

The Value of Two Feet

By Jane Tuttle, LLLI Board of Directors Chairman
Speech given at USWD TEAM08 Meeting, June 2008
Phoenix, Arizona USA

It is a pleasure to be here with women who understand the importance of mothering through breastfeeding. On behalf of the La Leche League International Board of Directors I want to thank you for being a La Leche League Leader and making a difference in your community and collectively making a difference to the world. The La Leche League International Board understands that the mission of LLLI is accomplished through the efforts of our volunteer Leaders. I also want to introduce Cathy Liles and Diana Lewis, two other Board members in attendance.

Thank you, also, for the invitation to speak to you. When asked for a title for my talk, I was a bit bewildered. I actually prefer extemporaneous speaking – I have an idea and I go with it. For those of you who know me personally, that probably does not surprise you.



What was on my mind at the time for a title was the idea of growing as a person and reflecting on what my board service legacy will be. I had gotten an email reminding me that I had two feet and I could just walk away if I wanted. I thought about that and knew that for me, two feet gave me the freedom to walk away and with that freedom came the opportunity to be more engaged in the work. Paradoxically as that seems, the freedom of two feet gives me strength. Thus, the ambiguous title of this speech and now my job is to tie it to the work and mission of La Leche League International.

Confucius is credited with saying, "A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step." That single step involves two feet.

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My Dreamcatcher Experience at TEAM08

By Fran Dereszynski, Area Leaders' Letter Editor for Southern California/Nevada

Dreamcatchers originated in the Ojibwa Nation over 40 years ago and came to be a symbol of unity among the various Indian Nations. The “web” or resulting dreamcatcher was hung above the bed to protect sleeping children from nightmares. The Ojibwa believe that it filters a person’s dreams. Good dreams pass through the center hole and slide down the feathers to the sleeping person. The bad dreams are trapped in the web where they perish in the light of dawn.

This is a picture of the dreamcatcher I bought at the Phoenix airport on my way back home from United States Western Division (USWD) TEAM08. The intricacy of the weaving and the flowing feathers caught my eye. I put the dreamcatcher in my purse. Then I walked over to a window and gazed at the bright colors of a beautiful sunset. The sun seemed to slowly sink behind the distant mountains spreading the sky with colors of yellows, oranges and reds. Later when I was seated on the plane, I thought about the Founder’s dreams 50 years ago and the many sunsets during those years. I thought about the legacy of LLL—past, present and future. I felt revitalized from being face-to-face at TEAM with 70 Leaders—new friends, renewed acquaintances, and LLLI Board Members—during the past four-and-a-half days. The dreams for LLL’s future were caught in my mind or in my dreamcatcher.

There was so much to take in at Department Day, LLLI/Division Day and Area Day! There were sessions related to departments and workgroups as well as online tools, outreach to health care professionals, writing, alternate meetings for breastfeeding support, LLLI database, working with Leader Applicants, fundraising, memberships, LLLI strategic planning, consensus, writing agreements, possible maps and scenarios for states to enter into Area Networks, and Area reports.

For me, the most interesting day was LLLI/Division Day that began with an inspiring talk, *The Value of Two Feet*, given by Jane Tuttle, Chair of the LLLI Board of Directors. This was followed by a panel of LLLI Board Members and USWD Staff who answered Leaders’ questions about the latest LLLI Board policies and guidelines for creating new



Areas and Area networks throughout the world. This encompassed the feasibility of forming a new Area network covering the United States, if Leaders in the country so desire. The afternoon included more opportunities for small group discussions. There was an energy present that brought forth ideas from Leaders from small and large Areas. We discussed and learned about various possible ways Leaders can do this. Sample agreements already used by several Areas were

available. Leaders can use those samples as they go about creating their own Areas or staying in the same Area they are now in—as long as the agreements follow LLLI policies and guidelines and fulfill the need for mutual support and accountability.

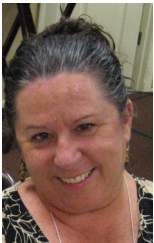
One big “ah ha” moment for me was the realization that understanding and implementing the new LLLI policies takes time. Many Leaders at TEAM08 used the discussion and brainstorming time to consider what the new policies and guidelines mean and defined them in relation to what they are already doing. That is the advantage of being together in person. We shared and learned from each other. It is important to remember that the LLLI Board has set international policy that protects the right of Leaders and Areas to self-organize in a way that

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This article contains snippets of highlights and memories from the Area Coordinators of Leaders (ACLs) and Leader Department Mentors who attended TEAM08.

Karen Sims, Mentor from AZ:

At lunch time the AZ ADCs were able to meet together to have a brief ADC meeting. It was good to get some things done face-to-face, and it was fun that we had a couple of AZ



Leaders who are not ADCs sitting in on the meeting. Not only was it helpful to get their opinions about some of the things we were discussing, but maybe they got the idea that they, too, could be ADCs some time? Wouldn't THAT be nice!!

In the afternoon, I attended the ACL meetings. It was so wonderful to meet some of you! It makes such a big difference to have a face to connect to a name on the computer screen or piece of paper. I enjoyed listening to discussions about supporting Leaders, and how DAs do (or do not) stay in touch with Leaders. We seemed to keep coming back to *relationships*, and knowing the Leaders we support.

I really enjoyed hearing the panel on LLLUSA. Jane Tuttle, Diana Lewis, and Cathy Liles are BOD members who were on this panel. Becky Hugh and Deirdre Knowles are USWD Staff members who also spoke on this panel. Karin Gausman represented the LAD on this panel. They were all forthright

and honest in their answers to questions and I was pleased that they answered every single question...even the hard ones! It was an encouraging and informative session that I believe quelled a lot of rumors and explained a lot of concerns that many had.

