

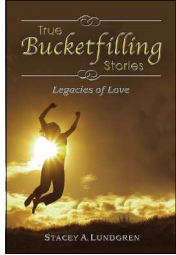
# Bucketfillers for Life, Inc.

Proudly Serving the Entire United States with 5 Regional Training Centers



## BFL News and Views

September 2011



*True Bucketfilling Stories: Legacies of Love*, by Stacey A. Lundgren. This wonderful collection of 10 short stories with discussion questions is available at Heartspeak, Inc.



[www.heartspeakproducts.com](http://www.heartspeakproducts.com)

Other bucket filling products available at Heartspeak:

- Posters
- Pencils
- Bracelets
- Sunglasses
- Piggy Banks
- Backpacks
- T-shirts
- More!

Be sure to also get your copy of Heartspeak's exclusive eBook, "Almost at the Front", a collection of World War II letters by Merrill Lundgren, The Bucket Man.

## Remembering 9/11 with Kindness

By Peter Lundgren

9/11/2011 marks 10 years since one of the worst events in American history. Most of you reading this article vividly remember where you were, who you were with, how you felt. Time stood still, and in the aftermath, at least for a brief time, all Americans seemed to band together. For that same brief time, I believe we were unanimously focused on the truly important things in life: Love, respect, kindness, compassion, understanding, and patriotism. I remember a deep feeling in my heart. I felt close to all Americans. I felt a bond, a powerful bond. I think many of you may have shared the same feeling. Our country, our big family, was hurting, and in need of our combined strength. We tapped into our reserves and we gave what was needed from our hearts.

Ten years later have we continued giving, or have we fallen backward into our old habits of stereotypes, hatred, and misunderstanding? I think the answer to this question is obvious, but that's not the point here.

The point is that we each have a choice, and this choice starts fresh with every new day. We felt compassion for our fellow Americans 10 years ago, and we can feel it today. But it's not an "automatic". It will take concentrated effort.



Earth, as seen from the Moon. A very confined space we all must share.

I would like to challenge all of you to make a small change (for most of us, there's room for improvement). Next time someone cuts you off on the highway and you feel the anger and adrenaline build up inside you, catch it, and make a conscious decision to let it go, then and there. Next time you feel the urge to stereotype someone based on their skin color or clothing, don't do it. Next time someone in your presence expresses an alternative

point of view that disagrees with yours, choose to accept it with the understanding that their opinion is just as valid as yours. Next time you feel someone has wronged you, choose not to react, choose no revenge, choose no justice.

In reality, there is no justice. There is only Earth and all of its inhabitants sharing this beautiful but limited space. In your daily choices, I challenge you to choose kindness and understanding over the need to enforce your ego via your own definition of right and wrong.

The change won't happen over night. But as we remember 9/11, I hope we can make a few small steps in the direction of kindness. Catch yourself and make the change once per day, then twice, then four times. Keep it up and it just might become a habit. If all of us can (myself included) make an adjustment, our beautiful Earth just might be a better place to live. Let me know of your experiences and periodically I'll let you know of mine. You can reach me via our web site at any time. pml

# New Feature:

## Good News of the Month

*Each month we will browse the net for some really good news and share it with you. Enjoy!*

This month's good news comes from Rita Rubin at MSNBC.

### Care Circles Fill In for Family

Perhaps no one feels more alone than when being wheeled into the operating room, but for many, that feeling continues on because there's no one to provide care and support at home afterward.

Then there's Lucy Whitworth. Whitworth lives alone and 800 miles from her nearest relative, but after she was diagnosed with breast cancer two years ago, she endured surgery and chemo secure in the knowledge that she would never want for companionship or a cooked meal or a clean house during her recovery.

"Lucy's Angels" — 49 friends who'd signed up to help care for her, were "literally fighting over me"

for more than a year, Whitworth, now 70, recalls. "There weren't enough tasks for that many people."

These "angels" met with Whitworth before the day of her surgery to talk about her post-op needs. They took it from there, allowing Whitworth to focus on healing instead of repeatedly asking for favors.

In the past, extended and immediate family members shouldered much of the load when someone became seriously ill. That's changed as marriage rates declined and

families shrunk. More than 31 million Americans — representing more than a quarter of U.S. households — live alone, according to the 2010 Census. That's up about 6.5 million since 1995. On top of that, the U.S. population is getting older.

**'What if something happens to me?'**

"There are some people living alone who always have this fear in the

them at home.

"A lot of times the decision of whether to admit or discharge home is straight-forward," says Amoroso, who practices at Tufts Health Plan in Medford, Mass., and serves on the board of the Alternatives to Marriage Project. "But probably in an equal number of cases, it's not so obvious. If you have no support at home, it changes the dynamic of that decision."



