



Dear Friends of Goodness To Go,

Happy, Happy, Happy 2013! May you create and live the authentic life of your dreams. May deep peace and compassion thrive within your heart and throughout the world. May your soul be free to sing and dance, praise and love. May your goodness be on the go.

It's time to experiment with the format of Goodness To Go newsletters, and your ideas and feedback are welcomed. This month, I've included a letter about my reflections on gun control that I mailed to President Obama two days ago. If you're willing, expand and amplify the conversation through your social networks.

December 26, 2012

Dear President Obama,

For more than twenty years, I've worked as a physician serving thousands of Americans from New York to Colorado. Some are target shooters and hunters who've shared with me their interest in these endeavors. Of course, many of the patients I've served suffer with mental illness. My father's surgical trauma training was in Detroit. I remember his comment that when people's psychological balance is lost in a state of rage or revenge, they reach for the most deadly weapon at their disposal. The victims' chances of survival were much greater if that weapon was a knife, not a gun.

The recent massacre of women and children in Newtown kindergarten classes has reignited a national debate about gun control. Many ask when our tragic grief will translate into sufficient political will. As a physician, teacher, and mother, I am adding my voice in support of your intent to limit access to semi-automatic weapons. I understand that if political opponents and lobbyists refuse to move from entrenched, self-serving beliefs, executive powers intended to uphold the greater good may need to be instituted.

Today, my twelve year old daughter asked what ammunition is and a friend told me he'd purchased another semi-automatic rifle at his private gun range. Although some people enjoy target practice as a hobby, fear and the desire to protect one's self and one's family fuel many other behaviors. The spirit of the Second Amendment protects an individual's right to use a firearm in self-defense. The opportunity to have a handgun in the event of intrusion into one's home is understandable and acceptable to the safety of society as a whole. However, what rational or righteous justification is there to insist on the "right" to own weapons of war with clips that can fire hundreds of bullets in minutes? Like surgeons, gunmen wield the power of life and death. Both should have years of rigorous training, life-long education, and on-going assessments of their cognitive and psychological health.

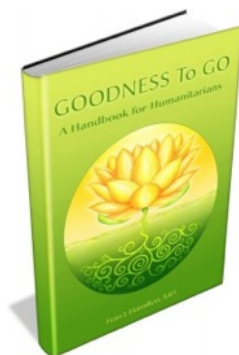
levels of freedom and honor democratic principles whose intention is to protect the rights of the community as well as the individual. Civil liberties are inseparable from profound civil responsibilities, and do not include the right for civilians who are not members of a well-regulated militia to own assault weapons. The escalation of potentials for violence cannot lead to true peace or security.

With hundreds of millions of guns owned by American citizens, it's easy to say that the cat's out of the bag. Fearing access restrictions, gun sales have sky-rocketed in the days following the murders in the Connecticut classrooms. There are many attempts to justify this folly. Some reflect themes of corruption and anarchy, insisting that democratic American society is crumbling like it is in countries ruled by tyrannical dictators, and it's every man for himself. Others flame fears of conspiracy, warning that all dictators have limited citizens' ability to arm themselves, and many threaten that stricter gun regulations mean that only the bad guys will have guns. It is not professional criminals who are the homicidal-suicidal gunmen murdering Americans in their churches, shopping malls, and schools. It was a mentally deranged man who set fire to his mother's home and murdered the volunteer firefighters who responded. Goodness and innocence are being slaughtered by madmen. Social systems and police departments are in place to address the violent criminality in our midst.

Although complete safety is not possible and there are no simplistic answers to the gun control issue, it is time for vision, open-minded conversation, and wise action. Thank you for mobilizing the courage and integrity required to substantially increase both community safety and opportunities for improved mental health for millions of individuals.

Fran I. Hamilton, M.D.

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Mobilize Your Goodness

Remember that the effect of one good-hearted person is incalculable. We're all connected and helping others helps ourselves. Actively delight in your own goodness and rejoice in the potential for goodness that we all share. **What is a small, specific, scheduled step that you could take this week to leave the world a kinder, more loving, and interconnected place?** Success is measured not only in achievements but in lessons learned, lives touched, and moments shared along the way. The journey of a lifetime can be in a single step from "no" to "yes".

Many serve simply because it does good and it feels good. [Goodness To Go - A Handbook](#)

potential. In the nest of hope, dreams grow bold, and then they grow wings. May your vision for 2013 soar on wings of goodness. At this auspicious beginning, hold the vision of global peace, justice, and equity close to your heart as you mobilize your integral service. Let us be a force of goodness in the world together. Radiate joy. Cultivate hope. Share love. Practice peace. Best wishes for a new year filled with light and wonder and goodness to go!

Celebrating integral service,



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Fran I. Hamilton, M.D.

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