I went to Cathy Liles and Jane Tuttle's panel on "Area Goals and Strategic Planning." It was a very inspiring discussion about ways that Leaders could implement the objectives in the LLLI's strategic plan at a Group, Chapter, and/or Area level. We talked about ways that Leaders could increase memberships, and increase services to under-served populations. We also talked about raising money and increasing the number of women who sought out Leadership. It was very interesting to hear the different ways that Leaders can get involved and be a part of implementing these objectives.

Holly Hollander - Mentor from SCA/NV:



I loved being at TEAM08. Some highlights of TEAM08 for me were remembering why I came to LLL and its

incredible influence on my life. It has changed the entire last 16 years of my life, ever since I had my first child. Several of the large group sessions were so amazing. While I missed some of Jane's "Two Feet"

Don't ask yourself what the world needs; ask yourself what makes you come alive. And then go and do that. Because what the world needs is people who have come alive.
Howard Thurman

presentation, I know that I gained so much from what I did hear. I also loved figuring out what was most important to

me about having an effective organization. These sessions were more emotional for me and I think they opened up my heart to hear the rest of the presentations. They also formed us into a community. Those hallway conversations are so important!

Hearing over and over that "what Leaders want" is the most critical criteria gave me confidence in us as a group of women devoted to LLL and our mission of helping moms and babies breastfeed. And that the Agreements — between Leaders, Areas and Area Networks are all about mutual accountability — gives me more hope that this will work out to everyone's benefit,

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There is Zen proverb regarding two feet. "The most important point is to accept yourself and stand on your two feet."



Another way to look at "two feet" is as a metaphor about standing on two feet. "Standing on my own two feet" – independence. The metaphor has its beginnings in a baby learning to walk – no longer needing help but maneuvering on his own two feet.

The principles of building a pathway in a Japanese garden remind us that even specific stones in the path may have meaning. A much wider stone set across the path tells us to put two feet here, stop and take in the view.

Those of you familiar with Harrison Owen's work with Open Space are very familiar with his law of two feet: If you find yourself in a situation where you are not contributing or learning, move somewhere where you can.

The fact of the matter is there is real value in understanding the importance of two feet. Contributing, learning, being independent and reflective are all hallmarks of La Leche League International and the

women who are the accredited volunteers representing it.

The La Leche League International mission is: To help mothers worldwide to breastfeed through mother-to-mother support, encouragement, information, and education and to promote a better understanding of breastfeeding as an important element in the healthy development of the child and mother.

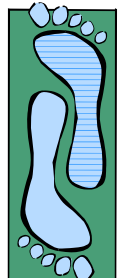
It is mainly the volunteer Leaders who deliver the efforts that support our mission. It is Leaders who talk to over a quarter of a million women a year, in the United States alone.

It is Leaders who answer the Help Forms on the LLLI Web site. Over 200 Help Form Volunteers work to reply to an average of 25-35 Help Forms every day – 365 days a year and most are answered within 24 hours. It is Leaders who keep the La Leche League International Web site updated. There are over 3,000 pages of content and all of it managed by Leader volunteers throughout the world. In 2007, we had 6.5 million unique visitors and over 24.8 million pages viewed. If you'd like to help update online breastfeeding information, please let me know and I'll connect you with the right people. We can always use Leader volunteers to help keep the breastfeeding information

updated and of the highest quality.

It is also Leaders who keep a variety of other La Leche League Web sites updated for their local entities. I don't have the data for all that work, but I know it is substantial. Leaders provide these services day in and day out and find satisfaction in knowing that they helped another mother discover the joys of mothering through breastfeeding.

Through mother-to-mother support La Leche League Leaders offer an informal support system that positively reinforces a mother's sense of accomplishment. Leaders empower mothers to challenge cultural practices that inhibit breastfeeding. The mother-to-mother support that La Leche League International offers mothers is in many ways built on the concept of two feet. We help mothers to learn more, to be independent in their thought and to be reflective about their mothering. For me, the La Leche League philosophy of mothering, provides an oasis from the chaos and gives me the rock to place my two feet upon when my journey become too rough. I've heard people say that La Leche League gives the baby back to the mother. For me, what I learned from the other mothers at meetings, the volunteer Leaders, from reading almost all the



books in the Group Library, and from devouring

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THE WOMANLY ART OF
BREASTFEEDING - La Leche
League gave me to the baby.

Contributing, a La Leche League hallmark

When I stop and think about the impact of La Leche League International in the lives of families all over the world, it is mind-boggling. I have to believe that La Leche League changes the lives of every person in the room. For some, La Leche League was like coming home and perhaps the change was not huge. For others of us, La Leche League was a place that offered another way to experience parenting – find what worked for us in mothering through breastfeeding. The La Leche League International philosophy of mothering through breastfeeding changes lives. That is one of the reasons that the Strategic Plan for La Leche League International includes reaching more mothers. All mothers deserve what LLLI has to offer. La Leche League contributes to the wellbeing of families worldwide.

Learning, another La League hallmark

La Leche League International has contributed to the world's knowledge about breastfeeding and has helped others learn that

a baby truly does have three basic needs, as Dick Grantly Reed suggested, and that breastfeeding meets all three. LA LECHE LEAGUE Leaders have modeled mothering through breastfeeding for countless mothers as they watched us at meetings, at the park, or at any other daily routine. Our children have learned a loving way of life: where we willingly give our time to others and make a meaningful contribution for a better society.

