

Steph Kew July 2, 2017

Greetings and salutations. Welcome to the Who's and What's of Steph Kew's inspiration.

When first approached for this assignment, I wanted to "run like the wind", away. I said you want me to what, in front of, standing, WOW!

I gave this subject meaningful thought and a lot of memory work. - Pat my big "girl priorities on"

To me thinking about and giving credit to the people in my life who have inspired me along my road is like "accepting an academy award" and like who should I thank first and not forget anyone.

My close friends would probably tell you that most of my inspiration comes from a combo of Mae West, Gypsy Rose and Gloria Stenium. Just kidding, Not all yet.

To give you a quick scenario of my start in life, I am the oldest of seven children (6 girls-1 boy) of two World War II vets. I won't use the term "born" to them I was always told "some crow shit me on the fence and the sun hatched me" So any old crow could be my mother. On a serious note I lived with my dear sweet evangelical, republican maternal grandmother in my early years. Her name is Marie Crocker, no relation to Betty but Pop always said she was his "sister". Everything good I ever learned was from Gram. She took me to church, what seemed like all the time, but I loved her. Sorry Gram I didn't hold up to your standards. She taught me to cook, bake, clean and iron. She gave up on crocheting. Ugh, piano lessons. She also told me to be nice to "old people" because I would be old someday. Sorry Gram, not me. She always said this to me which I carry with me today. When I complained about something, she would say to me, "Stephanie Dickerson, you think you have it so bad, look over your shoulder and you will see someone has it worse!". This has always been my mantra.

take me
Guru

In our small town Clarendon, PA we had many Italian Polish speaking people. My best friends GM couldn't speak English, she was embarrassed! I thought why, I should be embarrassed because my GP could only speak English. I wanted this lady to be my GM so I could go to her house and try and communicate. She had a warm "smile" and great hugs. She also smelled like garlic which I dearly love today. Some how we got along. She would give me a store list. I would walk to the store. The brothers who owned the store spoke Italian so I guess I got the right staff. I loved my Italian GM. I got invited to their houses, celebrations and baptisms, none of which our family had. I loved it all. My mother crow must be Italian. I knew their religious holidays. I didn't like the church though, too much kneeling too long, you get it. I even learned some words. Nice and bad too. I knew I was Italian! I was impressed with her courage coming to a new world. Can you imagine the surprise when I was told I am NOT Italian, I am German and Irish. I said what, I wanted so much to be a part of a fun family. Hence, start of my partying. Ya think.

she would also give me candy cookies

When I was nine I felt like I was pulled from the womb because my father got a job at Republic Steel in Buffalo, they made me go. Another shock to my "happy Italian life" was when the father got a job in Buffalo, NY and we had to move. I felt like I was being pulled out of the womb, I wanted to stay!!!

End of 2 GM - everyday

Moving to New York State was a big shock, first a one room school house, four grades, I was used to two grades in one room. There were farms, and grape vineyards all over the place. I was nine years old!!

When I was ten years old we moved to a farm. It was like when you rent with a bunch of kids, you would ^{have to} be on the farm. Our neighbor had cows. My father thought it was time to milk, hay and shovel dung. Really!!

L. Leuchus

The old farmer was a weird looking guy. Sparse teeth and thinning hair but what a story teller. He also had a nickname of "snowball". The reason for that is he had predicted the weather. He was a local legend and tv and radio personnel would consult him and ~~it~~ was more accurate than the farmers almanac. He also had a sidekick, a large Tom turkey named Ken. This turkey was big. He and snowball would communicate. Ken looked like he and snow had a conversation. Ken was also a ^{ball} ~~form~~ ^{form} on the farm. He would watch us work. Ken had a place in the house, no coop for him. He was kind of neat.

Snowball talked to a Southern accent - but was born & raised in the same farm he owns -

I worked in the fields with all kinds of folks. Puerto Rican's use to come and work the farms in the summer. Go back to PR in the fall. This was the 60's before PR was a US territory. I still don't know Spanish!! Farming is hard work. I knew when I graduated (if I did) I was hitting the road. I hoped I never had to see another grape. Boy did that change!!!

to be a nurse =

From the time I was five years old I wanted to be a nurse. I don't know why but I ^{must} started my career early when I was the neighborhood doctor. Gave physicals. *have been*

I did graduate, lucky between farm chores and ^{housework} homework. I was told I was not college material, besides I was told I had a "peanut shuck" between my ears. Oh well, (You proved them wrong a thousand times over!) the military was an option because I was considered a "badass" in need of discipline, military service was the best option!! Education and travel sounds good to me. My recruiting officer made it sound even better. The Vietnam War was already going on. "They needed me" October 28th 1964, six days after my 18th birthday, I was Inducted into the Woman's Army Corp and shortly there after was on my way to where? Anniston Alabama, then Fort Sam Houston Texas for ~~corp~~ man training. *- seeing my first choice filled up -*

I don't think I was even scared because I wanted to get away!!

Basic training was what it was. I still don't know my right from my left!

In our barracks we had girls from all over the US. It was great getting to hear about their homes, especially Alaska and Hawaii.

One big incident that is forever burned in my memory goes like this: We were able to have a day pass to go into town. Great, sounds like fun. Then we were told this shocking statement. If we had black friends in the barracks we couldn't be with them in town. I was did I hear the Sgt. correctly? No she just didn't say I couldn't walk with my friends. I flew in with my two friends on their way to basic like me and we ended up in the same platoon and now this. The Sgt must have seen the defiant look on my face because she said it would make it worse on them!!! We are military, we are representing

2-

the United States. They have to walk on the opposite side of the street from me. I was beyond mad (I'm really surprised your team didn't get it) but I made up my mind this will be the first many last time this will ever happen. This was the 60's. this was the Deep South but I don't get it. When we came back to the barracks I was most apologetic to my two friends and they thanked me but understood. I will never forget that.

