

# Capital Letters

Volume 14

January/February Issue 1



## Notes from the Executive Director- Ellen Weaver

**I hope everyone's holidays were happy and healthy!** We are starting a brand new year with our country and state still in economic turmoil. A new President with a new cabinet and set of advisors take office on January 20<sup>th</sup>, 2009. I am confident that there will be reforms and there will be sacrifice in the short term but the US will be healthier and stronger in the long term. The state is still a toss up and so much depends on the automakers.

The Capital Area Center for Independent Living; "Transforming thinking, creating economic self-sufficiency through promoting AccessAbility and connecting people through advocacy, education and resources.

With this in place we will begin crafting a strategic direction for the Center. If you have any thoughts on which way CACIL should go, please call 517-241-0393 and ask for Ellen or Al.

One last very important item: **all your support is greatly appreciated.** As we enter our 33<sup>rd</sup> year, the importance of friends is vital to CACIL's mission and vision.

**Thank you for continuing to be there for CACIL!**

We begin working with The Department of community Health-Michigan Arthritis Program to work on prevention and individual control of chronic disease-PATH on January 8<sup>th</sup>, 2009 for 6 weeks. CACIL staff is going through it first so we can be mentors.

We now have a new mission statement.

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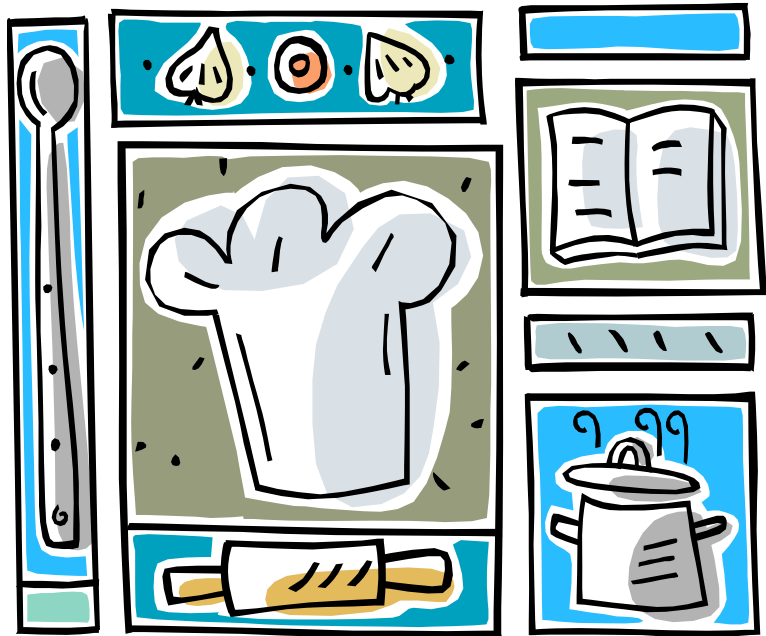


## ADA Amendments Act

The ADA Amendments Act (ADAAA) became law on September 25, 2008. These amendments helped restore the intent of the original Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), which had been negatively impacted by the court system.

One of the most important things the amendments do is clarify the elements of the definition of disability, defined as “a substantial limitation to a major life activity”.

Major life activities are now listed in the law. They are: caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, seeing, hearing, eating, sleeping, walking, standing, lifting, bending, speaking, breathing, learning, reading, concentrating, thinking, communicating, and working. A major life activity also includes the functioning of a major bodily system, for example bowel or immune system functioning. The amendments also make clear that impairments that are episodic or are in remission are considered a disability if they would substantially limit a major life activity while they are active.



## CACIL COOKBOOK

### DYCEM WITH CACIL

**Now half off!**

Price was \$10.00 a Book, Now Get These Great Recipes at a Great Buy for Only \$5.00- (They make excellent affordable gift!)

*Call 517-241-0393  
to order or pick one up at CACIL.*

### AD SPACE AVAILABLE

Place a business card size ad here. \$10.00 will buy this ad space for 3 bi-monthly issues, or for 6 months.

## The Sports World Update-

By: *Emily Hudson*

### THE MSU SPARTANS FOOTBALL TEAM:

The MSU Spartan football team had their best record since 1999. Their game record for the 2008 season is 9 wins and 3 losses in the regular season from September to November. Their final game was November 22 at Penn State University (“Happy Valley”).

They were invited to play in the CAPITAL ONE BOWL in Orlando, Florida, VS the GEORGIA BULLDOGS. Both of the two teams have the same records at 9 wins and 3 losses. This is the first time that the Spartans have played on New Years’ Day in team history. On JANUARY 1, 2009, they will try for their second 10 win season since 1999.

THE HEAD FOOTBALL COACH for the Spartans is Mark Dantonio. Coach Dantonio has only been at MSU for two years. Before that, he worked under Jim Tressel at Youngstown State University in Youngstown, Ohio. Jim Tressel is a very winning coach at OHIO STATE University. Ohio State has beaten the U of M Wolverines for the past six years and MSU for the past several years—all very big rivalries. So Coach Dantonio learned football coaching from a leader. Coach Dantonio was 1985-1990 Defensive Coordinator at Ohio State, and a Secondary Coach there from 2001-2003.