I'd like to share a quote about from a Leader about her involvement with La Leche League and its positive influence on her children. From the January-February 1994 LEAVEN, "I feel my children have benefited by my positive attitude and by acquiring values through my role modeling; commitment to an ideal, ability to do a job outside the family, community service and valuing work not rewarded by money." I read that 14 years ago and it rings so very true today. Volunteering as a La Leche League Leader is a gift of the heart! I often liken volunteering with La Leche League with a hospice volunteer although I admit they are on opposite ends of the life continuum. People when they are

most vulnerable turn to a stranger to help them. That is what we do.

Not only do others learn from La Leche League Leaders and La Leche League International, we also learn from one another and have made considerable contributions to the field of lactation. Many of the prominent names in lactation have their roots as La Leche League Leaders. To paraphrase Barbara Mandrell, La Leche League International was into lactation before lactation was cool. I do believe that lactation is now cool – as others have figured out a way to make money off of it and others have discovered that breastfeeding does improve infant health. The LLLI Strategic Plan has an objective of making La Leche League the first place that Health Care Providers look when they need breastfeeding information to give to their patients or for quality breastfeeding information for themselves.

Independent - La Leche League Leaders are women of strong conviction

We chose to breastfeed our children when that wasn't

I think that the main thing I came away with was hope. It was really cool to see people open up to the idea that all of these changes may not be so scary, that they can determine how and who they want to work with, and that though change can be uncomfortable, it can also bring about some new horizons to explore.

Laura Warren, USWD DALA

Effective Leadership Workshop TEAM08

Notes by Misty Dunn

Leaders were invited to spend half or the full day exploring aspects of effective leadership. This was offered concurrently to the departmental meetings on Thursday for any Leader who wasn't doing Area Council work and/or who was interested in learning more about "small L leadership." (This includes *leadership* not limited to or necessarily pertaining to our roles as LLL Leaders). We had a wide range of LLL experiences represented in this "Effective Leadership Workshop" — from newly accredited Leaders to an LLLI Board member — which led to many rich discussions.

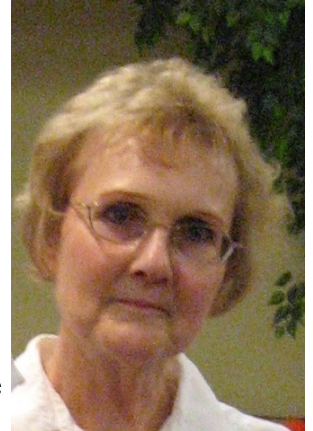
We spent the first part of the morning discussing what makes a leader, and looking at our beliefs, hopes, fears, and stereotypes about leaders. We then examined a model showing how we proceed and what we need in any new role and how we can support other people when they are at each stage.

In the afternoon, we looked at how people typically interact: usually observing and commenting on behavior, less often getting at thoughts and feelings underlying the behavior, and rarely examining our values, assumptions, beliefs, and expectations that caused the behavior. We then considered various individual styles of learning and working together and how these styles can impact our interactions in our leadership roles within our families, at work, and/or LLL.

I believe the "Effective Leadership Workshop" is tremendously valuable in LLL and anywhere, and I am always pleased to offer it. So, I was delighted when one of the new Leaders who spent the whole day with us, came up to me later and asked if this workshop was available to businesses or other organizations. She said she found it so valuable that she thought they all definitely would want it, and that they needed it! 🌟🌟🌟🌟

Tools for Working Through Hot Button Issues

Session
facilitated by
Misty Dunn,
Lupe Forsang,
Deirdre
Knowles
Notes by
Misty Dunn



Some of the "hot button issues" that the group thought of were: money, politics, expectations, different communication styles, different work styles, fear of change, biases, irresponsibility, not being accountable, misinterpretations, perceptions, life style choices/physical needs, etc.

What helps you navigate through the hot button issues?

Suggestions were:

- Motivate yourself to do what you are able to do
- Decide which are "excuses" and what are the real issues
- Recognize that when you're thinking, "she's difficult to work with," that it is because of your expectations

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eConnect is a free online publication of La Leche League US Western Division, designed to support, inform and connect USWD Leaders. Submissions to eConnect are always welcome, and may be submitted to any [USWD staff member](#), or to [Nancy March](#). Articles may be edited for length, clarity, and LLL journalistic guidelines. Copyright of articles and items printed in eConnect is assigned to LLL unless otherwise indicated.

Working Together to Embrace Change

Session facilitated by Diana Lewis & Misty Dunn

Notes by Misty Dunn

Questions the group had to start us thinking:

How do we help Leaders to see that we all have a personal connection to the big picture of LLL?

If Leaders don't see the need for change, how do we engage Leaders in conversations to do the work/make the changes?

While the needs of mothers and babies don't change, what mothers want may have changed—how do we meet the unchanging needs and the wants?

How do we talk about change without scaring people, without appearing “broken?”

Discussion:

Areas can make the effort to involve Leaders in more discussions (for example, about who makes various Area decisions). Help Leaders look beyond their Groups to see the whole International organization.

We found it helpful to look at how and why the LLL USA meeting the end of May was successful:

- There was a personal invitation issued and reason to be there.
- Invitation was to look at and build “where do we need to be?”
- It was face-to-face
- There were facilitators, Leaders asking questions and sharing information — like at a Series Meeting. Not a “presentation.”
- Everyone listened, listened, listened!
- They “cleared the air” first — addressed the “elephant in the room” — concerns were named, listened to, and validated.
- They made it a “safe place” — everyone there agreed to be respectful and explore possibilities.
- They agreed to keep the reporting of what went on at the meeting specific as to content, but not who said what.
- They agreed to hold true to say after the meeting what was said and agreed upon during the meeting to promote the outcomes (not to later “interpret” the meeting differently).
- They agreed to keep the momentum going (to have a private, closed CN discussion so they could solidify their

understandings and share their ideas and projects).


