



A Personal Note from Single Steps Strategies Founder Mary Grace Musuneggi

I Need Help!!!

Most of the stress that we experience in our lives comes from the unexpected, the unplanned for, and what we normally refer to as “emergencies.” How often do we find ourselves in situations where as these things occur, we don’t know what steps to take next? Wouldn’t it be wonderful if we had at our disposal a resource of people who could make the wrongs alright? If the moment we need them, we could call on the person who can fix the broken or undo the damage that unexpected events can cause?

What if when we found ourselves floundering to solve a family problem, a financial issue, a legal concern, we knew just whom to call? What if when the washer stopped washing or the sink started dripping or the furnace would no longer heat the house, we had a database of people we could trust to rush to help us?

A few years ago I walked into my dining room to find that the chandelier was pulling away from the ceiling. I was afraid it would come crashing to the floor. Wanting to have it handled quickly and not knowing an electrician, I pulled out the yellow pages and started to thumb through. The first and biggest ad that I came to promised 24 hour and same day service available. Without hesitation, I called as I was sure that this was the answer to my immediate need. And as promised they sent someone right away. But as soon as the repairman came in the door, he asked me for a charge card to bill me for his initial service fee; and said it would be deducted from the total cost of the repair. He had not even looked at the light fixture at that point; and he made it clear that he did not take checks. As intelligent as I am, I was not at that moment suspicious of this technique, because I was too anxious to get the chandelier fixed. When he finally went into the dining room he quoted me a price that was totally out of line. In fact it was more than the chandelier was worth. When I complained, he simply headed to the door and said I would be charged the initial service fee for his travel time and estimate. As I finally came to my senses, I told him if he did I would report him to the Attorney General’s office, as now this whole thing looked like a scam. He countered by saying that if I paid him his fee in cash he would tear up the credit card receipt; and fix the light. Wow, had I been conned. But I went along with the deal because now I was “between a rock and a hard place.”

After he fixed the light and he left, I called the Better Business Bureau and the Attorney Generals office, as I could only think of all the “little old ladies” who were being ripped off by this guy. Not surprisingly I found that both organizations were aware of this company and they had had numerous complaints. Why hadn’t I contacted them first?

Hindsight, they say, is 20-20. We learn so much after the fact. So I promised myself that something like this would never happen to me again. I decided to create my own “yellow pages” directory. I began by using the phonebook as a guide and I made a list of all classifications. But instead of just picking someone from the book to be my personal electrician, plumber, painter, handyman, doctor, lawyer, Indian chief; I spent the next 6 months asking friends, family, and business associates who they use. After I got a referral I checked with the BBB. Then I called each person and talked to them personally. I told them I was adding them to my personal yellow pages, and told them who referred me. I told them they were on my list as I heard they gave great service.

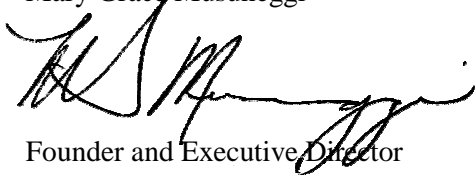
To say the least they were glad to hear that. Now I knew them and they knew me.

Over the years I have added a few names in each category, just because things do change. And any time I hear someone rave about the service they get, I ask for the service provider’s name.

So now when an emergency arises my stress level is significantly reduced when I know the right person to call upon. And know they will be glad to take my call.

On October 6, 2007, *Single Steps Strategies* will be having our **3rd Annual Day of Empowerment**. We will be assembling a ballroom full of professionals and service providers who you could add to your personal yellow pages. They will be providing information, education and strategies to help your business and your personal life. To learn more, go to our website at www.singlestepsstrategies.com.

Mary Grace Musuneggi

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Musuneggi', written over the printed name.

Founder and Executive Director

September 2007