



Kinship Link

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Pro Kinship for Kids

Inside this issue:

Life Savors: Simplifying your Life	2
Important Announcements	2

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Newsletter by
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Celebrating on a Shoestring with Lots of Memories

We are now coming into the full swing of the holiday season. We have all probably been given the full list of holiday presents by children and other family members. Can you see the rising cost of these gifts and even imagine the bills that will need to be paid off later? The thing to remember in all of this is that holidays are a family time. They are a time to share memories and just talk about dreams and plans. They are the time to have fun making Christmas cookies with your children and not pushing to have ten different kinds in your freezer. They are the time to let your children or family decorate your home together and not worry about the decorations looking like the pictures in magazines. There are many ways to celebrate the holidays and not spend so much on the gifts. It takes just a little creativity and ends with many wonderful

memories for years to come. Here are a few ideas for thoughtful, lower cost gifts:

- Give homemade gifts like breads, jams, fudge, or cookies wrapped in colorful cellophane.
 - Make theme baskets like a breakfast basket of hot chocolate mix, muffin mix, and honey. A lunch basket of crackers, cheese, and a special coffee. A snack basket of pretzels, nuts, and popcorn for a special time together.
 - If you are a gardener, share plants decorated for the holidays.
 - Give a gift not of money, but of time. Babysitting for a friend, running errands for grandparents, go to a movie with your child, or calling a distant relative instead of sending the package.
 - Give a coloring book and colors for helping develop creativity in your child.
 - Let your child be an artist with just a variety of paper, colored pencils, markers, chalk, crayons, and paint.
 - You can even go together with others to buy the special gift someone close really wants.
 - Partners can save money and decide what bigger purchase will need to be made now or later and give this to each other like a washer, dryer, hot water heater, lawn mower, or painting the house.
- If you are going to shop for those Christmas gifts, then remember to comparison shop, watch for sales, and when you have something for everyone **STOP** shopping. Enjoy the gift of giving this season and be creative. Memories you make will be worth more than any gift.



Life Savors: Simplifying Your Life

Far from being selfish or irresponsible, taking time for yourself on a regular basis can make you a better parent, spouse, worker - and a happier person as well. Nearly half of Americans feel they don't have enough time to do what they really want. Life is passing them by - or running them over.

In research, on dual-career couples, it is found that there are distinct differences in how men and women use downtime. Men spend their downtime doing what they want, and don't worry about it. Women typically use downtime to become more organized. Men seem to possess more of a sense of entitlement when it comes to time for themselves, the research shows, whereas women tend to feel guilty if they take a few hours off from their responsibilities. Simplification is the key. You must first let go of the attitudes that continually deny your health and happiness in an effort to be responsible.



Try simplifying your work and/or home life with these techniques:

- Set realistic goals; simplify your expectations. Life is filled with imperfections.
- Mark one day off your calendar a month to "catch up".
- Give yourself permission to play. Get as good at planning fun as you are now at scheduling work.
- Plan a day to work at home once in a while.
- Schedule a breather. Schedule one hour a day to allow some breathing space.
- Take five for yourself. Five minutes away from your work area can have a dramatic effect on your productivity.
- Schedule time to work on specific projects by scheduling work time in your calendar.
- De-clutter. Pick one section and start de-cluttering. Try handling things only once.
- Delegate. Stop trying to do everything yourself.
- Take a 1-minute speed whine. Find a friend, set a timer, and take turns whining about

everything you can fit into one minute. If you whine fast enough, you'll end up laughing - the best stress-buster of all.

- Be spontaneous. Spontaneity is key to feeling like you're in control of your own destiny. Every once in a while, a change in routine can spark your spirits and your energy.
- Live beneath your means. Did you know that 80% of America's self-made millionaires are frugal? If you want to achieve economic independence, try buying only what you can afford, not what you think you need.

Everyone needs to renew, recharge, and relax. Only by breaking the chains of busyness can we escape the prison of status quo and experience life. You don't need to set aside hours to reap the benefits of trying to build little blocks of fun into your day. The trouble with most people is that they work so hard making a living that they don't have any time to live.



Important Announcements

Here are a few things for all Pro Kinship for Kids families to remember:

- If school is called off due to weather, all Pro Kinship for Kids activities for that day will also be called off. We will notify you of a reschedule date if we plan one. If we are having an activity on a non-school day and decide to call off an activity due to weather we will put it on KNUJ (860

AM) radio and text/call you. You can also call the office at 359-2445 or 1-800-642-5779 to check on an activity, but if no one answers you can call Director, Kari Beran's cell phone number you are given in the office message.

- Next, if you have questions, concerns, or just want ideas on how to deal with parenting issues around your children. Director, Kari Beran, who is a licensed Minnesota State

Parent Educator is available to answer questions and give you suggestions to help your family. Pro Kinship for Kids is available to help all our families be their best. If we do not have an answer for you, we will help you find the answer and/or refer you to services that may be able to help your family.