- They went home excited — “fired with possibilities.”

Some of these ideas can help Area Leaders also. The resources and support are there. Those from the May meeting and USWD staff have agreed to be resources.

This is not an all or nothing venture — not “one size fits all.”

This is getting the work — the mission of LLL — done in different ways or in the same way if that is working well. Now we have more options, with different models encouraged.

Keep LISTENING! Don't diminish or dismiss Leaders' thoughts or concerns. There is NO stupid question.

Remember it all depends on, IF THAT IS WHAT THE LEADERS WANT! 

Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.

Margaret Mead

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makes sense to them as long as they are accountable to each other. The LLLI mission and philosophy remains the same, will not change, and is central to LLL's work worldwide.

Each of us at TEAM08 made a commitment to share these possibilities anytime we can get together with Leaders in the coming months after we returned home. It might be at a Chapter meeting, at a Leader Enrichment Meeting, District Workshop, a gathering arranged by the Area or a casual conversation where Leaders who attended TEAM08 are present. When I get together with Leaders, I will be glad to share the handouts, sample agreements and brainstormed maps of Area Networks. These materials can be tools for other Leaders learning about LLLI policy implementation. It will take time for Leaders to make agreements with each other. These possibilities are in my mind's dreamcatcher that came home with me from TEAM08—a montage of positive ideas for the future of LLL in our Area. Points to remember are:

- All Leaders throughout the world will be making at least one agreement with an Area—a primary connection.
- If 5 or more Areas connect together to become an Area Network, then that would involve another agreement for that secondary connection. Our existing Area has eight Districts based on geographical county boundaries. It could reorganize itself into five or more Areas (new definition but same word) and become an Area Network if the Leaders agreed to do this. Another possibility could be Leaders who do Help Forms and who don't necessarily live in the geographical Area of a current District could create a new Area. This new Area would be meaningful to them for their goal to help mothers and babies. It is up to each individual Leader to choose who she wants to connect with and then make an agreement to form an Area.
- If 5 or more Area Networks within the United States connect together, then it would become a USA entity that connects to LLLI.

- Or an Area can stay connected (with an agreement) to the USWD or Eastern US (each is already an Area Network). The divisions are then connected to LLLI.
- Each Area must maintain a primary connection to an Area Network that either directly connects to LLLI or indirectly connects to LLLI through a chain of primary connections with other Area Networks.

To be informed of these policies, a starting point would be to read *LLLI Policies and Standing Rules, Appendix 6 LLL Leader Obligations and Privileges and LLLI Area Networks—Obligations and Privileges*. Look for an article in LEAVEN for more details, too.

After the deep thinking, listening, and talking that we experienced at morning sessions, I enjoyed the two-hour lunch periods. I did not feel rushed to get to the afternoon sessions. My evenings were spent at department gatherings and workgroups or in conversations with Leaders from other Areas.

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Southern California/ Nevada Leaders who attended TEAM08
Fran Dereszynski, Chele Marmet, Nancy March, Holly Hollander, Jollina Simpson
Autumn Rujiraviriyepinyo, Linda Goodman, Lupe Forsang, Ellen Shell

MAKING YOUR AREA STRONGER

How Area Team Support of World Breastfeeding Week Can Make A Difference

By Linda Parry

Why does active participation in World Breastfeeding Week Celebrations (WBWC) by the Area Team, Area Council members, and Area Leaders make your Area stronger?

- Participation in WBWC offers an opportunity to promote breastfeeding awareness and normalcy in your Area. It's the perfect chance to join with others involved in lactation and companies who market to parents - showing our solidarity.
- Leaders are only a part of the lactation community. Nurses in OB offices, labor and delivery, postpartum units, NICUs, pediatrics, midwives, doulas, lactation consultants and LLL Leaders are all part of the growing group of breastfeeding advocates. As we all celebrate World Breastfeeding Week, this is our opportunity to get to know, thank and to celebrate each other.
- WBWC is free advertising—making your community aware that La Leche League is an available resource for breastfeeding mothers. Using the community parenting blogs to mention your event also offers an opportunity to later post meeting notices and invite parents to attend LLL Meetings.
- The annual theme is a method of educating the public about some aspect of breastfeeding. World Alliance for Breastfeeding Action (WABA) provides free calendars and Action Folders for downloading and WBWC produces materials based on the theme.
- WBWC provides funds for all levels of La Leche League. These funds help more Leaders attend conferences and workshops, improve Group libraries, and purchase Group materials. Groups that don't hold WBWC events may still pass out donation brochures, asking attendees to share them with someone who either understands the value of



breastfeeding or who they wish did.

Sharing on your Group's email list is also a way to ask for support for your Group.