This year’s Spartan football MVP was Javon Ringer, a running back who came to MSU from high school in Ohio. Javon Ringer won national recognition for his accomplishments on the field. Ringer, a senior, won the Governors Award as the team’s most valuable player, and the Clarence J. Underwood, Jr., Sportsmanship Award. MSU senior quarterback Brian Hoyer won the Downtown Coaches’ Club Award, which is given to a senior offensive player. Coach Mark Dantonio has 16 seniors on this year’s varsity football team.

BE SURE to watch them at 1PM on New Year’s Day (ABC network).

**GO GREEN!!!**

## Citizen Storm Information

We are in the mist of our storm season. Here are some pointers to get us through these stormy times. With rocky winter weather, thaws and the spring tornado season just around the corner, (I promise!), it’s good to refresh our memories as to what we should do in the event that we must deal with the after affects like downed tree limbs, water in our basements, power outages, etc.

Here are some tips from the Lansing Fire Department Office of Public Information.

- **Emergency:** If you have any type of emergency please call 911.
- **Power Lines:** Assume all downed power lines are **HOT** (charged) and stay away. If you are unsure if the downed power line has been called in please contact BWL at 877-295-5001.
- **Standing Water:** Water can be energized by a downed power line that you can’t see or be contaminated. Stay out of standing water!!!
- **Water In Basements:** Call 517-483-4161 for information and direction. Contact your insurance company as well. Detailed information is on the City of Lansing’s website: <http://www.cityoflansingmi.com>
- **Trees In Yards:** Call 211 or your insurance company for information on private property tree removal. These are trees located on the house side of the sidewalk.
- **Trees On Street Side Of Sidewalk:** Call 517-483-4161 to report or for direction.
- **Yard Clean Up:** If you have downed limbs to be removed remember that limbs less than 2” in diameter are to be bundled in less than 4 foot lengths, limbs over two inches in diameter should be cut to less than 4 foot lengths and stacked at the curb. Do not block sidewalks or streets with debris.
- **Health:** Any refrigerator with out power for more than 12 hours, food is a health issue, please discard. Deep freeze without power for 72 hours, food should be discarded.
- **Traffic Signals:** Treat all non-working traffic lights as 4 way stops.

# CACIL ACADEMY-101

-Justine 335-1524

**You must RSVP** if you plan to attend any of the of the activities to Justine Bond at 335-1524.

## Class Descriptions:

- **RICC & People First -**

Regional Interagency Consumer Committee—what is it? We call it the RICC. An organization of people with disabilities. We work to create change in our community, to learn about programs and services and to enjoy the company of good friends over dinner.


The Capital Area RICC has three components— the Lansing group, the Mason Insiders and the People First. The Lansing Group and the Mason Insiders meet monthly to work on projects; People First meets every Thursday morning from 10:30 to 11:30. We have been learning the Bill of Rights and what each of the first 10 Amendments talks about. During the year we have been doing advocacy for Medicaid funding.

- **Advocacy:** Learn what issues are affecting your life everyday! Stop letting others decide what course your life will take. Learn how you can make a difference.
- **Traveling Café:** A chance to learn of gathering places in our community. The group will be working on issues like money management, rating accessibility and service in the community, etc.
- **Positive Thinking:** Feeling down? Does it seem like everything is just bad news? Join our group and get a lift out of life.
- **\*\*\*Human Sexuality:** Addressing the physical, emotional and psychological barriers that pose as obstacles to the full human experience.

- **\*\*\*Creative Writing:** Recording our life stories using “The Time Of My Life” program.
- **Music Therapy:** Using music in our lives to relieve stress, alter moods and just learn to appreciate music in general. These classes also work with fine and gross motor skills.
- **Micro-Enterprise:** We have begun make bags for the back of wheelchairs. And they do look awesome.!
- **The Explorers Group:** Learn of places to meet new people and build new relationships. A great chance to get more involved in your community! It could be a chance to discover possible pre-vocational opportunities.
- **Why We Do What We Do:** Figuring out why we are who we are and do some of the things we do. Then exploring ways of reducing non-productive thoughts, feelings and behaviors.
- **Enhanced Fitness:** An adaptive exercise program for all including wheelchair users. Please wear comfortable clothing. All water bottles/drink containers must have a secure lid or top. Instructed by fitness instructors from the YMCA.
- **Computer Training:** Learn different computer programs, about assistive technology for the computer, navigating the internet, etc.
- **Hot Topics!!!-** Open discussions on aging gracefully, stress management, relationships, personal grooming, racism, etc. We’ll talk about everything under the sun!
- **Artists A Bloomin’:** Is a program of creativity for everybody! You absolutely do NOT have to be an artist to enjoy the making of art. That’s what art is all about— the enjoyment of the process of making it!

