

constructive CHOICES

The Choice Connection

Constructive Choices, Inc.

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~ CONNECTIONS... THE STRONGER LINKS ~

Dear Jean,

CHOOSE TO... Strengthen Your connecting links CHOOSE to... strengthen first your connecting links and identify the strongest link

CHOOSE to ... connect your strongest link in one chain to another chain of connecting links present in your life

CHOOSE to ... live your responsibilities... throw paint on your canvas... add a link... be open... smile

CHOOSE to ... reach out and touch another heart or hand ... link up ... connect

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CONNECTIONS... The Stronger Links



I have mentioned in an earlier issue that I generate the monthly list of topics for my newsletters in January. And I am consistently amazed at the timeliness of the chosen topic choices as the deadline approaches to write each newsletter. This month is no exception. The topic this month is Connections - and April will again this year reinforce how key this has been and continues to be in my life.

As you read this month's newsletter, I am in New York City attending the annual ISPI conference (www.ispi.org) - this representing the training design and development side of my business. I will close out the month of April with attending and co-presenting at the International Mentoring Association Conference in Las Vegas, this representing the coaching side of my business. In my professional life, the work connections are stronger now than they have ever been.

I have attended the ISPI conference each year in the spring since 1994. The first connection to this organization began 6 years prior

Jean's Latest Choices



- Read and read some more - the focus is to complete a review of literature by the end of March, and now it looks like it will continue into April.
- Get a handle on THE list .
- Hold the space for time and keeping the energy lit to strengthen my connections.
- And now look at the possibility of new work, more work and the choice of what work can be managed best.
- consider which links for me are the strongest and are in fact connections to continue reshaping 2008.li>

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in 1988 with an invitation from a professor who believed the local ISPI chapter was a good fit for me, and the work I was studying to incorporate into my life. School, moving, new job, etc. kept me from exploring that connection until 1992. And when the invitation came up again, I walked in and as they say - never looked back. I have remained active in this organization at a local level and an international level. What I didn't know in 1992 was the impact that this connection would have on my education, work experiences, relationships, my choice for a future transition in my work, and the opportunity to discover my passion for supporting others' strengths so that they may shine brilliantly.

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I have never been a fan of the word, "networking." Yes, to me it truly does sound like "work!" I am a true introvert. If you are an introvert as well, then you know it isn't easy standing in a room with a handful of people you don't know. It is even more difficult for me to stand in front of a room of strangers when launching into a 3 hour workshop. Now, give me a room full of people I know and you might not get me to stop talking and moving around while I greet everyone. The key to strengthen a link of connection with my audience is to find a way to connect. Before the workshop, I must extend my hand in a greeting, smile and introduce myself with a welcome. If you see me do this, you might think it is the most natural thing I do. It is not! It IS, however, sincere and metaphorically speaking uses the handshake to create that first link - me to you and you to me. It is how I first determine what it is you and I have in common.

Joining the NM ISPI chapter, was simply the first connecting link in my professional life. As I transitioned into other areas of work, both paid and as a volunteer, connections grew, multiplied, linked and began to represent different facets of my life. What is most interesting is how some areas of one's life at first may appear very unconnected. Over time you may actually discover they are not as unconnected as you might have believed. Each chain of connected links, when you really examine them, can and do relate to other connections you have. You might know how amazing the feeling is when you suddenly realize the connections between two links, and the strength or power you receive from strengthening the connections of two or more links.

Integrating, infusing, building, joining, etc - a few additional words others use to describe connecting. For me, it is just touching my heart and hand to yours - a connection of time, place, and energy.

This month in NYC I will connect with a buddy coach I have never met and spoken to for 6 years weekly, close friends and colleagues I see once a year and I get to be the instructional designer/coach. At the end of April at the Intl Mentoring Association's conference I will show up as the coach/presenter. Looking from either end of this chain of connected links may show you and me a different view of the connections. And yet, what I know is that the strength of this connection finds its strength in the 'coaching' link. And for you, what is your strongest link to your connections?

Quotable Quotes

"When we do the best we can, we never know what miracle is wrought in our life, or the life of another."

- Helen Keller

Quotations

"Life is a great big canvas and you should throw all the pain on it you can." - Danny Kaye

"It is easy to dodge our responsibilities, but we cannot dodge the consequences of dodging our responsibilities." - E. C. McKenzie

"The chains that bind us most closely are the ones that we have broken." - Antonio Porchia

Jean recommends...



1. [Making Questions Work: A Guide to How and What to Ask for Facilitators, Consultants, Managers, Coaches, and Educators](#)

Dorothy Strachan

~ A Guide to What and How To Ask, for Facilitators, Consultants, Managers, Coaches and Educators. A great resource! I had the opportunity with a colleague to use a question technique for enabling action in a World Café

format. What? So what? Now What? A great desk reference - you will want to check this out. Jim, thank you for the resource! .

2. [PEOPLE TYPES AND TIGER STRIPES: PRACTICAL GUIDE TO LEARNING STYLES](#)

Gordon Lawrence

~ Many activities to encourage learning with an opportunity to look at a person's type and finding ways to help a person use their strengths to strengthen their weaknesses.

3. [Ready for Anything: 52 Productivity Principles for Work and Life](#)

David Allen

~ How to 1) Clear your head for creativity, 2) Focus your attention, 3) Create structures that work and 4) Take action to get things moving. Learn how to master the game of work and the business of life with a clear mind, clear deck and clear intentions.

4. [The Last Full Measure](#)

Jeff Shaara

~ The conclusion of story of the Civil War written by Michael Shaara and continued by his son, Jeff. My nighttime reading and amazing lessons on dignity, perseverance and regard for man.

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!

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