- WBWC is the perfect opportunity to take advantage of the assistance provided by our sponsoring companies. In 2008, Platinum Sponsor ERGObaby gave Groups who asked, a matching sling, front pouch and back pack (retail value of over \$140). Leaders who spend a short time online soliciting items for a raffle or silent auction have found that the income earned for their Groups has provided more than repayment for the time spent making the request.
- A portion of the WBWC income raised funds for WBWC Grants. Annually Leaders and Areas with innovative ideas to encourage breastfeeding may apply for these grants. This past year 11 grants averaging \$450 were awarded.
- In 2008, a minimum of ten percent of the money raised is going to the Helpline. The Helpline receives over 3,000 calls a month and is no longer funded by LLLI. WBWC is an opportunity to help fund this important service to mothers in the USA.
- The WBWC Team receives emails from mothers interested in supporting a local WBWC event. In several cases we have had to write back that there are no events registered in their community. While WBWC is not a requirement of being a Leader, it is frustrating to reply that there is no LLL WBWC event for their area.
- Fifteen percent of the money raised in WBWC goes to support the Area. Modeling and supporting WBWC by the Area Team

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Saturday evening's Girls' Night Out was the most fun of all! Many Leaders joined the Sock Hop and Ice Cream Social and came dressed in '50s style clothes—rolled-up jeans, pedal pushers, blouses, ponytails, a chiffon neck scarf, poodle skirt, tennies and bobbie sox, saddle shoes, car club jacket, and more. One Leader was dressed like a Founder with a navy blue shift dress, high heels, and pearls! Then it was time for small groups to create a skit based on individual surprise-assigned themes. Themes ranged from the family bed interview on *The Dr. Phil Show*, breastfeeding workout olympics, an LLL meeting if men were LLL Leaders, clown mothers attending an LLL meeting, Bwabawa Walters interview and more. Some of the more reserved Leaders surprised us by having a leading role in a skit. You can imagine how much we laughed as each Leader-actress entertained us.

After the skits, there were drawings for about 50 items/baskets donated by individual Leaders, Areas and donors. I am proud to say that the \$1,500 income from the drawings will be divided equally with World

Breastfeeding Week Celebrations and the LLL Helpline-US. This was another engaging activity full of fun! I relished with wonder and delight as each claimed her winning item.

On Sunday, the event ended with LLLI Board Member Cathy Liles' talk about helping one mother at a time, one phone call at a time, one email at a time and one meeting at a time—as we work together to accomplish LLLI's mission. This culminated with Cathy's beautiful pictorial show of mothers and babies throughout the world. Each Leader received a packet with LLL note cards and a *Together We Make a Difference* pin.

Then we all packed up our bags, checked out of the hotel and were on our way back home with the memories and inspiration we gained from each other in Phoenix.

As an Area Council member, I am thankful to my Area for funding part of the expense for me to attend TEAM08. I am also grateful to USWD for giving me a registration scholarship. Several Leaders from our Area also received registration scholarships from USWD. About 12 Leaders (from other Areas) who attended did not have a current position in their Areas and were warmly welcomed, as any new or experienced Leader would be. A few had been accredited within the past few months or the past year and they just wanted to learn more about LLL and decided to attend TEAM08. Several Leaders

were able to come for only one or two days in between their children's camping trips or family commitments. Some came with their entire families and made it a family vacation time. There were 17 children, age three and under (included babies in slings) and 30 children age 4 and over (included some teens). Out of the 21 Areas in USWD, Leaders from these 16 Areas attended: AR/OK; AZ; No. CA/HI; So. CA/NV; CO/WY; IA; IL; KS, MO, MN/DK; MT, OR, TX, UT, WA, and WI.

Many Arizona Leaders volunteered to pick up out-of-town Leaders at the airport as well as take them back to the airport. This deepened the spirit of Arizona's hospitality. One indelible experience I had was when my ride back to the airport was with three Leaders from Arizona, Colorado and Montana. Each was the daughter of an LLL Leader! That joy found its way into my dreamcatcher that I will always treasure from my time at TEAM08! 🌟🌟🌟🌟



always a popular decision.

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We chose to practice attentive parenting when that could be viewed as "old fashioned." We chose to make informed choices when it comes to the health of our families and that often makes us seem difficult or revolutionary. La Leche League empowers women! That independent spirit has allowed us to be active, active, respectful, and conscious in our mothering.

Another hallmark of La Leche League that relates to two feet is reflection. Remember, the big stone on the path in the garden is there to prompt you to stop and take in the beauty around you. The LLI philosophy of mothering through breastfeeding provides grounding in what some call reflective parenting. Enjoy your babies, as they will grow

*The notion of
harmony is giving
everyone enough
space to be who
they are. That's
what listening does.*

Jack Ricchiuto

so quickly. When the days take forever, it is hard to understand how the years flew by. Days turn to minutes and minutes to memories, as a favorite songwriter wrote. Taking time to reflect is an important part of life.

The death of Edwina Froehlich just two weeks ago was a sad event in the life of LLLI. Edwina's obituary has appeared in newspapers all over the globe. Not only did THE NEW YORK TIMES and THE WALL STREET JOURNAL cover her death, but so did newspapers around the world. Edwina's death was noteworthy not only because she was a remarkable woman, but because she was the Founder of this remarkable organization. Please join me in a moment of silent remembrance for Edwina. Thank you.

You, La Leche League Leaders, matter to the vitality of LLLI and you matter to the world just because you are who you are and the care that you bring to life. I ask you to use your two feet to contribute, to learn, to be independent and to be reflective. Use your two feet to learn and grow.

I will leave you with a short version of the *Daffodil Principle* by Jaroldeen Asplund Edwards. Coincidentally, the *Daffodil Principle* depends in part on two feet. This is the Reader's Digest version and the longer version is lovely and easy to find on the Web. Just go online to Google "Daffodil

Principle" and you'll get lots of hits.

One spring when looking at a mountaintop filled with



daffodils, a mother wondered how the field of daffodils came to be. The answers are: "50,000 bulbs, one at a time by one woman, 2 hands, 2 feet and very little brain, began in 1958"

That was a life-changing experience for the mother as she viewed the daffodils. Here was woman who had begun - one bulb at a time - to bring her vision of beauty and joy to an obscure mountaintop.