January 2009

# Here, we are family!

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
			1 CACIL Closed CACIL Wishes YOU... <b>A HAPPY NEW YEAR</b>	2 CACIL Closed
5 Enhanced Fitness 12:30 - 1:30 Advocacy Team 2 - 4 pm	6 Enhanced Fitness 12:30 - 1:30 Relationships (aka Humane Sexuality) 2 - 4pm	7 Why We Do What We Do 2 - 4 pm	8 People First 10:30-11:30 Enhanced Fitness 12:30-1:30 Artists a Bloomin' 1:30- 3pm Positive Thinking 3 - 4pm	9
12 Enhanced Fitness 12:30 - 1:30 *Music Therapy @ St. Lawrence- Behavioral Health Bldg (door with green awning) 3:15-4:30	13 Enhanced Fitness 12:30 - 1:30 Micro Enterprise 2 - 4:00pm	14 Tim Horton's 5625 S. Cedar St. Lansing 882-3536	15 People First 10:30-11:30 Enhanced Fitness 12:30-1:30 Computer Class 1:30- 3pm Positive Thinking 3 - 4pm	16
19 CACIL Closed <b>Martin Luther King, Jr. Day</b> 	20 Enhanced Fitness 12:30 - 1:30 "Time sof My Life" Writing Class 2-4pm	21 Why We Do What We Do 2 - 4 pm CACIL Board Meeting	22 People First 10:30-11:30 Enhanced Fitness 12:30-1:30 Hot Topics 1:30-3pm Positive Thinking 3 - 4pm	23
26 Enhanced Fitness 12:30-1:30 *Music Therapy @ St. Lawrence- Behavioral Health Bldg (door with green awning) 3:15-4:30 RICC 5-7:30pm	27 Consumer Board Meeting And Game Day 2-4pm	28 Cracker Barrel 2285 Woodlake Dr. Okemos 381-1511	29 People First 10:30-11:30 Enhanced Fitness 12:30-1:30 Computer Class 1:30-3pm Positive Thinking 3 - 4pm	30

Unless otherwise stated, all CACIL Academy-101 activities will meet at 1048 Pierpont, Suite 9-10. in Lansing

Please call Justine at the Capitol Area Center For Independent Living at 517-335-1524 if you have any questions, or if you need more information.


\*Note: For those planning to attend Music Therapy, You must arrive before 3:25 or you will not be able to attend.

Please do not schedule your pickup before 4:30.

Please sign up for ALL off-site activities and parties.

# February 2009



<i>Mon</i>	<i>Tue</i>	<i>Wed</i>	<i>Thu</i>	<i>Fri</i>
2 Enhanced Fitness 12:30-1:30 Advocacy Team 2-4pm	3 Enhanced Fitness 12:30-1:30 Relationships (aka Human Sexuality) 2-4pm	4 Why We Do What We Do 2 - 4 pm	5 People First 10:30-11:30 Enhanced Fitness 12:30-1:30 Artists a Bloomin' 1:30-3:00 Positive Thinking 3:00 -4:00	6
9 Enhanced Fitness 12:30-1:30 Music Therapy 3:15-4:30 St. Lawrence-Behavioral Health Bldg	10 Enhanced Fitness 12:30-1:30 Micro Enterprise 2-4pm	11 <i>Valentines Day Party</i> 2-4pm  	12 People First 10:30-11:30 Enhanced Fitness 12:30-1:30 Computer Class 2- 3:00 Positive Thinking 3:00 -4:00	13
16 Enhanced Fitness 12:30-1:30 Scrapbooking 2-4pm	17 Enhanced Fitness 12:30-1:30 "Times of My Life" Writing Class 2-4pm	18 Why We Do What We Do 2-4 pm CACIL Board Meeting 5:30-7:30pm	19 <b>People First</b> 10:30-11:30 Enhanced Fitness 12:30-1:30 Hot Topics 2- 3:00 Positive Thinking 3:00 -4:00	20
23 Enhanced Fitness 12:30-1:30 Music Therapy 3:15-4:30 St. Lawrence-Behavioral Health Bldg	24 Enhanced Fitness 12:30-1:30 Consumer Board Meeting 2-4pm	25 <b>Café'</b> Either CeeCee's or DeMarco's Pizza TBD (look for special notice)	26 People First 10:30-11:30 Enhanced Fitness 12:30-1:30 Computer Class 2- 3:00 Positive Thinking 3:00 -4:00	27

Unless otherwise stated, all CACIL Academy-101 activities meet at 1048 Pierpont, Suite 9-10. in Lansing

Please call Kim McDonald at the Capitol Area Center For Independent Living at 517-241-0410 if you have any questions, or if you need more information.

Please RSVP if you plan on attending any of the activities.

\*Note: For those planning to attend Music Therapy, You must arrive before 3:25 or you will not be able to attend. Please do not schedule your pick-up before 4:30.

Please sign up for ALL off-site activities.

## Energy Tips-

By Marjorie Sandoval, CRRN

With the start of a new year we will all be reading and hearing about diets, losing the holiday weight and being heart healthy. We will be inundated with that, so this couch potato researched a multitude of tips about staying warm and comfy along with saving pennies. In Michigan, that is going to be quit an achievement. Here is what I found:

**Draperies, rugs & furniture:** Check to see that draperies, rugs or furniture are not blocking radiators, heaters, hot-air registers or baseboard heating outlets. Remember when we used to sit on the hot air registers? Talk about blocking!

