



## Notes From Under the Prairie Sky

Issue #5

August 2011



I am at the lake by myself because my husband couldn't get away this week. I am finding that I like it. It is quiet, I am not thinking about what he might like for breakfast or dinner and I do not have the usual clutter (e.g. backpack on the couch). I am here to reflect, read, walk and "be" for a whole 10 days.

I have been reading and thinking about me and about you. I started out reading Schlock which is what I call shallow summer reading that is allowed only at the lake. Gossip and romance feed my craving for a salacious and different reality.

About four days in, I was ready to get back to me and thinking about my perspective on life. I devoured "The Happiness Project" and "The 6 Quantum Secrets to an Amazing Life" along with perusing the book "Governing with Soul". I thought I would bring you some of my learning moments from those books as well as the information you might



Skidoodle at 7 months old.

I wore out my new best friend Ebony who is also a labradoodle about 8 months older than I who came to visit for a weekend in early July.

If you are receiving this e-zine it is because you are a leader in a not for profit organization or because you said you would like to receive it. My purpose in sending this to you is to provide some information you might find useful or thought provoking in your leadership role or in your life. These e-zines connect loosely so you may want to go back and read the earlier editions. They are available at my web site under e-zines.

I am not very proficient at this yet so if you have ideas for improvement or suggestions for topics just send me an e-mail. For those of you who do not know who I am please have a look at my website at [www.prairieskyexecutivecoaching.com](http://www.prairieskyexecutivecoaching.com)

If you think you might want to know me better or might be interested in having me as your personal coach just send me an e-mail or call 406-781-2485. Remember your first two sessions are free and then it is up to you whether we continue. My rates are geared to the non profit sector so are reasonable. My mission is to support passionate women in leadership positions however, if you happen to be a man and want to give it a try let me know. I hope each of you will forward this e-zine to anyone you think would find it interesting.

### What is Coaching?

The ICF defines coaching as partnering with clients in a thought-provoking and creative process that inspires them to maximize their personal and professional potential.

require should you wish to inquire further about the ideas, facts and perspectives outlined.

First "The Happiness Project" by Gretchen Rubin. This is a best seller that many women are reading and then using to create tools to make themselves happier. I found the book well written and Gretchen gives us enough about her own background and research so that there is a lot of credibility attached to her project. She is a successful wife, mother and professional who decides she would like to be happier and sets out to make it happen through a year long project addressing one area of her life each month.

It is important to her that she does not give up her present life as it is generally very good. The twelve areas she addressed are as follows: January, Vitality; February, Marriage; March, Work; April, Parenthood; May, Leisure; June, Friendship; July, Money; August, Eternity; September, Books; October, Mindfulness; November, Attitude and December Happiness. For each month she examines research on the subject and how it affects happiness.

I found many of her habits as she described them pretty universal, however, I recognized a few each month as particularly mine. As Gretchen determined a set of twelve commandments along with learned life lessons and a plan to address a specific issue each month there was something she did that I know I would not do and is probably what created the success. She built in a brilliant accountability framework through a resolutions chart which she reviewed constantly and as a person with self discipline, insight to her own behavior and exceptional organization she made it through.

I found it enjoyable to read and there are a few really good insights to my own poor behavior along with some new strategies to address them. Gretchen also created a blog as she went along and had others joining her along the way. You can visit her at her blog at the [www.happiness-project.com](http://www.happiness-project.com) or her author site at [www.gretchenrubin.com](http://www.gretchenrubin.com)

The second book I read was the 6 Quantum secrets to an Amazing life. This book is written by a social worker Maureen Kitchur who does psychotherapy and the reason I bring it to you is there are some, new to me, ideas that you might find useful for yourself or people you are supporting/serving or supervising.

First of all she lays out 4 domains of healing. The

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Would you like some support as you lead your organization through difficult times.

I will listen, listen some more and together we will co-create pathways to solutions and new opportunities.

If you are unsure if Coaching is right for you or your organization, you can contact Gail

at

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first is, the brain and body, and she emphasizes that people often have problems caused by something going on in their brain or their body and we are not going to be able to help unless those are addressed first.

We all know this to be true, however, as long as someone is not complaining or seems to be the way we have always known them to be we think they must be fine. She pushes for a further examination of that assumption.

The second domain is history which I think we are all familiar with however, she describes how it stays with us through life and creates some of our negative self talk. I have not usually equated myself talk with my family history it always seems to come from my day to day life experience. She also describes some successful therapies addressing issues arising from self talk or history which were new to me.

The third domain is self talk versus your inner voice. She outlines how our thoughts, perceptions and beliefs create our feelings which then create our choices, behaviors and outcomes.

Finally the most exciting part is chapter 4 which lays out the "6 quantum secrets to an amazing life".

They are:

1. Tune in to the universe
2. Express gratitude!
3. Set intentions for others. Affirm for others.
4. Set intentions for Yourself. Affirm for yourself.
5. Plant the seeds of change.
6. Affirm that your intentions were accomplished.

It was enlightening to me to think of setting intentions and affirming for others. I am used to setting intentions for myself but not for others except perhaps in prayer. My mind is now busy thinking about all the good intentions I could set for others in my life. What about the people you support/serve or supervise. Do you set intentions for their success or happiness in life?

Maureen presents the information through stories and easy to read lessons. She is based out of Calgary Alberta and can be reached at:  
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The third book I thought you might find of interest

if you work with a nonprofit board is a book called Governing with Soul. The sub-title is How Joy, Courage, and Compassion are taking Charities to the Next Level.

This book speaks of the need for the board to have spiritual integrity and how a culture of inquiry makes for better decisions. Sample content includes Spiritual integrity = Good governance; The conscious leader is a servant too; Boardroom walls should be made of glass; Board and staff relationships in a culture of caring.

There are lots of examples and while it does not give a real prescription for how good boards work it does give some good examples of how to govern with soul and therefore have a healthier board and organization. Here again it is the first time I have seen the term soul used with board governance.

This book is written by Maureen Sharpe and published in November 2010 by Civil Sector Press  
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I hope you are enjoying your summer as much as I am mine and that you too have the time to reflect and be. I will set that intention for each of you.

*Choosing joy for each of you on  
your path,  
Gail*