Still, this unknown, old woman had forever changed the world in which she lived. She had created something of magnificent beauty, and inspiration." That is what you and I do each and every day when we help a mother bring her baby to breast and introduce her to mothering through breastfeeding. We do it

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- Look beneath to see the human need (non-violent communication)
- “Toggle back” after you explode from a hot button issue
- Recognize that issues of “fairness” are due to unmet needs
- Recognize that pressure, time or feeling rushed all contribute

What do you do to prevent your buttons from being pushed?

Suggestions were:

- Give yourself a time out to get the good feeling back; notice how I am feeling and ask myself if it is really justified? Take the break and commit to come back to talk with the other person about it.
- BREATHE (slow, deep breaths), meditate, consciously relax
- If I get mad at a child, I take a time out and snuggle with him/her
- If I get mad at an adult, I use the time to reframe my thinking to a more positive, *curious* attitude and think about what they are wanting and feeling.
- I think about and ask the other person, “What do you need from me?”
- I role-play with myself several different conversations that might happen with the individual, before talking with him/her, so that I can work through better ways to express myself.
- I play with my pets
- I learn from and respect how others who are close to me react. When calm, I ask how they handle or would prefer to handle upsetting issues. I share how I would prefer to handle them. 🍷🍷🍷🍷

More thoughts expressed:

Recognize when you’re experiencing “Flat-brain-itis” – that’s when all blood and energy/thinking power goes away from your brain. This occurs when you’re exploding from upset or even from positive emotions. You need to find ways and the time to return to rational thinking.

When buttons get pushed, recognize whose problem is it. (“Developing Skills for Harmony [Communication Skills session 3], and handout on CD explain how to figure out whose problem it is and what to do about it.)

Responding with empathy, asking a request and/or setting a limit, while continuing to empathize—giving genuine and respectful I-Messages—can be very helpful.

We’re kinder to others when we take care of ourselves rather than being resentful, blaming and shaming.

When there are differing expectations, talk about each person’s expectations and clarify them so you can find ways to solve the problems.

You may need to just accept your differences. You can’t change or control other people. Once you accept the person and his/her differing viewpoint, you become calmer and problem solving is easier.

Further resources recommended:

Communication Skills sessions offered by La Leche League Communication Skills Instructors/Facilitators in most Areas

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To work in the world lovingly means that we are defining what we will be for, rather than reacting to what we are against.

Christine Baldwin

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especially the Leaders without whom there would be no La Leche League.

Kathy Grossman - ACL Utah:

Jane Tuttle, Karin Gausman, Diana Lewis, Cathy Liles, and others were incredibly generous and brave to sit in front of the whole group and ask for our questions. From finances, to e-mail etiquette, to LLL USA, these women answered everything as best they could with graciousness, intelligence, and humor. I really appreciated their openness.

Diana Lewis talked about the Womanly Art of Mentoring, a title and idea that really resonated with me. I think this is a key to Leader support. At lunch I got to sit next to Kay Batt, a person I've heard about and had been e-mailing for our shared panel presentation later today. We talked about mentors, and she said Edwina had been her mentor.

Susan Flack - Interim ACL, Iowa:

A Highlight for me: Discussion of Leader support — the importance of a personal invitation to join the Area Council and face to face time goes a long way in maintaining relationships. I want to remember -- Every Area has things they would like to do

better but also things that work well for them. We can learn from each other. Even if an idea didn't work as hoped in one Area it might work well in another. Saturday lunch discussion about forming a Midwest Area Network with representatives of IL, IA, MN/Dak, WI and GeoMoKan was another highlight. Meeting face to face was a great start. Great sharing/back and forth of ideas. Seems like an excellent opportunity to share administrative resources.

I want to remember -- The TEAM attendees are optimistic about the future of the organization and willing to make changes to keep it going.

Becca Haack - ACL WI:

I was so glad to get an "up close and personal" report from Jane Tuttle, Diana Lewis and Cathy Liles about the current status of LLLI and the future of our organization. When Jane remarked that "mothers and babies deserve La Leche League," it really hit home that we all need to work hard to insure the future of LLLI for mothers and babies in the future. I'm very excited about LLLUSA and Area Networks (now that I understand how they work!) and how we in Wisconsin will fit these new ways of working together toward our common goal of helping mothers and babies.

On Saturday I had lunch with Leaders from Iowa, Illinois, Minnesota and Missouri to

discuss the idea of a Midwest Area Network. I'm so excited at the possibilities!

Tonya Lang - ACL NCA/HI:

I had breakfast with Diana Lewis. She was so warm and welcoming; I instantly felt comfortable with her. I've never met any Board members before, and it was so nice to just sit and chat with her and some other Leaders from my Area. I think that sometimes I forget that we're all just moms and that we all have so much in common.

The morning session about forming a new LLLUSA was so informative. I'm excited about the possibilities! There seem to be very few disadvantages. I also appreciated the panel members' willingness to address so many other hot-button issues in an open and honest manner.

Angie Runyan - ACL IL:

The overall highlight was the opportunity to meet many wonderful women committed to mothers and babies and breastfeeding. Each of my specific highlights includes experiences shared with new friends made at the conference.


The benefit that will have the most immediate impact for me will be the simple advantage of being able to put actual people and their faces and personalities with the many communications sent and posted.

Thanks for a great time to all who planned and attended.

