



Holidays and Stress

Just because the family always gathers at Aunt Millie's for the holiday, does this mean you absolutely must be there again this year? So much has changed since last year. Perhaps you recently lost your full-time job of eleven years and finances are tight, or your twenty-two-year-old daughter said she plans to travel to her new boyfriend's hometown and will not be home this holiday, or your marriage of twenty-three years is ending and divorce is imminent.

Traditional holiday gatherings can be worthwhile if they still bring us joy and leave us with positive feelings. If not, maybe it's time to rethink these events. Much pressure builds up due to shopping, cooking, expenses, travel, family and friends' expectations, and of course the "must attend" parties.

Suppose this holiday we try to focus on new ways we might simplify our lives. Can we courteously decline several invitations and replace them with low-key activities we would really enjoy? Think about alternate plans such as revisiting a childhood tradition that has been lost over the years or doing something that you have never thought of doing before. If you are at a loss to come up with several new ideas, consider asking others about their holiday traditions. Could one of these borrowed traditions work well for you?

There are always great needs in our local communities. How about volunteering your time to help others at your local food pantry, shelter, or soup kitchen? Many volunteers are needed to help serve holiday meals. Is there a friend, colleague, or family member who might enjoy going along with you? For volunteer opportunities, visit this website: www.volunteermatch.org.

Holidays can be an emotional roller coaster. We may experience a range of feelings: frustration, excitement, loss, happiness, loneliness, joy, disappointment, exhaustion, love. By recognizing holidays can trigger all kinds of emotions, we can try to be more accepting of our own moods and those of others. Taking some quiet walks, alone or with a friend, and keeping to your regular exercise schedule will help you balance holiday stress.

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Understanding Domestic Violence Court

Unfortunately, the reality is that every person who is reading this article knows someone who has been a victim of domestic violence. It is a sad reality. And yet, the vast majority of incidents go unreported. Sometimes it is because the victim is too afraid to say something. Sometimes there are family or financial pressures preventing a victim from coming forward. And, sometimes, it is because the victim simply does not understand the process for coming forward. This article will attempt to give you a better understanding of what a person should expect if she chooses to come forward.

The first step in this process is reporting the domestic violence. This can be done either by going to the local police department or by going to the County Courthouse. If it is a week-day between 9:00 am and 3:00 pm, you should go to the County Courthouse and ask to speak to someone about getting a "Temporary Restraining Order" (TRO). A staff member will then sit down with you to complete an application and bring you to a Superior Court Judge who will hear your story. If it is on a weekend or after 3:00 pm, you can go to the local police department and speak to an officer. That officer will then take your statement and contact the Municipal Court Judge. You will then speak to the Municipal Court Judge on the phone.

In all likelihood, after speaking to the Judge, you will be given a TRO. On the last page of the TRO there will be a notice of a court date and time for you to return to Superior Court at the County Courthouse. The date will be within 10 days of when you get the TRO. If after receiving the TRO, you realize that the description of the incident in the TRO is incomplete or that information given about prior incidents was not included, it is important that you amend the TRO. This can be done by going to the County Courthouse and asking to amend your TRO. The staff will sit down with you again in order to add any missing information. Because of the emergent nature of the application process, it is not uncommon for someone to need to go back to supplement their statement later on. No negative conclusions will be drawn if you need to amend the TRO.

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On the date of your first appearance, the court may or may not hold a hearing. Either party can request an adjournment of the proceeding at the first appearance. If both parties appear and both are ready to proceed, the Court will conduct a hearing at that time. If either party requests a postponement or if the Defendant was unable to be served with the TRO, the matter will be postponed and a new date will be issued.

