



Stars

By Joan Courtney

Stars. We in the White Mountains are gifted with clear skies and bright stars. I step out for my morning walk and am dazzled by all the stars I can see. Some are large, with a steady light. Others are much smaller and seem to twinkle. Some are grouped in bunches, leaving a vast area of darkness between them and others. Still others have a color or perhaps I'm seeing a planet. I know if I looked through a telescope into the sky, I would see far, far out into the galaxy, with

nebula creating other formations. And, as in the course of nature, some are even extinguishing themselves.

As the sunrise comes each day, the stars seem to disappear. The Morning Star, in its glory, is the last to remain. These glittering points of light are not visible to the naked eye with sunlight around but are still there. When clouds are overhead, the stars are blocked from sight. But they are still there. During a new moon, the stars are brilliant. I can easily see them, with the shape of the Big Dipper sharp and clear. The Milky Way arches across the sky, creating a path for the imagination. During the recent full moon, with its intense light, these sparkling delights were barely visible. And yet they still exist.

Just as the stars are always there, you have a treasure chest of resources within yourself. Some of these gems sparkle and shine for you have used them for a long time. Others are waiting to be discovered or polished. Just as the stars are constant, your skills, talents, and abilities are always there. You might not be aware of them but they are waiting for you to discover them.

The bigger stars are more prominent. Similar to skills you have developed over the years, they shine their light. Like to fish and have done that for a long time? Your "fishing star," with knowledge of tension in the line and muscle memory as to how you pull the fish in, is fairly bright. Quilted for years and are honing your skills? Your "quilting star," with an eye for exact lines and perfect cutting techniques, will be dazzling.

Some stars are much, much smaller. These ideas need to be nurtured inside before they can be put out to shine. How about traveling? The concept starts as a tiny seed ("I think it would be fun to head over to Durango and ride the train"); then expands your world with new adventures. That star may grow brighter as the next trip takes you overseas. But that first dream starts out small.

Some of these stars would include developing personal traits. Courage, inner strength, future planning or even a sense of humor would fit here. These small stars can be cultivated to someday burst into a swirling nebula of opportunities and values. Getting along in years and realize you need to know more about the computer to further your game plan? You may tap into courage and grit and begin to learn. Did life change dramatically with a death or divorce? Time to discover and polish up the stars for inner strength. Perhaps even a sense of humor.

This treasure chest within is always available to you. Your challenge, should you choose to accept it, is to discover the stars inside you – the skills, talents and abilities -- and make them shine. Your life, your body

and your mind will thank you. For, after all... is it possible that stars are like a handful of diamonds randomly tossed across the sky? Who knows what you will find?