prospects.

[The Generosity Factor: Discover the Joy of Giving Your Time, Talent, and Treasure](#) by Ken

Blanchard and S. Truett Cathy

This book contains a parable that demonstrates the virtues of generosity. The principles in the story describe a way to give time, talent, treasure, and touch to those in need.

## THE INTERNET CONNECTIONS

[www.goodnewsnetwork.org](http://www.goodnewsnetwork.org)

The Good News Network website with articles about giving in many forms - great inspiration for using your own special gifts.

[www.greenleaf.org](http://www.greenleaf.org)

Information about servant leadership as promoted by Robert Greenleaf's Center for Servant Leadership.

## Reflection

It is amazing how much a little extra attention and intention can make your life reflect the best that you can offer the world.

What if your work, your leisure, your lifestyle is not fulfilling because your best gifts are waiting to be expressed? You can turn that situation around at any time. You can raise your awareness and intention to focus on living a life based on your chosen gifts. The first step is to identify what those gifts are.

Use your experiences to help you. Remember those occasions when you have felt the most vibrant and satisfied. You can recreate that feeling. When did other people thank or compliment you for helping? What skills and talents were you using? Think of actions that you can take to use the gifts that you prefer. Then begin - one step at a time.

Pause and breathe deeply. Take a moment to reflect -

Be aware and be grateful for the gifts **around** you.

Be aware and be grateful for the gifts **within** you.

## Choose To

Identify your gifts ... your special artistic talent ... running errands for others ... preparing food ... the financial means to give support for a cause ... helping with a campaign or project ... Then .... look at your list of gifts ... determine which of these gifts give you the most satisfaction ... AND ... seek out an opportunity to share one of your gifts ... just do it!



## Joyful Observances

[World Alzheimer's Month](#)

[National Organic Harvest Month](#)

[Self Improvement Month](#)

Suicide Prevention Week (Sept. 7-15)

Dating and Life Coach Recognition Week (Sept. 14-20)

National Keep Kids Creative Week (Sept. 21-27)

Sept. 5 - [International Day of Charity](#)

Sept. 10 - Swap Ideas Day  
Sept. 11 - [Patriot Day](#)  
Sept. 17 - International Country Music Day  
Sept. 21 - [Nickelodeon's Worldwide Day of Play](#)  
Sept. 22 - American Business Women's Day  
Sept. 27 - Ancestor Appreciation Day

## **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, life their voices, and...
- \* Coaches who choose to step out, show up, and say - YES, it IS all about YOU!

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