When both sides appear and are ready to proceed, the court will hold a hearing. At the hearing you will be asked to testify about the allegations in your TRO. If there are witnesses or evidence that back up your statements, you should make sure to bring them with you to court. You should be prepared for the fact that you will be in an open courtroom and other people may be present when you testify. You should also be prepared to tell the court exactly what happened. While it might be uncomfortable to use certain language in front of others, or to describe events to the Judge, it is necessary. Ultimately, it is the victim's burden to convince the Judge that an act of domestic violence took place and that protections are needed to prevent future acts of violence. However, the burden is by what is called a "preponderance of the evidence." In other words, the court must believe that it is more likely than not that the incident happened and that the protections are needed.

At the conclusion of the hearing, the Judge can either convert that TRO into a Final Restraining Order or the TRO will be dismissed. If a Final Restraining Order is granted, in addition to granting protection from the defendant, the Order can also address issues of custody, parenting time, child support, paying for household bills, and even damages.

If you are a victim of domestic violence, I encourage you to reach out to the local support services. In Morris County, this organization is called JBWS and can be reached by calling 973-267-4763.

By Holly M. Friedland, Esq. Shauger & Friedland, 248 Columbia Turnpike, Florham Park, NJ; Additional information about Ms. Friedland and the content of this article can be found at www.shaugerfriedland.com

WC Newsletter

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SCC 115, Randolph, NJ 07869

973-328-5025

womenscenter@ccm.edu

www.ccm.edu/womenscenter

Mission Statement:

**To serve the varied needs of
women in their quest for
economic self-sufficiency.**

Staff

Director	Melissa Elias
Career Counselor	Susan O'Connor
Career Counselor	Maureen Haggerty
Job Placement	Michele Coneys
Legal Program Admin.	Betty Squire
Admin. Assist.	Patricia Spitnale
Admin. Assist.	Betty Squire

The Women's Center at CCM is a nonprofit organization serving displaced homemakers, single mothers, and other women. It is sponsored by the **County College of Morris**. The program is funded by the **NJ Division on Women** and the **United Way of Northern New Jersey**. The legal education services are funded by a grant from the **IOLTA Fund of the NJ Bar Foundation** and the **Morris County Bar Foundation**.

REMINDER

FREE LEGAL CLINICS

1st, 2nd, & 3rd WEDNESDAY OF EACH MONTH

CALL 973-328-5025, OR EMAIL

womenscenter@ccm.edu

FOR AN INDIVIDUAL APPOINTMENT

The Importance of Friends!

*Friends are quiet angels who lift us to our feet when
our wings have trouble remembering how to fly.*



Career Corner**Your Next Career**

What work skills would make your resume more marketable and more valuable in the marketplace? Computer skills? Writing ability? A second language? A certificate in a new field? An Associate or Bachelor's degree?

Learning new skills. We need to continually look for new learning opportunities. Perhaps there is another career you've had in mind but have been fearful of moving into that field. Maybe you know the field you would like to transition to, but aren't sure how to begin the process. You may be unaware of the education you would need, how much time it would take to prepare, and whether the training would be worth the investment of time and money.

Where do you start? An excellent career resource available online and in all libraries is *The Occupational Outlook Handbook* published by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (www.bls.gov/ooh). This book lists many careers and provides information about education/training, salary, and employment outlook.

Have a career in mind? Locate an individual whom you can interview. You have read about the field but have some practical questions to ask: for example, "what is a typical day for someone in this field?"

What if additional training is needed? When we discover special training is needed, we sometimes close the door on that career before exploring the possibilities. It is normal to be concerned about whether we would be able to do the work, whether we would have the time to devote to classes and assignments, whether we would be able to afford the program tuition, and whether we would be successful in changing jobs. These are practical, important concerns that we need to take the time to explore.

As we look towards the New Year, let's be open to the possibilities of a new career.

By *Maureen Haggerty, Career Counselor*

Empowerment Workshop

Empowerment is a twelve-week pilot program providing techniques to empower women who are currently dealing with challenging life circumstances or adversity and have a desire to increase self-esteem, coping skills, confidence, and professional or personal self-concept. Jeanne Rohach, Certified Women's Empowerment Coach and Consultant, will be using a holistic approach to building self-sufficiency, so attendees can learn how to overcome many of life's obstacles and enhance skill development.

