



Making Lives Personal

January 2013 Issue #5

This month I share with you a blog written by Julie Malette (lead for HSA Canada); she practices and models person centeredness in all areas of her own life and work. She is an inspiration. Enjoy☺

Important To and For this Holiday Season

It seems that these last few weeks, people are getting busy with Holiday Season preparations. Many people hold family traditions close to their hearts. This can bring out the best in people and the worse in people. People don't always agree with their loved ones about traditions including religious practices, decorations, baking, gift exchanges, parties, visiting schedules and getting everything ready.

*When people agree about Holiday Season events and customs, it is most likely because they have similarities in terms of what is **important to them**. The other explanation is that their **priority in terms of what is important to them** is their relationships and getting along.*

*This year November has been and December will be an especially busy time for me, and what is **important for me** is not to overdo it and burn myself out with the baking, decorating, shopping and visiting. Listening to my own **important for my health** priorities has also made me re-examine my own list of what is **important to me for the holidays**. Instead of making 3 to 4 dozen each of our 8-10 favorite cookie and squares recipes, I will be making only three recipes, one for each of my children and one recipe for my husband. This year, I will enjoy tourtière (meat pie) at other people's homes and not make my own. I also asked my husband for help with shopping and we've simplified gift exchanges with our extended families. Decorating my tree with loads of lights and hundreds of ornaments that I have collected over the last 25 years was also always very **important to me**. This year, I asked my children to make decisions about where to place the tree and how to decorate it.*

The differences this year are that we will have our favourite baking, but not loads so this will definitely be better for our health and waistlines. My husband was glad to do some of the shopping and we feel like a team this year and we are only exchanging gifts between my children and my brother's children and eliminating the exchange between the adults.

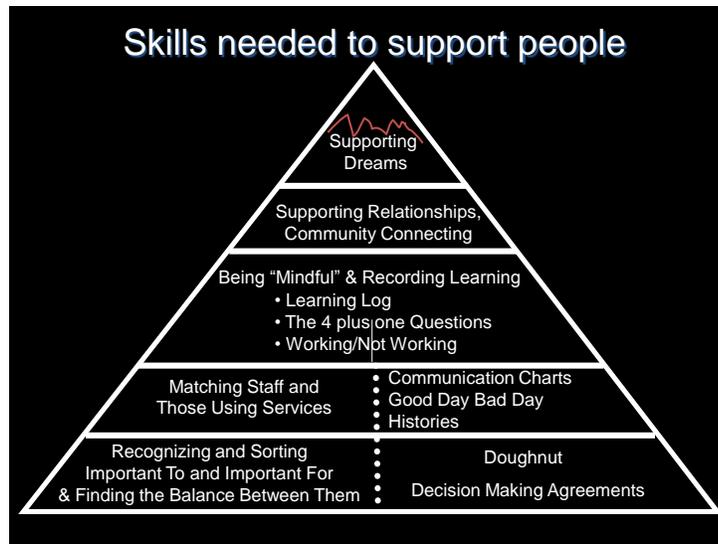
*The most valuable lesson I learned is that it is **important for me** to better listen to others, even when my own priorities are extremely **important to me**. In letting go and relaxing about the holidays, my children had more fun decorating the tree and told me that in the past there had always been too many decorations. The tree is a bit different but just as beautiful. In talking with my brother and listening more closely to his own priorities for a gift exchange, I have understood better. He is happier about us focusing on the children and not exchanging between adults. And I am truly okay with this. I resisted in the past because I only heard his words (why do we need to do an exchange anyway?) and not the message behind it (children okay, adults not so much).*

*The Holiday Season will still come whether or not we do things the same way every year and it has been a blessing to do what is **important for me** instead of **what is important to me**. I am grateful for the opportunity to listen more deeply and learn more about others. Season's Greetings everyone!*

Goal Setting

There is a difference between service goals and personal goals; however they complement each other. **Service goals** have a focus on **improving the quality of service**. **Personal Goals** have a focus on **improving quality of life**.

Service Goals can lead to accomplishment of Personal Goals



Goal setting is not always about dreams. We cannot reach our dream goals without addressing the small steps that need to be accomplished beforehand. Large goals must be broken down into small steps. When setting goals (actions) with people we need to identify the goal and start with the first step in achieving it. Action plans should reflect all of the steps that need to be taken to reach the larger goal; otherwise goals may seem overwhelming and people tend to procrastinate because they seem too big to tackle and have no idea where to start. Breaking it down with them helps them see it is possible but it may take time. It helps everyone involved feel like it is manageable and change does happen.

For example:

After a working/not working review with someone it is identified that they are struggling with their roommate. The ultimate goal may be to move; if written in the action plan in that wording it will seem overwhelming and may never happen. If we break it down into steps like sitting down with the two of them to discuss it and maybe make living together manageable in the meantime, doing a home one page profile to identify the type of home the person would like to live in, looking at budgets to see what the person can afford; etc to make it seem manageable. The person then experiences movement toward the desired goal and feels hopeful for change.

Action Planning should directly reflect the information identified in the use of tools in the plan. It is not a tool that is used independently; it is a result of all the learning you have done in an attempt to move forward to make change with the person.