**Washer & dryer:** Make sure you have a full load—but do not overload—before you run the washer or dryer. I wonder what they consider over loading. Hmm probably the bedspread and the sheets and the pillow cases and the towels in one load would be overloading. Use cold water whenever possible, that sure saves on the heat bill.

**Lighting:** Turn off lights when not needed. That reminds me of parents and spouses following their kids and spouses from room to room shutting the lights off behind them. Replace bulbs with next lower wattage whenever possible. Nuts! Now I will trip over that coffee table every time instead of every other time. Outdoor lights should only be used when essential for safety.

**Showers:** Showers are preferred over tub baths since they use less water. A flow restrictor installed on the showerhead will restrict water flow to an adequate four gallons per minute. Interesting, sounds like they are not advocating showering together anymore.

**Dishwasher:** Your dishwasher should be full, but not overloaded, before you turn it on. If rinsing is necessary, use cold water. Dishes should be air-dried by opening the dishwasher after the final rinse and turning off the unit. Just think about improving the humidity in your living area with the steam that will be pouring out.

**Turn on the humidifier:** It's not just the heat; it's also the humidity. If your furnace doesn't have a built-in humidifier, use a portable unit in frequently occupied areas such as the bedroom and living room. The additional moisture will increase the "heat index" inside your home, making 68° F feel more like 76° F. The relative humidity in the home should be between 20 to 40 percent. To help avoid condensation on windows, turn down the humidifier as the outside temperature gets colder.

**Cooking:** Flat bottom pans that cover the burner heating element are more energy efficient since they allow more heat to enter the pot. Use pressure cookers to reduce cooking time. Clean the heat reflector below the stove heating element to reflect heat better. Microwaves are pretty efficient aren't they? Beats washing those pots and pans!

**Air Conditioning:** Set air-conditioning at 78 degrees--no lower. Run air conditioning only on hot days with fan speed set on high. When the weather is very humid, set the fan at low speed to increase moisture removal. Clean or replace the filter at least once a month. I knew there was something I was supposed to do with the furnace. It has a filter too.

**Manual refrigerators& freezers:** While these appliances consume less energy than automatic defrosting units, they must be defrosted frequently. No more than ¼ inch of frost should be allowed to build up. The refrigerator should be emptied and disconnected during extended vacations. I had to find out what a manual refrigerator was. It was the kind my sister put a heater thingy in the freezer to help melt the frost; she forgot it. It thawed out the metal of the freezer; looked like a peeled tin can. She didn't have to do that chore again.

**Furnace:** Have your furnace serviced at least once a year, preferably in the Fall. Be sure that the 'fuel in', 'energy out' and chemical composition of the exhaust are measured by your heating oil dealer. A high carbon dioxide reading and low stack temperature indicate an inefficient furnace. NOT to be confused with carbon MON-OXIDE, a high level of that will have you sleeping six feet under. If you have a forced air heating system, clean or replace the filter every month. That's what I forgot—have to write myself a reminder. Warm you before heating the entire house. Put on a sweater before turning the thermostat dial. Each degree you raise the thermostat on your heating system increases your fuel bill by 3 percent. The effectiveness of your heating and cooling arrangement can be improved by as much as 10 percent by cleaning air registers, baseboard heaters and radiators as needed and changing forced air heating system air filters monthly. An alternative to swapping out the replacement filter is to use washable filters (around \$20 each). With care, they can last up to five years.—Who would have thought, doing housework will cut your utility bills.

**Windows & doors:** Check all the windows frames and sashes (What is a sash? That guy in the Christmas poem is throwing up the sash.) for weather-stripping, cracks and loose fits. Install storm windows (combination storm and screen are the most convenient type) on all windows. Low cost-yet highly effective—storm 'windows' can be made from a sheet of clear plastic film taped to the inside of the frames. (Have you ever gone by homes with the plastic taped to the outside of the windows? That plastic must flap a lot in the breeze.) The trapped pocket of air between the plastic film and window acts as an effective insulator, helping to reduce heat loss through the window by 25 to 50 percent. Combination storm and screen doors-aluminum or wood-are also recommended.

**Insulation:** be sure your attic is adequately insulated. The recommendation is insulation rated R-30 (two layers or about 10 inches) for oil or gas-heated homes. Insu-

late floors over basements and garages. What a good idea, love to have a warm floor when getting out of a warm toasty bed and walking barefoot. Remember that it takes at least two times as much fuel or electricity to heat an un-insulated house. I didn't know that! No wonder we were poor!

**Thermostat:** Keep the thermostat at 68 degrees during the day. Turn down 3-5 degrees Fahrenheit at bedtime and turn it up when you get out of bed. A clock thermostat will automatically do the job for you. (Wonder how much that costs.) Following this 'down-at-bedtime-up-in-the-morning' routine with your thermostat can save you about 10% on your heating bill. Someone pointed out that it takes a while to heat up the furniture and the floors when you turn it too low. We should probably research this one.