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Ideas for Coordinating Area Meetings and Events

Notes by Misty Dunn

- WI offers live video feed for HCP sessions for ‘noisy non-separating’ children
- MT Leader Day-- factors in time for sharing what is working and what is not among Leaders and Groups
- Leader Gathering/ Retreats/ DWs—does name make it more enticing? Leader Appreciation Day suggested around Mother’s Day with a small gift for Leaders
- Ellen Shell knows the new owner (or part owner?) of Sparks professional women’s basketball team. She’ll be offering fundraiser for LLL benefiting SCA/NV.
- Suggested by Events team: if Area hasn’t given an event for awhile, start with a small one to learn how to do it
- NCA/HI and WI offer any ADC “free” registration to their conferences (ADC pays for cost of food, the rest of registration is “free”)
- WI found that there was less competition in the fall rather than spring for CE events. They use the same weekend every fall and publicize the date a year or more in advance, also announcing the speaker and facility. To build momentum, in Oct. 2007, they announced 2009 speakers.
- WI built their own professional data base—they now have 3500 entries; it was a LOT of work but thought worth it
- WI budgets 3 times with different budgets reflecting:
 - Worst case scenario
 - Realistic goals
 - Wonderful, ideal outcome 

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Books:



Bolton, Robert. *People Skills*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1979. *

Brinkman, Rick and Rick Kirschner. *Dealing With People You Can’t Stand: How to bring out the best in people at their worst*. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1994.

Brinkman, Rick and Rick Kirschner. *Dealing With Relatives (Even if You Can’t Stand them): Bringing out the best in families at their worst*. New York: McGraw-Hill .

Conner, Marcia. *Learn More Now*. Hoboken, New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons, 2004.

Miller, John. *QBQ! The Question Behind the Question*. Denver: Denver Press, 2001.

Rosenberg, Marshall. *Non-Violent Communication*. Encinitas, CA: PuddleDancer Press, 1999.

Stone, D., B. Patton, and S. Heen. *Difficult Conversations*. New York: Penguin Books, 1999. 

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Peggy Wiedmeyer - USWD



Leader Dept support staff:
We had a very successful session about the LLLI Organizational Database, which also

included information about Leader Activity Reporting online. Leaders Shelly Stanley (database person) and Karen Smith (online reporting person) joined us on Gizmo [a phone voice station machine]; there were 10 Leaders here at the session, plus Debbie Heffern joined us from her home – she’s a Gateway Leader (St. Louis, MO). Lots of good questions and answers. I had my laptop at the

session, logged onto the database and the leader Activity Reporting page, so session attendees could visit the screens and see what they looked like.

Diana Lewis helped me think about mentoring in some new ways, that maybe I need to be more proactive when I mentor someone. At lunch I learned about a desktop publishing program from Adobe, but I can’t remember what it’s called . . . but I remember who it was I learned it from. J My afternoon session on searches and getting the work done led to some productive brain storming and several people said they came away with some new ideas – yeah!

**Wista Waldroop - USWD
Leader Dept support staff**

The basket drawing was a gigantic success! We had **50** baskets - big & small - with all sorts of items inside. We were soooooo happy to learn that we made close to \$1400 to split between World Breastfeeding Week and LLL USA Helpline.



The sessions were all great but the best ones were in the halls and around the meal tables. Face to face meetings build such wonderful, lasting relationships and allow us to hold on til the next time we meet. 🍷🍷🍷🍷

Have you checked the LLL USA Web site lately to see if the list of ADCs for your Area is accurate. Many Leaders can use that list as a resource.

Log on to:
<http://www.lllusa.org/admin/USWDadcdirectory.php>

Some of the names are outdated and it is only changed when an Area informs Jennifer Moquin <beanmom@beanmom.com> to make the changes. Please help us get the list up-to-date. If the position is open, Jennifer needs to know that as well.

Jennifer usually replies within 1-2 weeks after the request to let you know it has been posted. Each Area is the best source of changes.

Each USWD department/workgroup usually keeps a roster of their respective Area members as well. So please continue to inform your USWD contact person of any changes in ADCs, email and address changes. Your assistance in keeping these lists up-to-date is greatly appreciated.

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and Area Council encourages Leaders/Groups to share funds with the Area and all levels of LLL. Are Leader's aware of how the Area will use WBWC funds? Some Areas choose to encourage WBWC by letting the Group keep the Area's 15%. Is this something your Area might consider?

- Part of the strategic plan of LLLI is to reach



underserved populations. WBWC offers a unique opportunity to do just this. Working with WIC and Peer Counselors on WBWC events helps to form a relationship with La Leche League. Consider planning a WBWC event in a clinic or other facility that serves low-income families. This is an excellent opportunity to distribute meeting notices and, when appropriate, information in Spanish.

- In 2008, WBWC, which is marketed nationally, had an ad in summer issue of Mothering magazine and was interviewed by public radio in the Midwest. The more WBWC is advertised, the more La Leche League becomes a household word.
- Could your Area use an additional \$500? A member of the Area Team doing fundraising on behalf of the Area could win a \$500 LLL educational scholarship or Amazon gift

certificate. These prizes and many others are available due to the generosity of our Prize Sponsors.

- Groups doing WBWC fundraising have the funds to pay Area assessments and conference registrations. Leaders who have the opportunity to attend LLL educational events in their Area recharge their batteries. Strong Leaders make for a healthy Area.
- Many Leader Applicants volunteer to be their Group's WBWC Chair. This wealth of successful interaction may encourage her to complete her application. Some of our highest WBWC prize winners have been Leader Applicants who later became Leaders.
- Members who are involved in their Group feel welcomed and appreciated. Working on a WBWC Event gives them the opportunity to have fun with other Group mothers and encourages them to bring their friends to their Group's WBWC Event.
- WBWC participation enables all levels of La Leche League to dream. The more Groups that participate, the more funds there are to further the mission of La Leche League, in old, new and always exciting ways.
- WBW Celebrations are fun. They give us all a chance to join other lactation specialists to promote what we believe in. Breastmilk is best! 🍼🍼🍼🍼

To oneself lies the whole world and if you know how to look and learn, then the door is there and the key is in your hand. Nobody on earth can give you either the key or the door to open, except yourself.