This program begins on January 15 from 10-12; please call to register at 973-328-5025 to register.

Upcoming Job Club Topics

- 12/6 Overcoming Obstacles with Trainer & Group Facilitator, Jeanne Rohach
- 12/13 Job Hunting on the Internet with CCM Librarian, Lynee Richel
- 1/10 Secrets of a Successful Job Search – Part 1
- 1/24 Secrets of a Successful Job Search – Part 2
- 2/7 Secrets of a Successful Job Search – Part 3 with Certified Professional Coach Betty Dangler.

Job Club meets from 10-12 and is a great way to network and meet other women. All of this free help is available by calling 973-328-5025, or emailing us at womenscenter@ccm.edu and reserving your place.

Secrets of a Successful Job Search**Three Part Intensive Job Club Program**

Distinguish yourself from everyone else and make the connection! Learn from Betty Dangler, Certified Professional Coach, how to make job search skills work for you.

Be yourself; don't over or undersell yourself. Know what your body cues are saying, and demonstrate self-confidence. You have a choice – you can stay stuck in your search, or you can begin to move forward.

Consider joining us from 10-12, on January 10, 24 and February 7. Please call The Women's Center at 973-328-5025 to register or email us at womenscenter@ccm.edu and become the expert on YOU!

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We realize time is one of our most precious gifts, and it is up to each of us to think about how best to use it. As we look towards the upcoming holiday season, let's decide which traditions are most important to us and which activities will bring joy and friendship into our lives and into the lives of those we love.

Happy Holidays from the Women's Center at CCM!

Divorce Support Group

Are you struggling with the effects of divorce? Are you deciding whether this is the right decision for you? Would you like to meet other women who are dealing with the same challenges? Then consider coming to the Women's Center support group where you will be encouraged, supported and understood in a positive environment.

Meetings will be on January 9, 16, 23, 30, February 6, 13, 20, 27, and March 6, 13 from 1 pm – 2:30 pm in room HH 110 at CCM, 214 Center Grove Road, Randolph, NJ. Please call 973-328-5025 to register!

Women’s Center at CCM
Winter 2013/2014 Calendar of Activities

December

4,11 – Legal Clinic
6,13 – Job Club
Mon – Thurs – Computer Lab
Mon – Thurs – Career Counseling appointments

January

8,15,22 – Legal Clinic
9,16,23,30 – Divorce Support Group
10,24 – Job Club-Secrets of a Successful Job Search, (1&2)
15,22,29 – Empowerment Workshop
Mon – Thurs – Computer Lab
Mon – Thurs – Career Counseling appointments



February

5,12,19 – Legal Clinic
5,13,19,27 – Empowerment Program
6.13.20,27 – Divorce Support Group
7– Job Club-Secrets of a Successful Job Search, (3)
21 – Job Club - TBD
Mon - Thurs – Computer Lab
Mon - Thurs – Career Counseling appointments

March

5,12,19 – Legal Clinic
5,12,19,26 – Empowerment Program
6,13 – Divorce Work Shop
7,21 – Job Club - TBD
Mon – Thurs – Computer Lab
Mon – Thurs – Career Counseling appointments

Words of Wisdom

Self-confidence is the most attractive quality a person can have; how can anyone see how awesome you are if you can't see it yourself? - Unknown

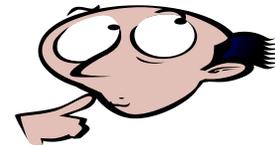


Computer Lab Appointments

Just a reminder that you can get a one-on-one training session with an instructor to learn any of the Microsoft applications. If you don't have time to attend a class, or perhaps you were put on a waiting list, call the Women's Center at 973-328-5025 for an appointment! It is free!

A Thought to Ponder

When was the last time that you did something new for the first time?



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County College of Morris
SCC 115
Randolph, NJ 07869

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