Lucy Whitworth, left, and Nancy Rose share a laugh at Rose's Sebastopol, California home. Whitworth helped Rose during her recovery from hip surgery, and the two became good friends.

Whitworth has never been married nor had children. But she's lived in Sebastopol, California since 1985 and has made cultivating friendships a high priority.

"I don't have a big extended family," she says. "Years ago, it became very clear that my family was my friends."

One of those friends is Tricia Hoffman, 64, who also lives in Sebastopol. Hoffman is the first to admit she's no cook, but she found there were plenty of other ways

to help Whitworth during her recovery. She could take her to the doctor, go grocery shopping or simply keep her company.

Hoffman, a retired massage therapist, has been divorced for more than 30 years, and her two children live hundreds of miles away in Los Angeles. "I really am dependent on my extended network of friends," says Hoffman, who's also been involved in care circles for two other friends, one who had cancer and one who had hip replacement surgery.

back of their mind: What if something happens to me?" says social psychologist Bella DePaulo, author of the book "Singlism" and a visiting professor at the University of California, Santa Barbara. "Because friends aren't obligated to help in the way that, say, a spouse is, single people often worry 'I don't have anyone.'"

Emergency room physician Thomas Amoroso has even admitted patients to the hospital and ordered extra diagnostic testing because they have no one to keep an eye on

# Another New Feature: Notes From the Bucket Man

By Merrill Lundgren "The Bucket Man"

Since 2007, Bucketfillers For Life has made presentations in 16 states to almost 400 schools.

We are very pleased with the feedback we have received on our "Why I Love and Respect You" (WILARY) exercise, part of our program from grade 4 up to adult. WILARY asks participants to write why they love and respect someone in their life. About 90% of elementary aged students pick an adult at home (Mom, Dad, Grandparent, or other guard-

ian). The student is then asked to read what they wrote to the chosen person, and the chosen person then writes their reaction on a separate response form. The response form is returned to the classroom and is read by the teacher and principal.

This exercise is very powerful and has had a tremendous positive impact on the students involved. But the impact doesn't stop there. It also promotes the bucketfilling concept in the homes, and increases parental involvement by developing a positive relationship between parents and their children's teachers

and principal.

Our Maintenance Program involves annual recurring visits to the participating schools. For these schools, the WILARY experience impacts thousands of families annually. For schools who choose not to have us return, the WILARY experience, although still powerful, is a one-time occurrence.

We will continue to provide a positive experience that not only impacts every participant in a significant way, but also helps build positive relationships at the same time.

## Good News of the Month cont'd

You don't need dozens of best friends to organize a successful care group, though, Whitworth notes. For example, she says, you might want to think about "who are the people you've worked with who are special in your life?"

Her friends actually followed a template laid out in a 1995 book called "Share the Care."

Most of the dozen members of the original caring circle that gave rise to the book didn't know each other before gathering to help their mutual friend Susan, a single mother with cancer whose therapist had suggested she ask for help, author Sheila Warnock recalls.

"For 3 ½ years we worked together, and our little group of friends became sisters," Warnock says. "When she died, we had a closing meeting. We felt good about what we had done."

Soon after, another woman asked Warnock if she could help her organize a similar group. That's when Warnock and her friend Cappy

Capossela decided to write a book about the concept.

"We knew we had to get it down on paper so that other people wouldn't have to reinvent the wheel every time," says Warnock, who describes herself as a senior but declined to give her age. Warnock eventually had to spearhead a caring group for Capossela in 2002 after she was diagnosed with a brain tumor that eventually proved fatal.

In Whitworth's case, what goes around comes around. Before she was diagnosed with breast cancer, she had participated in the groups for seven sick friends and is now involved in helping out three more. In total, maybe six or seven of the 10 have lived alone.

Whitworth first learned about Share the Care years ago through the friend of a friend with breast cancer. Back then, she and the other members of her friend's care group used a phone tree to organize it and share information. But Whitworth's most recent groups turned to a free website, [\[inghands.com\]\(http://inghands.com\), for scheduling.](http://lotsahelp-</a></p>
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"We created this service to answer the question: What can I do to help?" says Lotsa Helping Hands spokeswoman Brooks Kenny. "Not everybody has the means to drop off a meal five days a week."

Kenny says more than half a million people have participated in 50,000 Lotsa Helping Hands communities.

"There were times when I just needed somebody to be here because I was really sick," says Whitworth. "What I felt was completely held. It's that place of being able to turn it over and allow people to do things for you."

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