

Living with Grace and Passion

A Seasonal Newsletter from Peggy Patenaude
Winter 2008

Coming Up in 2008

Keeping Your Love Alive:

A Couples Retreat

Sunday, February 10
9:00 AM to 5:00 PM
Falmouth, MA

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#### One Light Service

Sunday, February 24  
Peggy will be the guest speaker  
for the 10 AM Service at  
One Light: A Center for Spiritual  
Transformation, W. Yarmouth.  
[www.peaceoncapecod.org](http://www.peaceoncapecod.org)

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Keeping Your Love Alive:

For Gay & Lesbian Couples

Saturday, March 29, 9:30 AM to
Sunday, March 30, 1:30 PM
Falmouth, MA

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#### The Couples Refresher:

A Follow-up to "Keeping Your Love Alive"

Saturday, April 12, 9:30 AM to  
Sunday, April 13, 1:30 PM  
Falmouth, MA

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My One Wild and Precious Life:

A Women's Retreat

Friday, May 2, 7:30 PM to
Sunday, May 4, 1:00 PM
Genesis Spiritual Life Center,
Westfield, MA

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### For information & registration on all programs:

Contact Peggy at (508) 548-9149  
or [timeoutretreats@comcast.net](mailto:timeoutretreats@comcast.net)

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For Peggy's complete calendar
visit her website

www.timeoutretreats.com

Peg's Ponderings: Tell Me Your Story

Do you dream of making a lasting contribution to our world? No doubt, many, if not most of us, hope to do so in our lifetime. Fortunately, we hear of individuals whose creativity and generosity inspire us to aim high. David Isay does that for me.

Founder of StoryCorps, the largest oral history project of its kind, and editor of the recently published *Listening Is an Act of Love*, Isay believes that everyone has a story that matters, and that our stories need to be shared. StoryCorps' mission is to simply "honor and celebrate one another's lives through listening" by bringing ordinary people together to interview each other. Participants receive a CD copy of the conversation and the interview is then archived at the American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress. Since the first *StoryBooth* was set up in New York's Grand Central Station in 2003, StoryCorps has traveled to 46 states and recorded nearly 15,000 conversations.

StoryCorps' mission reminds me about the importance of listening. One of the greatest gifts we can give another is our rapt attention. When we listen attentively we affirm the significance of the other. In essence we say, "You are of great value. You are worth my rapt attention."

Listening benefits not only the speaker, but also the listener. A scene from *Renaissance Man* comes to mind. Danny DeVito declares "Everybody's got a story." After listening to his students' essays on why they joined the army and learning each soldier's background, DeVito was transformed. He no longer saw them as unintelligent and incapable but as real people with pain and potential. As motivational speaker and writer Wayne Dyer says, "When you change the way you look at things, the things you look at change." Feeling understood and valued, these soldiers soared to new heights.

Listening is a challenging act of love. It requires we lay aside our own agenda. It means we look into the eyes of the other and forget all else. Real listening means we hear more than words; it means we hear with our hearts and not just our ears. When we listen deeply we see ourselves in the other's story. When we recognize our shared humanity, no one remains a stranger.

Recently we celebrated Christmas, but as author, activist and theologian Joan Chittister says, "Christmas is celebrated on one day of the year in order to remind us to live it *every other day* of the year." Why not begin this New Year with the resolve to truly listen to one another...to our spouses, our children, our students and co-workers and yes, even to our enemies. As one poet said, "Who is it that we would not love if we only knew their story?" I daresay, simply by listening we could make a lasting contribution to our world.



Passing It On

Listening Is an Act of Love by David Isay

Published by Penguin Press, this collection of StoryCorps interviews offers a real portrait of American people from all walks of life. Their experiences of joy and sorrow, dreams and despair, strength and courage will connect with your own life story. An abridged version of *Listening Is an Act of Love* is available in CD format. Google *StoryCorps Project* to learn more about this fascinating endeavor, to hear sample interviews and to find out how to bring StoryCorps to your community.

Radio Heartbeat CD

Produced by Alan Mayer in conjunction with Jim Moeller of *Serenity Music*

Speaking from the heart on such things as love, prayer, children, death, freedom, ordinary men and women candidly share their memories and experiences. The listener is drawn in by the voices of these real people who speak with passion, warmth and genuineness. This unique recording consists of twenty-four 2-3 minute vignettes each accompanied by *Serenity Music*. A favorite of mine, I have used *Radio Heartbeat* on retreats and in presentations and have copies for sale at \$13.

The Monastic Way by Joan Chittister, OSB

With the beginning of a new year, this monthly publication is perfect “for people who lead a busy life, but long for greater spiritual depth.” After a brief essay on a pertinent topic, Chittister expands the theme by combining insights of many great writers with her own in a very brief reflection for each day of the month. Also included is a section entitled *The Listening Heart* with questions and suggestions for further reflection or group discussion. A yearly subscription to *The Monastic Way* is available at www.benetvision.org for \$18.95.

Breaking All Our Teacup Talk of God: A Retreat with Edwina Gateley

Saturday, June 7, 2008 at One Light: A Center for Spiritual Transformation, West Yarmouth, Mass., is quickly filling up! Contact Kevin York at (508) 428-6248.

Recent Events

Keeping Your Love Alive Couples Retreat in Westfield, Mass.

Genesis Spiritual Life Center, October 27, 2007



Eleven couples participated in the retreat I facilitated last fall in Western Mass. Making the time to focus on their relationship was a gift each partner gave to the other. As one person commented, “It was a wonderful splurge to spend the whole day together.” Another summed up the experience in this way: “We walked away feeling rejuvenated and excited again in our lifelong journey together.” The next couples retreat is scheduled for February 10 in Falmouth, Mass.

Moms from St. Mary’s, Shrewsbury, Mass. traveled to the Cape for some reflection, sharing, prayer, laughter and camaraderie. Listening to each other’s experiences and feeling solidarity were invaluable benefits for these eleven women. As one retreatant said, “Lots of ideas and support come from hearing each other.” Not having to cook, eating without interruptions and having time to relax were also some of the highlights for these mothers of 24 children combined!

MOMS Retreat, Falmouth, Mass.

November 17-18, 2007



A Little Soul Food

*“We have two ears
and one mouth
so that we can listen
twice as much
as we speak.”*

Epictetus

*“The reality of the other
person lies not in what he
reveals to you, but what he
cannot reveal to you.
Therefore, if you would
understand him, listen not
to what he says, but rather
to what he does not say.”*

Kahlil Gibran

Morris, an 82 year old man, went to the doctor to get a physical. A few days later the doctor saw Morris walking down the street with a gorgeous young lady on his arm. A couple of days later the doctor spoke to Morris and said, “You’re really doing great, aren’t you?” Morris replied, “Just doing what you said, Doc: ‘Get a hot mamma and be cheerful.’” The doctor said, “I didn’t say that. I said, ‘You got a heart murmur. Be careful!’”

Sometimes we hear only what we want to hear!

***Remember: Humor is good
for the soul too!***