Graduation from basic training. I found out that Ron Sam for me, school filled up. OJT (on the job training) with a promise of applying one year past duty station. I thought should I run, but where, back to picking grades no. I will take on for the team. Deal!!

My duty station was Kenner Army Hospital, Fort Lee, Virginia. After two weeks of hands on training by the chief nurse, a few doctors and her assistant chief a major general, they let us loose. There were four of us altogether. *we worked on each other*

The first day on the unit my first job was a patient who had died and I was about to learn how to care for a dead body. Then I got a tour of the morgue as well. The *first* had been to a dead body was a fun and interesting. The aides that instructed had done this a few times or they acted like

In the 60's at Kenner the women cared for the women and the male techs cared for the males. I had some great role models in civilian personnel, two nurses and aides I dearly loved and yes they were black. We were all one at the hospital, all equals. *until all the males were sent to Nam*
I want to give love and thanks to Mae Thomas, Mae ... For their kindness, expertise and patience. Besides they were a lot of fun, they cooked really good too. Introduced me to collard greens, real fried chicken and sweet potato pie. Yum!
they identified
Disolve -

Wednesday was GYN day. I learned how to take care of female issues. Thursday was TIA day, lots of kids, plus other surgeries and medical issues as well. One certain RN I became close to was Miss ... (can't spell her name) she was Greek *here* and ran a tight ship. She took me under her wing, instructed me on med, *even let me pass meds occasionally. We became friends - She was a great cook too.*

I will be forever grateful for these mentors and the patients, *female* I met along the way. I became friendly with the Sgt who ran the *main* port, ambulances mainly. I met his wife when I took care of her when she suffered a Miscarriage. We became close friends and as a result *we* become friends be called to ride the ambulance when taking patients to Walter Reed Hospital in DC, that was great. Fed the Sgt. Was from Germany. He had a story to tell, I listened to it all. He even made his own beer too. Over the years we lost contact. I think of them often. *he was 6 or 7 yrs old - when ... filled ... came. took his ... the med ...*

One year passed in duty station, school followed up, didn't qualify to go to Nam, no school. I will apply to Germany to go, didn't have school. Ugh! When I found out I was on orders for Alaska, I decided I would go back home, get married to an old

boyfriend. ^{in the 2000s}
-boy, in the Army you couldn't be married or pregnant to stay in the service. I felt like they screwed me, "so tit for tat".

Back home, married, two kids came rain or shine. Landed a job in our small local hospital which was located on Lake Eisenhower to the NYS thruway. - We got all kinds of 3.5 - 4.0

I worked night shift because my kids were small. Childcare was difficult. The hospital only had on call Dr's, the RN's functioned as Dr's and the LPN's as RN's. aides worked as LPN's. I had great mentors. I worked in labor and delivery. The RN and I had to deliver a baby before the doctor got there or going to the ER for a trauma. I prefer "blood & guts". I was a willing learner. Love it all. The nurses urged me to go back to school.

^{It was 2000}
The year my youngest daughter ~~was here~~ applied to LPN school. Got it. ⁱⁿ
That day my journey started. After graduation I started my RN journey.

^{got formal education}
Unexpected turn, my ex-husband Joe Bethlehem Steel brought us to central PA in 1981. I kept working on my RN one course or two. While working full time and raising a family I eventually got my RN with encouragement from my children, friends and coworkers.

My children have always been ^{and} always be an inspiration to me. They are creative, humorous and also "Demented" ^{like} like me. I took great pride in that.

^{Sticks}
Without all the support and encouragement from all my peers I would not be the nurse I am today. While working on the ER ^{and a few patients & friends} I drew strength from my many patients and families I have had the privilege of caring for all the years. ^{help from from² college came and children - after all I deserved it - Right -}

I drew strength from my many patients and families I have had the privilege of caring for all the years.

To the many people I have smiled at, said hello to, only to hear their whole life story. Some good, some bad, all interesting. I thank you.

^{UCIT}
To my Community, which ^{found} found while taking a course on world religions it when I read the I knew it was for me. Three women ^{you} who I met first and formed a friendship need mentioned because they are in the spirit world. Kay ^{of} Maureen Callahan, Sandy Eckert. Thank you ladies ^{cox (loved her big peeps)}
^{her humor and courage of the Goddess - her friendship}
^{informed me more about UCIT} My "peeps", I call them. Love their creativity and friendship, thank you.

Maya Angelo, thank you for your stories, your ^{peeps} courage, your ^{peeps} peeps, your ^{peeps} beauty, your ^{peeps} knowledge - your ^{peeps} love & ^{peeps} people

^{SAN}
The first time I say Maya in person I was mesmerized. The stage was set only one small light, then the voice. She started to sing "caged bird" then she appeared

on stage, larger than life in a beautiful full length baby blue dress. She is a tall lady, 6 foot to be exact. She was amazing. I would follow her any where.

My daughter and I had an opportunity to see her in Harrisburg at the forum. She was amazing. My daughter an English major was most than impressed. My favorite poem, "Phenomenal Woman" Thank you Maya.

*...were in awe
I own several of her books thanks to my daughter Keely*

In closing, I will give you two of my favorite sayings:

Eat Ubbie?

Eat, drink and be merry for tomorrow Life is not a dress rehearsal, no do

overs.

Eat Hep Burns

Won't take nothing for my journey now.

*...ite g a book by
Sage Angelina*