**Water heater:** Using special kits available at plumbing supply houses, wrap your electric or gas water heater in an outside layer of insulation. Aren't they called coats? Exercise caution with gas heaters to insure that you don't cover air vents or the tank top. Drain tank bottom twice a year to remove sediment that insulates the heating element from the water. Whew! Twice a year! Now how do you do that??

**Fireplace:** keep the damper on your fireplace closed except when a fire is going. (Is that the thing you have to crawl into the fireplace and turn, twist or jiggle? Sure don't want to do that when the fire is burning!) This will reduce warm air loss and conserve fuel. If your fireplace does not have a damper—or if the damper does not close properly you should consider having glass doors installed. Open the doors when you have a fire blazing and close them when the fireplace is not in use.

**Ducts & Pipes:** The most logical way to stay warm is to only heat living areas, not the attic or unfinished basement. In many homes the warm air produced by the furnace escapes into the attic or basement before it reaches its destination because of cracks or holes in the air ducts. The furnace works overtime to keep the rest of the house warm. Check ducts for leaks each fall and use that fancy duct tape to repair and seal holes or sections that may have separated. If you are buying new ducts, consider a system that is already surrounded by insulation. (Why didn't they tell me about those?!) Insulate metal heat ducts and hot water copper pipes that run through unheated areas such as crawl spaces. Loose duct joints and seams should be sealed with duct tape prior to being insulated. I wondered why my utility room where the furnace is located is the warmest place in the house. You would think that the person installing the furnace would do the duct tape thing. Did you know duct tape comes in a variety of colors? My heat ducts will look pretty spiffy with the hot pink duct tape I bought.

### Additional energy saving tips:

Keep closet doors closed. Why waste your money heating closets?

Kitchen and bath ventilation fans should be used only when needed to reduce heat loss.

Leaky hot water faucets should be repaired quickly. There goes the water and heating bill if you don't.

Keep draperies, blinds and shades open sunny days. Close them at night to keep the heat in. I have to remember to do that. When you leave them open so you can tell when the sun comes up the next day. Wakes a person up, don't ya know.

Remove or tightly cover your window air-conditioner before the onset of cold weather. All they would have to do is fall out and you have an instant open window.

Caulk/weather-strip all windows, doors and openings. The exterior of your house is your first line of defense against drafts, so caulk, seal and weather-strip around all seams, cracks and openings. Pay special attention around windows and where siding or bricks and wood trim meet. You can also reduce drafts from the inside by caulking, sealing and weather-stripping around windows and door frames, and near electrical boxes and plumbing penetrations. I watched someone do that and it was so easy. I always thought it was very, very difficult.

Close vents to guest rooms. Today's homes often have more rooms than family members to fill them. By closing the vents to one spare bedroom house, you can cut your heating bills. You can always open the vents when guests visit.

Department of Energy's (DOE) Weatherization Assistance Program has provided weatherization services. The Weatherization Assistance Program enables low-income families to permanently reduce their energy bills by making their homes more energy efficient. During the last 30 years, the U.S. Department of Energy's (DOE) Weatherization Assistance Program has provided weatherization services to more than 5.6 million low-income families. States set their own rules based on these national guidelines, and you have to check with your state to see if you are [eligible for weatherization](#).

If you want to apply for assistance, contact:

State of Michigan Department of Human Services

Weatherization Unit

235 South Grand Avenue, Suite 1314

P.O. Box 30037

Lansing, MI 48909

Phone: 517-373-8896

Fax: 517-335-5042

Happy New Year!

Stay warm!

# 10 Ways to Be Your Own Life Coach

By Victoria Moran

Though we often seek advice from others, many spiritual traditions teach that the answer lies within. In this gallery, Victoria Moran, inspirational speaker, spiritual life coach, and author, offers us the top 10 questions she asks her coaching clients.

By asking them of yourself, they can help you gain clarity in almost any situation. Just pick a challenge you're dealing with, and apply one or more of the following questions. Then, be willing to act on what your inner wisdom reveals.

- **Is This Good For Me?**

This question needs to underlie every personal decision--from how to respond to a job offer or what to choose from a menu. So many of our choices are either snap decisions or belabored: We ask a friend (and another and another), make a pros and cons list, throw the "I Ching."

While such processes have a place, you can simplify things by asking yourself if this is genuinely good for you--physically, mentally, and spiritually, today and next week and in 10 years. Because your inner being looks after your true interests--not just your ego cravings--you'll get the guidance you're looking for

- **What Does My Body Have to Say About This?**

Our culture has long mistrusted the body. It's been seen as a confusing blend of God's handiwork and the devil's playground. It is, rather, a vortex of intelligence.

Every cell comes equipped with awareness. Your body has something in the neighborhood of 40 trillion cells--quite a consulting committee. Call on it when you're confused or undecided. Relax quietly and ask your body what it has to say. Then note any sensations. Around your heart, are you picking up excitement that says "Yes!" even if there's also a little anxiety about doing something new? Or in your belly, are you feeling dread, a "gut reaction" telling you to take another path?