J. Krishnamurti

Tribute to Edwina Froelich, Founder


Remembering Edwina

By Wista Waldroop
USWD Leader Workgroup

Back when I was retiring as ACL (way before there was the concept of an Area team leadership), Edwina was the guest at our Area Conference that year.

I was given a handmade quilt as a thank you gift (made by Shawna Linck who was the former CLA and the new ACL.) It was a signature quilt and Area Leaders had signed squares and sent to Shawna for the quilt. She had left some squares blank so that conference guests and Leaders who did not send a square could use a marker and sign at the conference. The ALLE we had at the time—I cannot remember her name—had a young daughter who used to send me faxes (way before I had a computer—just a fax machine). She always called me "Wistawoman" and would fax pictures of me as a super-hero with a cape. It was kind of a special thing between us; soon her mom called me that too.

At the conference, Edwina heard this mother and daughter call me that and thought that was my real name. So when she signed her square to me, she signed it to "Wistawoman"! At first I was kind of horrified that she got my name wrong in indelible marker but then I realized it was kind of sweet and special that she signed it that way.

We went on to be guests together at many conferences over the years (including one hectic weekend where we were guests together at two conferences in two different Areas!) and she always thought 'Wista' was short for Wistawoman... 

Nurtured by Edwina

By Pam Young
CSI NCA/HI



Who nurtures the mother? This was the topic for the luncheon speaker, Founder Edwina Froehlich, at our 2001 Area Conference. Edwina says that we are ultimately responsible for nurturing ourselves and that doing so makes us better parents and better people. There was much food for thought, which I would like to share with you in as close to its natural state as possible. Take a cleansing breath and read slowly. Savor the wisdom from our eldest Founder.

Edwina began with the necessity of taking care of oneself. She said that we women in La Leche League should be the best at nurturing ourselves. "After all, you do it for the baby all the time." She reminded us to take a look inside and see what needs are there. "Take care of your emotional side. Remember your spirit. There is more to us than our physical body." It's not a luxury. It's a necessity. "Children without parents suffer, and people who don't nurture themselves suffer." We see the suffering most vividly when hard times hit.

Just as many in the audience were mentally logging the reasons they can't take time for themselves, Edwina switched to a gentle, but firm tone. "It just takes a few minutes of being with yourself. It's not selfish. If your spouse needed [the time], you'd figure it out. If you knew that your child needed it, you would find the time. Love would make it happen. Young mothers say, 'I don't have enough time. It's not possible.' What you're saying is, 'I don't have enough love.'" Wow! That statement made me sit up. She continued, "'Love thy neighbor as thyself.' Think about that! What does that say about taking care of ourselves?" Okay, Edwina, I'm convinced. For the sake of my family, I should take time to nurture myself.

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Edwina described how she got some time to herself when she had a baby. “My mother came over every Monday...and gave me an hour or an hour and a half to do whatever I wanted to do. I bolted out the door! Sometimes I just sat on a stool at the pharmacy and had a Coke after a long walk along the waterfront. It was blissful. You don’t need a week away, just a little time to be free for a few minutes.”

Edwina shared some thoughts on the necessity of taking time to learn from our mistakes instead of repeating the frustrating pattern and becoming resentful. Just as children learn from their mistakes, we need to, too. “You have to set aside time. Ask yourself, ‘Why did I get mad? What am I going to do about it?’” She continued, “If you are resenting something you have to do regularly, explore that. Why hate it? If you don’t look at the problem, it won’t go away.”

Nurturing yourself will make it easier to live with what you can’t change. “If you can’t change the situation, change your attitude.” As an example, Edwina talked about growing old. “I can’t change that I’m growing old. I can’t do a lot of stuff, but fighting it and resenting it...what good is that? I have to learn to accept my limitations. I never minded the idea of growing old, but frankly it’s the physical limitations that get me.”

Criticism is another thing that we are likely to have to learn to live with. Edwina reminds us to follow our hearts. “Criticism hurts and can affect your behavior if you’re not following your heart and intuition. If we listen to our inside voices, we

are able to turn a deaf ear to criticism.” She talked about how changing to please someone doesn’t make sense. There is no guarantee that the change would actually please the person and you will have gone against your inner voice. She was quite emphatic, saying, “It doesn’t pay to stifle your inner voice.”

Edwina left us with the gift that comes with age: the perspective of looking back on a long and fulfilling life. “When your family is raised, you want to be able to say, not only did I do a good job on the family, I also did a good job on me.” She reminds us that we are ultimately responsible for our own growth and development. Having a supportive spouse makes it easier, but if you don’t, Edwina doesn’t let you off the hook. She said in her characteristic gentle, firm way, “Don’t blame anyone else for not making the time. Some women say, ‘My husband wouldn’t understand.’ I say, that’s a copout!”



Edwina’s presence at our Conference added a wonderful dimension. I felt thankful she was willing to travel and share her thoughts on one aspect of mothering that is as pertinent now as it ever was. I left her luncheon speech feeling deeply satisfied and enriched by the meal, by Edwina’s practical wisdom and by the wonderful Conference. I wish all Leaders could have been there, because nurturing yourself is as important as eating.

Adapted for *ACE HI!*, the USWD newsletter for event planners, August 2008, from *Grapevine*, the Area Leaders’ Letter for Northern California and Hawaii, 2002

Pam Young is the mother of four and a Communication Skills Instructor. She engages in the practice of self-care.

