In confused seasons

Giving hope to the robins

The lilies push through

I wrote this haiku after spotting my day lilies covered with snow. These lilies are my signal that spring has arrived. But this image sent a mixed message. “Is winter ever going to end?” I sulked. But then a plump, beautiful robin landed on the fence. As I looked at the hardly lilies and the well-fed robin, I had my answer. Spring had not been cancelled. It was coming.

For our clients, especially those living at our emergency shelter, life can seem like an eternal winter. They, too, desperately crave a fresh season. But it seems like it’s never going to arrive. At these moments, we have to encourage clients to push past the setbacks, just like the snow-topped day lilies.

We encourage women to take it one day or even one hour at time. We listen when a woman needs to vent. We applaud steps toward independence – a completed job application; an hour spent searching for an apartment. We celebrate birthdays and host baby showers. Even in the midst of struggle, we have to cherish what is good.

In so many ways, you also show how much you care about our clients. When I visit shelter, I see residents curled in the blankets. It makes me smile as I think of the knitters who donated those blankets, literally wrapping our clients in love. When we needed towels at shelter, stacks and stacks arrived. You are amazing!

Here are some wonderful ways you can help our clients keep going and feel hopeful this spring:

1. Write an encouraging note and email (executivedirector@wchkenosha.org) or mail to me: Diana Newton, Women and Children’s Horizons, 2525 63rd Street, Kenosha, WI, 53143. Please do not include your full name or any identifying information. We will deliver the notes to clients. If you like to draw or paint, we’d love to have an image on the note, too!
2. Adopt a Room! We are giving each bedroom at shelter a fresh makeover – new bedding, flooring and inspirational art work. The adopter or sponsor of each room will be recognized on a plaque outside each room. Kenosha Lions Foundation is our first adopter. Thank you, Lions! This kind of help sends a powerful message to clients: “You matter. We are here for you, and a new season is on its way.”
3. Use your green thumb to plant pretty flowers around shelter.
4. Shop at Nifty Thrifty, 4200 39th Avenue, Kenosha. The more you shop at Nifty, the more you help our clients. All profit at Nifty goes toward helping families recover from domestic violence or sexual assault.
5. Donate fresh veggies from your summer garden so that our shelter families can eat nutritiously.

Most importantly, keep being your amazing, wonderful, giving self. We so appreciate your supporters!

From all of us at WCH, we wish you a wonderful spring!

Diana Newton