- **What Are My Values?**

This is an important question to ask yourself periodically--on your birthday perhaps, or at the New Year. It's both liberating and motivating to be so well acquainted with your values that you could recite them on demand.

My husband was working with this question and announced, "My values spell ditch: discretion, integrity, tolerance, civility, humility." He was so pleased with his discovery that he had a bracelet made with his values engraved on it. You may want to do something similar, but as long as your values are engraved on your psyche and acted on in your life, that's enough.

- **What Would Jesus (Buddha, Sai Baba, My Grandmother) Do?**

Thinking of a role model, whether a great spiritual teacher or a sweet spiritual person, is like having a mentor on-call. Ask yourself what this person would do in your situation. A technique for tapping their wisdom is to write out the question and the answer. This doesn't mean that you're channeling a spirit or writing a new gospel: you're simply tapping into the wisdom that knowing this person (or knowing of this person) has given you.

Your questioning on paper can become a fascinating conversation that yields surprising insights. And it gives the phrase "friends in high places" a whole new meaning.

- **What Am I Not Seeing?**

We all live with blinders on. They come with having a personal vantage point. And yet the answer to a dilemma may lie in seeing just another millimeter of the situation. Ask, then, "What am I not seeing here?" Often, what we're not seeing is what we don't want to see. Let's say you're feeling uncomfortable in your job for no apparent reason. If you were to see just a bit more of the picture, you might

learn (or remember) that the problem is not the role per se, it's that it isn't using a talent you're yearning to express. Once you see that, you can take appropriate action.

- **What Really Matters Here?**

In his classic of the spiritual life, "At the Feet of the Master," Krishnamurti writes that as we grow spiritually, it is essential to discern not just right from wrong, but more important from less important. Whether it's prioritizing your to-do list or figuring out which demands you can tend to today and which ones will wait, you need to ask yourself what really matters. Generally speaking, things with feelings--i.e., living beings, particularly those closest to you--will take precedence. No matter the answer, you'll learn what's of greatest consequence to you in this instance.

- **Where Should I Act and Where Should I Step Back?**

Ask this to get a sense of what is yours to do and what isn't. This is the advanced class in enlightened living. Countless times we've all acted too soon or without sufficient information, or we've stepped in where our input wasn't needed and muddied circumstances that were already working themselves out.

When you ask yourself, quietly and confidently, what your part is in a given situation, and where to wait (or exit entirely), you'll get a clear idea of your role. If you ask the question and still want to act against the advice of your internal coach, remind yourself that, although life is a series of little dramas, none of them needs a drama queen (or king).

- **What Would Make Me Genuinely Happy?**

"Eudemonic" is a little-used word that means "happy-making." What are all the eudemonic activities you can think of? Make a list. How many of these happy-makers did you do yesterday, last week, this year? Which ones can you indulge in today? When you're facing a challenge, ask what would make you happy in this situation. And cast a wide net. You may have "taking a cruise" on your list, but if you also remember that "hanging out at the library" and "playing with my dog" are eudemonic for you, you get to be happy every day--and that's important. What would make you happy now (that wouldn't make you unhappy later)? Do that.

- **Who Has Some Guidance for Me Right Now?**

When you need help from another person, trust your inner knowing to tell who this is. Sit and do some slow, deep breathing for two or three minutes to go into a state of receptivity. Then ask, "Who has the right guidance for me?"

You may see a face or hear a name immediately, or you may be led down a thought-trail to a person. Use your rational mind to weigh the answer. If, for instance, you have a marital issue and the name of your 10-year-old comes up, this doesn't mean discuss your marriage with your child. It may, however, mean to put the child first as you work through things.

- **What is the Divine Intention for My Life Today?**

As football has a Super Bowl, life has a Super Question, and this is it, asking the will of God, or the way of Tao, etc. Your request is to know how your day can be in keeping with divine design. You can go off in a different direction--we do it all the time and learn the lessons of the detour. Nevertheless, when you ask this and even attempt to follow through on the answer, you're taking the high road.

One of my mentors says, "I don't always do God's will, but I always want to." It's a great place to start. So ask the question. Its answer might be the only one you'll ever need.

# Top 10 New Year's Resolutions...

New Year's Eve has always been a time for looking back to the past and more importantly, toward the future. It's a time to reflect on the changes we want (or need!) to make and resolve to follow through on those changes. Here is what the average American resolves to change in the New Year. Are your resolutions on the list?

## 1. **Spend more time with family & friends.**

Recent polls show that more than 50% of Americans vow to appreciate loved ones and spend more time with family and friends this year.

## 2. **Fit in fitness.**

The evidence is in for fitness. Regular exercise has been associated with more health benefits than anything else known to man. Studies show that it reduces the risk of some cancers, increases longevity, helps achieve and maintain weight loss, enhances mood, lowers blood pressure, and even improves arthritis.

## 3. **Tame the bulge.**

It is not surprising to find that weight loss is one of the most popular New Year's resolutions with over 66 percent of adult Americans considered overweight or obese. Setting reasonable goals and staying focused are the 2 most important factors in sticking with a weight loss program.

