

# Part 2

## Support The Circle of Odds

In my December President's message, I touched on the circle of support as it relates to our Chapter's Strategic Plan. I have discovered another circle of support within our chapter.

There is a wonderful aspect of the IAAP that has helped me tremendously in my personal and professional life – the support I personally receive from IAAP. IAAP has supported me through a few job changes by providing me with resources that have helped me attain new skills needed to become successful in new roles in my professional life.

In October of 2009, I experienced a layoff in the worst economic downturn since the Great Depression at the beginning of the last century. There were at most a few admin jobs advertised at any one time, and most of the time, none advertised. It was looking pretty bleak, job wise. My husband's income was also seriously affected by the downturn. I had some personal trials at the same time: my husband was recovering from a serious accident and an associated serious medical condition, and I also needed a surgery that would require some down time. No problem with the down time – it had been provided to me through the lay-off. I asked myself what else could possibly go south, and on the surface it seemed that I was in a downward spiral. I was worried, to say the least.

I was in a spiral of sorts, but once again, I found support in IAAP. I used resources made available to me to brush up my resume and portfolio. Last year we had a great portfolio program from one of our members, and I found the handouts and reviewed them. I re-read the handouts from the resume program from last spring and followed some of those guidelines to create a good cover letter. I held on to the words of encouragement and job tips from the chapter members and kept my chin up and applied to jobs I didn't feel qualified for. I used my network of friends and acquaintances to find the jobs that weren't advertised, found confidence in my abilities and landed a few freelance jobs to get me through a period of the lowest income my family has seen in over 5 years.

I started my new position as Administrative Supervisor at a regional mental health organization on February 10, 2010. The support I received from IAAP, both from people I know and those I don't, was an integral force in my successful job search. I'm thankful every day for the circle of support that IAAP has brought to me. It isn't something I could put my finger on, but it is the biggest benefit of membership in IAAP. Thank you to everyone who was a part of that circle.

Karen Loughman, President  
IAAP Book Cliff Chapter