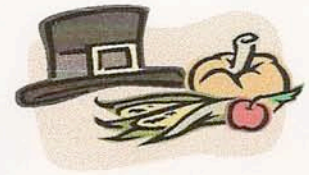




RENEWNEWS

RENEW helps people who juggle work, family and community commitments sustain (or regain) their enthusiasm, effectiveness and purpose.



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The Two Casserole Test

LINDA HAWES CLEVER, MD, MACP

Awhile back, I devised a two-part, Two-Casserole Test: Part one is, “How many people will bring you two casseroles when you need them, when troubles roll on and on and even multiply?” Neighbors, church, the office will send one casserole (or card or bouquet). *Friends* care so much that they will send two – or more. Part two of the question is, “How many people in your life will *you* take two casseroles to, when *they* need it?”

Despite our hectic lives, most of us know deep down that friends are important. They are a source of care, comfort, and ideas. The relationship is reciprocal, so we are resources to them, too. We are safe with friends. We don’t have to clean the house before they visit.



A woman once told me, “A friend is someone who will take you in, in the middle of the night, when you are running away.” Friends are committed to each other.

If we are so busy, how can we find and keep friendships? First, we need to have the intention to build them! Twenty years ago, Jamie and I and four other couples decided to meet once a month. Thinking and laughing together helps build deep bonds. With other friends, we have season tickets to the symphony or theater. Some people develop friendships in Scrabble contests, running clubs, docent training programs, the Giants boosters. We can also reach toward each other with a tickle file of birthdays and anniversaries along with a stash of cards; a potluck Thanksgiving dinner; a hike; a hobby.

As we look back and look forward along the course of our marathon called Life, we realize that we need renewing and we need refueling along the way. Friendships are fuel for many of us. Take the Two Casserole Test and measure your supply.



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Your Gifts Help RENEW Give

As we've mentioned before, many people and groups need to renew but can't afford to pay. That's where your gifts come in. Recently, medical students and radiation oncology residents with low budgets asked Dr. Clever to talk with them.

Two big topics were relationships and fatigue. These physicians-in-training are worried about "connecting" with patients as well as finding and keeping personal relationships. And they get so tired. As one resident said, "They know me by name at Starbucks." All of the groups discussed values, friendships, ways to stay buoyant and creative, and, yes, remedies for fatigue, or better yet, ways to prevent spirit-draining fatigue in the first place.



Northern California Cancer Center

Husbands, wives, parents, patients, scientists, government workers, nurses, philanthropists, the curious and the interested gathered at the four NCCC-sponsored RENEWing seminars, "Sailing into the Unknown: Contending with Loss."

Some returned for a renewing repeat; some brought friends. In the safe space of a RENEW conversation, they defined and gave examples of loss (people, job, health, pets) and told of ways they handle it, whether alone or, sometimes, being dragged kicking and screaming to get some help. Refreshing values is a centerpiece of contending with loss.

News from our Speakers' Bureau

Dr. Clever will give the keynote at the American Medical Women's Association's national meeting in Anaheim in March 2008. The theme of the conference is Women and Aging. Linda notes that she qualifies on both counts. The meeting organizers said they were delighted that they snagged her. They say she'll attract a full house with her lively discussion of ways to navigate the complex zones of personal and professional responsibilities and pleasures.



Linda is Talking & Listeners are Talking Back

Dr. Clever recently taped her 12th segment in a series of "Rx for RENEWing" interviews with Dr. Leslie Lundt for the Clinicians Roundtable on ReachMD satellite XM radio channel 157. Four more are scheduled for January and will air in early 2008. Check their website www.reachmd.com for updated program information, or write RENEW Program Coordinator Keven Chriss at keven.chriss@gmail.com to get on our broadcast notification list.

One listener wrote to say, "Thank you so much for these marvelous tapes. We just listened to the first four, and they are superb. A splendid contribution for all of us!"

Another said, "I've just listened to the interviews and am again RENEWed by your wonderful ideas, positive attitude and devotion to this most important work."

Publication and Chocolate and CD oh, my!

With the season of giving upon us, we are offering three new ways to give to RENEW, and receive a gift in return. Just mail us the enclosed card with your gift of \$250 (or more!) to RENEW and we will send you the complete text of Dr. Clever's recently published article on "Friendship." Your gift of \$500 will bring a mini-box of RENEW chocolate as well. And for a gift of \$1,000 we will also send you the 4-segment CD from XM radio. Segment topics include, "Taking Risks," "Saying No," "Resilience," and "What is Success?" Think of it as a gift to yourself, or to share with friends and family — a wonderful way to RENEW before the New Year!