## 4. **Quit smoking.**

If you have resolved to make this the year that you stamp out your smoking habit, over the counter availability of nicotine replacement therapy now provides easier access to proven quit-smoking aids. Even if you've tried to quit before and failed, don't let it get you down. On average, smokers try about 4 times before they quit for good.

## 5. **Enjoy life more.**

Given the hectic, stressful lifestyles of millions of Americans, it is no wonder that "enjoying life more" has become a popular resolution in recent years. It's an important step to a happier and healthier you!

## 6. **Quit drinking.**

While many people use the New Year as an incentive to finally stop drinking, most are not equipped to make such a drastic lifestyle change all at once. Many heavy drinkers fail to quit cold turkey but do much better when they taper gradually or even learn to moderate their drinking.

## 7. **Get out of debt.**

Was money a big source of stress in your life last year? Join the millions of Americans who have resolved to spend this year getting a handle on their finances. It's a promise that will repay itself many times over in the year ahead.

## 8. **Learn something new.**

Have you vowed to make this year the year to learn something new? Perhaps you are considering a career change, want to learn a new language, or just how to fix your computer? Whether you take a course or read a book, you'll find education to be one of the easiest, most motivating New Year's resolutions to keep.

## 9. **Help others.**

A popular, non-selfish New Year's resolution, volunteerism can take many forms. Whether you choose to spend time helping out at your local library, mentoring a child, or building a house, there are many nonprofit volunteer organizations that could really use your help.

## 10. **Get organized.**

On just about every New Year resolution top ten list, organization can be a very reasonable goal. Whether you want your home organized enough that you can invite someone over on a whim, or your office organized enough that you can find the stapler when you need it, getting things in order offers us a real peace of mind. It is a sure way to help us reduce stress in our lives and help to return a sense of control that we may feel we have lost.

## **Five (5) lessons to make you think about the way we treat people.**

### **1 - First Important Lesson - Cleaning Lady.**

During my second month of college, our professor gave us a pop quiz. I was a conscientious student and had breezed through the questions until I read the last one:

'What is the first name of the woman who cleans the school?'

Surely this was some kind of joke. I had seen the cleaning woman several times. She was tall, dark-haired and in her 50's, but how would I know her name?

I handed in my paper, leaving the last question blank. Just before class ended, one student asked if the last question would count toward our quiz grade.

'Absolutely,' said the professor. 'In your careers, you will meet many people. All are significant. They deserve your attention and care, even if all you do is smile and say 'hello.'

I've never forgotten that lesson. I also learned her name was Dorothy.

### **2. - Second Important Lesson - Pickup in the Rain**

One night, at 11:30 p.m., an older African American woman was standing on the side of an Alabama highway trying to endure a lashing rainstorm. Her car had broken down and she desperately needed a ride.

Soaking wet, she decided to flag down the next car. A young white man stopped to help her, generally unheard of in those conflict-filled 60s.. The man took her to safety, helped her get assistance and put her into a taxicab.

She seemed to be in a big hurry, but wrote down his address and thanked him. Seven days went by and a knock came on the man's door. To his surprise, a giant console color TV was delivered to his home. A special note was attached. It read:

'Thank you so much for assisting me on the highway the other night. The rain drenched not only my clothes, but also my spirits. Then you came along. Because of you, I was able to make it to my dying husband's bedside just before he passed away. God bless you for helping me and unselfishly serving others.' —Sincerely, Mrs. Nat King Cole.

### **3 - Third Important Lesson - Always remember those who serve.**

In the days when an ice cream sundae cost much less, a 10-year-old boy entered a hotel coffee shop and sat at a table. A waitress put a glass of water in front of him. 'How much is an ice cream sundae?' he asked.

'Fifty cents,' replied the waitress.

The little boy pulled his hand out of his pocket and studied the coins in it.

'Well, how much is a plain dish of ice cream?' he inquired.

By now more people were waiting for a table and the waitress was growing impatient.

'Thirty-five cents,' she brusquely replied.

The little boy again counted his coins.

'I'll have the plain ice cream,' he said.

The waitress brought the ice cream, put the bill on the table and walked away. The boy finished the ice cream, paid the cashier and left. When the waitress came back, she began to cry as she wiped down the table. There, placed neatly beside the empty dish, were two nickels and five pennies..

You see, he couldn't have the sundae, because he had to have enough left to leave her a tip.

### **4 - Fourth Important Lesson. - The obstacle in OurPath.**

In ancient times, a King had a boulder placed on a roadway. Then he hid himself and watched to see if anyone would remove the huge rock. Some of the king's wealthiest merchants and courtiers came by and simply walked around it. Many loudly blamed the King for not keeping the roads clear, but none did anything about getting the stone out of the way.

Then a peasant came along carrying a load of vegetables. Upon approaching the boulder, the peasant laid down his burden and tried to move the stone to the side of the road. After much pushing and straining, he finally succeeded. After the peasant picked up his load of vegetables, he noticed a purse lying in the road where the boulder had been. The purse contained many gold coins and a note from the King indicating that the gold was for the person who removed the boulder from the roadway. The peasant learned what many of us never understand!

