

CONNECTING

Healthy Information from the Des Moines Pastoral Counseling Center  January/February 2010

HOW TO ENJOY 'SNOW DAYS' EVERY SEASON OF THE YEAR



A SNOW DAY

By one in the afternoon, I know that it's time to get myself home. The snow that was forecast has started and is piling up fast, thick, heavy, and wet. It takes me almost half an hour to make my usual ten-minute drive from the office. I dodge skidding cars and other obstacles by driving over curbs and right up onto yards. I do whatever it takes to get home and not get stuck in this mess. Thank God for skills built up from years of winter driving.

The thrill of arriving in my garage is ecstatic. I've made it! Opening the front door to the warmth and safety of my own dwelling, I know the drill. Turn on the lights. Start the fireplace. Light the candles. Look into the fridge. Pull out everything that's singing "Soup!" Put it all in a big kettle and let it simmer. Make up a batch of pumpkin muffins to put in the oven. Make cocoa – go ahead and top it off with a splash of peppermint schnapps and a dollop of cool whip. Head for the sofa. Wrap up in the soft fleece blanket. Open the book that's been begging to spend time with me. Look out the window at the afternoon traffic that has slowed to a crawl.

Be grateful. Aaaaaah...home.

May this winter season bring you opportunities to discover the joy of simple pleasures in life.

~Kathy Reardon

This title begs some minimal description of what a snow day is. First of all, a snow day offers permission to be joyfully tucked in at home – as snug as a bug in a rug, as the saying goes. Secondly, it invites one to do only that which brings pleasure. So you wouldn't find me polishing the silver (of which I have none) or hunting down dust bunnies (of which I have many). A snow day nudges me to simply hang out and to remember that I've become a pretty good friend to myself. Although I enjoy time with my son and dear friends, it is a real blessing to enjoy my own company.

A snow day requires me to let go of my usual routines and schedule and to pay attention to what's stirring inside of me, needing to be tended, such as:

That desire to have an uninterrupted hour to read – for pleasure.

That thought to send a card or handwritten letter to someone with whom I've been out of touch – for pleasure.

That impulse to call a friend whose name just popped into my head and tell him or her that I'm thinking of them – for pleasure.

That need – and it is a deep need – to leave radio, TV, CDs and computer off for a good amount of time to allow silence to envelop me – for pleasure.

That remembrance that it is okay to cook something delectable just for myself – for pleasure.

Then there's a snow day's call to putter. I plan to elevate puttering to an art form. Puttering is a movement, a flow from one thing to another with no predetermined purpose or goal. Puttering involves wandering. Hang some clothes up. Clean a bathroom sink simply because I'm standing at it. Neaten the kitchen counter. Go through things piled on my desk. Organize a drawer. Balance the check book. Flip through a cookbook or an unread magazine.

Daydream – a lot.

When I'm in my puttering mode, things seem to "get done," but the intention is never to accomplish anything in particular. Puttering never feels like work. It's relaxing. There is no "to do" list to follow.

It seems to me that puttering longs to be introduced more into my everyday life. Like the good china (of which I have none) or the sterling silver flatware (none of that either), puttering should be used every day. Why? Because it's such a joy!

So I will become mindful of dressing in my puttering garb more often. I'll look at my life more and more with the attentive yet relaxed eyes of a maturing putterer. Who knows? As I grow in my puttering acumen, I may find that I'll want to carry my puttering self right out the door of my home into the world.

Where might the wanderer be birthed from the womb of the goddess of puttering take me? Now there's an adventure in the making!

Thank you, O Spirit of Putter. May you bless all of my days with your lightness, your ease, your delight, your wanderlust. Let me grow in trust and knowledge of your presence. Long live snow days – every day, in every season!

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Kathy Reardon is a holistic nurse, spiritual director, and Certified Healing Touch Practitioner. She holds a bachelor of nursing degree from the College of St. Scholastica and a master of science degree in counseling from Drake University. Kathy combines Healing Touch with other holistic approaches to assist her clients in growing in self-responsibility, empowered well-being, and wholeness. She has a special interest in working with those in trauma, life threatening illness, grief and loss, and critical life transitions. Kathy is a co-director of the Center's PrairieFire program. As a spiritual director, Kathy plans and facilitates retreats, and presents programs on prayer, spirituality, and adult faith formation.