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A Tumbleweed Christmas

By Jane Fulton

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In those days, I worked for the Dept. of Motor Vehicles, in the state of California. I lived in Lancaster, California, which is about 50 miles north of Los Angeles. This is dessert area. Very hot in the summer time and snow every three years in the winter time.

This particular winter was an easy winter. At least the weather was easy. My life started to crumble before my very eyes.

At the ripe age of 38, I almost had a stroke on my job and was ordered by my doctor to quit my job. Quit my job! What was I going to do? We were in a small town and jobs were scarce!

I could never find a job with the job security I had with the State of California. The good part is I had a choice, if you could call it that. I could stay on my current job and risk dying there or I could quit and live for my child. What a choice! For me, there was only one choice. My child came first.

The only work I had ever done was in offices and most of the jobs listed in the local paper wanted you to type 80 words per minute. I must admit typing was never my best attribute and 80 words per minute was way out of my range; 60 words per minute was more in my range.

I had managed to save a little nest egg while I was working and drew out my retirement money. I tried to start a home business, but failed with that. My money was almost gone and I didn't have anything to fall back on.

On top of all of that, it was getting close to Christmas. Now what? The only alternative I had was to go to the Dept of Public Services [better known as welfare]. They told me it would be two months before I could receive any money, although I would get food stamps right away. Well, at least I knew we would eat at Christmas time! What about gifts, a tree and all the other things that my daughter and I had gotten used to all those years? You know, the "traditional" things all families in the United States had at Christmas? I knew one thing, I couldn't and wouldn't let my daughter down!

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I took sewing in school, had made men's suits at one time and had an old sewing machine. A friend of mine had given me ten bolts of material they had stashed away when cleaning out their garage. I would make my daughter some clothes for Christmas.

My daughter, at 11 years old, was so brave. After I explained our situation to her, she set about asking one of our neighbors to teach her how to do macrame. If you aren't familiar with this craft, it was used to make the plant holders they had then out of yarn.

I didn't know she was doing this and I set about sewing her Christmas gifts while she spent time at the neighbors house. I thought she was playing and having a good time.

I still had one problem. What would I do about a tree? I told my daughter that we wouldn't be able to have a tree this Christmas. She said to me, "Mom, why not use a tumbleweed?". I thought about it and said why not? They were plentiful in the dessert and free.

We went out and chose a tumbleweed just as if we were picking out the perfect Christmas tree. When we found the right one, we came home, put lights on it and popped pop corn and strung them for the tree.

Christmas morning we arose full of anticipation and excitement. I was surprised to find two gifts under the tree with my name on them. How did my daughter get me two gifts? She had no money.

When I questioned her about it, she said, "Just open them mom!". I opened them and was pleasantly surprised! They were simply beautiful. They even matched my decor! She explained how all the time she had spent at the neighbors house, she had been learning to make these for me. This touched my heart to the core.

I have never forgot it to this day. Neither has my daughter. When she talks about Christmas now, she always mentions our tumbleweed Christmas and how she remembers that Christmas over all the rest. She always refers to it as the best Christmas we ever had.

Jane Fulton owns 5 sites and publishes 3 newsletters. She has been helping people online since 2000. For more articles like this on, sign-up for Woman 2 Woman at:<http://woman2woman.biz>

What Do You Want This Year?

By Angie Dixon

Christmas is all around us, and many people are making up wish lists. Those who aren't doing that are busy setting down their New Year's Resolutions already. But this is a good time to sit down and do some serious introspection.

What do you want from the holidays this year? Do you want to rush around, spend a lot of money you don't have, and yell at the kids for not playing with all twenty of the toys they asked for—at the same

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time? Is that really how you want to spend Christmas?

We talk about "Christmas spirit," and mostly we mean giving. Giving of ourselves, giving to people who need it. That's great, that's Christmas spirit.

But I think there's another aspect to "Christmas spirit." I think it's spiritual. And don't close your screen on me because I said spiritual. I didn't say religious, because it's not. I think it comes from our souls.

I think deep down, each of us has a spirit that wants to be expressed. And I think at Christmas, when we're naturally thinking of others, that spirit is more easily expressed. I think if you want to, you can have a spiritual Christmas. You can feel loving, caring, generous. You can feel like a kid at Christmas, just by opening up to your spirit.

So what do you want this year?

Angie Dixon helps small business owners get their acts together. She is a personal development coach specializing in helping people integrate their home and work lives so they feel less stretched and more balanced. Get her FREE EBOOK on balance at

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to discover how coaching can change your life, contact Angie at

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