Every obstacle presents an opportunity to improve our condition.

### **5 - Fifth Important Lesson - Giving When it Counts...**

Many years ago, when I worked as a volunteer at a hospital, I got to know a little girl named Liz who was suffering from a rare & serious disease. Her only chance of recovery appeared to be a blood transfusion from her 5-year old brother, who had miraculously survived the same disease and had developed the antibodies needed to combat the illness.. The doctor explained the situation to her little brother, and asked the little boy if he would be willing to give his blood to his sister.

I saw him hesitate for only a moment before taking a deep breath and saying, 'Yes I'll do it if it will save her.' As the transfusion progressed, he lay in bed next to his sister and smiled, as we all did, seeing the color returning to her cheek. Then his face grew pale and his smile faded.

He looked up at the doctor and asked with a trembling voice, 'Will I start to die right away?'

Being young, the little boy had misunderstood the doctor; he thought he was going to have to give his sister all of his blood in order to save her but he had chosen to save her anyway.

## Think about this for a minute...

If I happened to show up on your door  
step crying,

Would you *Care*?

If I called you and asked you to pick  
me up because something *Hap-*  
*pened*,

Would you come?

If I had one day left, to live my life;

Would you be part of *That last day*?

If I needed a shoulder to cry on,

Would you give me *Yours*?

This is a test to see who your real  
friends are or if you are just some one  
to talk to you when they are bored.

Do you know what the relationship is  
between your two eyes?

They blink together, they move to-  
gether, they cry together,

They see things together and they  
sleep together,

**BUT THEY NEVER SEE EACH OTHER...**  
that's what friendship is.

Your aspiration is your motivation, your  
motivation is your belief,

Your belief is your peace, your peace is  
your target,

Your target is heaven, and life is like  
hell without *FRIENDS*.

## Community & Human

### Services...

Unsure Of Who To Call?  
Call 211

Capital Area United Way  
517-337-8211

Cristo Rey Community Center  
517-372-4700

Lutheran Social Services  
517-321-7663

Michigan Association for Deaf &  
Hard Of Hearing  
1-800-968-7327

St. Vincent Catholic Charities  
517-323-4734

Black Child & Family Institute  
517-487-3775

Poison Control  
1-800-222-1222

The Salvation Army (South Lansing)  
517-394-6945

Alzheimer's Disease  
1-800-272-3900

National Arthritis Foundation  
1-800-283-7800

National Domestic Violence Hot Line  
1-800-799-7233

National Suicide Hot Line  
1-800-273-TALK (8255)

American Council for the Blind  
1-800-424-8666

Department of Veterans Affairs  
1-800-827-1000

Medicare Information  
1-800-392-3070

Social Security Administration  
1-800-772-1213

# Capital Letters

Capital Area Center for Independent Living

1048 Pierpont, Suite 9-10

Lansing, MI 48911 (517) 241-0393

## OBSERVATIONS -by Paula Rehner

As I was driving down West Saginaw a couple of weeks ago, my eyes were drawn to a searchlight that was very bright and had to be close. It turned out that it was only a block away, but it started my memories of childhood when the family would have our weekly auto excursions. Every Saturday or Sunday evening we would all (Mom, Dad, my older sister, the dog and I) pile into the Oldsmobile to take a joyride. I was fascinated by search lights and we would find one in the sky and take all the turns necessary to find its source. Sometimes it was a pretty long search, but we never gave up.

This reminded me of some of our other family adventures in the car. My sister was a fan of junk yards and we would sometimes stop and take a look at the stuff and lots of times it was piled really high and towered over the surrounding fence. This was way before the car munchers and almost all of the yards piled the cars really high making it look like they defied gravity.

Another thing we were really into was what we called tickle-belly roads. I don't think they even exist any more, but there used to be stretches of smooth, concrete roads that were full of hills off almost all turnpikes and expressways. There used to be a great one outside of Youngstown that we enjoyed every time we went to visit the relatives in Pennsyl-

vania. Of course when we flew over them, we all had to make Wheee!! noises like we were on a rollercoaster. It was about a 15 mile stretch and on some days we would even turn around and go back over it so that we actually had three runs before we got back on the turnpike.

We always sang in the car too. We would sing our old favorites like Carrying Crow and Little Sir Echo (my favorite). The harmony was really pretty good and we would sing for hours only pausing occasionally for a round of license plates or cows. My mom didn't take part in this activity as she said she couldn't carry a tune in a basket and as hard as we would try to get her to sing along, she always stayed silent.

My parents are long gone by now, but reminiscing about "the good old days" always brings a smile to my face and Christmas time always brings back those days. It's great to let my mind travel back in time to relive my youth and think about the days when family time really existed, when TV only had 4 channels, there were no computers, there were very few kids' sports and we always ate dinner together around the kitchen table. Take a trip back in time if you can and enjoy.

**MERRY CHRISTMAS & HAPPY NEW YEAR!**