

# The CHOICE Connection

Positive strategies. Practical solutions.

constructive  
**CHOICES**  
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March 2011 "Building Connections, Partnerships and Alliances"

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### CHOOSE TO...

#### Alliance - A Focus...

Alliance - coalition, grouping, association or union with an intention to work with an agreement or pact. There is a purpose to solidify connections among a group of people or organizations, to reach a common goal, share joint resources, strengthen and foster professional connections, teach skills. ...

*Be MORE than you can be alone.*

## Quotable Quotes

*"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has." ~ Margaret Mead*

*"Friendship makes prosperity more shining and lessens the adversity by dividing and sharing it." ~ Cicero*

*"Every exit is an entry somewhere else." ~ Tom Stoppard, American dramatist*

Dear Jean,

### A Reflection on Alliances - "Many Hands"

Many friends over the years have shared the quote above from Margaret Mead as their email by-lines. I always smile when I read that quote. It truly does take only an amazing thought and then a conversation around what could be to establish a new "what is."

These words prompted a greater amount of time of my reflecting what so many hands, when joined with their minds, can achieve. The possibilities are truly endless.

Where to start...well, during the last month, I have had the greatest pleasure to work with two insightful, passionate, engaging and inspirational colleagues whom I am also honored to call friends. They answered my request for additional support to co-design an event for our professional coaching group. Here was an opportunity to bring together like-minded professionals and begin an alliance and by its definition - an attempt to define purpose and solidify connections within and among this professional group.

Over our working meetings in the space of about 5 weeks, a new language emerged for me and one that resonates to my core. The



## Tools and Resources - A Sample

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

[Beyond the business card: how to turn business cards into meaningful partnerships, alliances or mentorships - Making Connections](#) (web article)

[How to build global alliances](#) (web article)

*Please refer to February 2011 CC Newsletter for the complete listing.*

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thought of an alliance and its potential to grow into a transformed community - a gathering of citizens (the bearers, creators) vs. consumers (the users and maybe the more traditional members of a community). In truth, maybe there needs to be consumers and citizens interacting and connected with a unique purpose in each community.

And...oh my, how much richer the conversation when there is the freedom to create. It begins with an invitation to show up, be curious, interested, willing and ready to explore. And without speaking the word freedom, it is exactly what I felt - that I was not only encouraged...I was also allowed to just listen, sit in the uncertainties of the moments and consider an alternative future without worrying about the rules, restrictions, limitations. Oh, the limitations never really go away and it certainly isn't about ignoring them - only that we can push them a bit and consider how to live more abundantly within their borders.

In the world of coaching, we know the power of questioning. In our design of our coaches' day of community, we spent quite a few hours considering the right questions. Some of our questions are listed below. Consider using these questions to build your alliances and then grow into a larger community. Begin with a silent and personal reflection of the question. Then have those conversations with a few and then a few more and always be open to the possibilities. And... then you can share them with others or encourage a crafting of other, more appropriate questions.

### Conversation #1 - The Crossroads

- What are the crossroads I face at this stage of my journey?
- What are the needs and hopes that draw me to this community?

### Conversation #2 - Possibilities & Gifts

- What are the possibilities that have the power to transform (or revitalize) this community and inspire ME to engage and participate?
- What are the gifts that I hold that I have not brought fully into this community?
- What are the possibilities that have the power to transform this community and inspire US to engage and participate? (the question for the larger community)

### Conversation #3 - Possibilities to Promises

- What are the possibilities for leadership (as we are all leaders) in the transformation of this community that would inspire ME to engage and participate?
- What are the promises I am willing to make to my peers that might bring about these possibilities?
- What are the promises I am unwilling to make at this time?

Within your world of connections, partnerships, alliances, you can even begin revitalize your community. You can consider the unspoken possibilities, those special and unique opportunities and

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Today!

your gifts you have yet to give or may still be holding back.

Yes, ..."Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has." Thank you Margaret, for this wisdom and inspiration.

Thank you, Barb and John, for holding me safely and securely in the conversation of community and offering your gifts of inspiration and passion.

You already know how to be great...may your conversations with others gift "your greatness" to one more person,

Jean



### **CHOOSE to...**

...Connect...strengthen first your connecting links...identify the strongest link...connect your strongest to another chain or links present in your life...live your responsibilities...throw paint on your canvas...add a link...be present...smile...reach out and touch another heart or hand...connect.

...Partner...become a team of two...share your strengths, your dreams, your hopes...build on your expectations...be more than you can be as one.

...Stretch the thought of alliance to community...join hands...know your gifts...share your gifts...have the conversations...keep your

promises...whatever you can offer at this time.

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## 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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