



CHANGE VS. RESOLVE - by Marney W. DeFoore, LCSW-S

“I have a tradition every year on Christmas Eve. I stay up all night long keeping the fire lit, wrapping last-minute presents, assembling toys, stuffing stockings, snacking on home-made Christmas treats, and watching the old black and white film classic “It’s a Wonderful Life.” Over the years I have begun to use this time to reflect on my past year, examine the ‘me’ that I am nowadays and to springboard myself into the New Year. This is how it has come about for me.

As I watch the film, I take time to evaluate myself. I ask, “Who am I taking for granted? What and who am I ignoring right here right now that is in need of my attention? What are the opportunities that lay before me this very minute for truly relishing and enjoying my life?” My answers to these questions are usually a sweet “welcome back” to the ‘me’ I really want to be. This also gives me a fantastic kick-start for Christmas morning! After staying up all night long I usually need quite of strength. There’s nothing like a good cup of coffee and a good fresh attitude to see me through.

Here are some of my nutshell thoughts on getting this done for yourself. For years you have heard me say this. You’ve read about this in my emails, letters, and even in this Newsletter. So if you are not interested in change then stop reading right here and skip to something else. Still reading? Good!

DECISION

Don’t waste your time with resolutions. Instead, make a decision and use this approach to make it stick. I keep talking about making a new decision because the clarity and feasibility of your decision predicates success.

Get started by asking yourself, “What do I want to change?” As you listen to your own answers take a piece of paper and write down what you are saying to yourself verbatim. Edit your answers to make them clear, concise, positive and measurable. When you have chipped away long enough you will see your finished product – “I have decided that I _____.” What you DO from here will separate you from the part of society that sets but never reaches new goals year after year.

ACT

The time is NOW to DO something about your new DECISION. I know... ALL CAPS is like screaming... ok, so be it! Read the sentence again... the time is NOW. Get busy doing things, taking actions and making steps that are positive and supportive of your new decision. Do this despite all else. That is, take these action steps even though you don’t “feel” like it. Act even though you don’t “want” to. Act even though you don’t think it will work. What do you have to

loose? The worse case scenario is that you stay exactly as you are, right? Fa-getaboutit. When you act in this way CHANGE IS COMIN'!

HABIT

Take your new actions and repeat them – daily! Some researchers have said that it takes 2,000 repetitions to make a reaction natural. Get busy ya'll. Start repeating the positive actions that support your new decisions or re-decisions. Repeat, repeat, repeat – that's how we learn, grow, and change. You know us... we are all about CHANGE!

ATTITUDE

News Flash... This just in... Hot off the press... Stand-by for the latest... YOU ARE IN CHARGE OF YOUR ATTITUDE!!! There, I said it! Do you get it? What I've decided, acted on, and made into the habits of my life – these actually form the core of my attitudes. So as new decisions are made and acted on and supported with the development of repeated behavior changes through new habits NEW ATTITUDES emerge.

FEELINGS

Finally... feelings. You know this already but I'm going to tell you again (because I need to hear this, too!) You are responsible for your own feelings. Now at this point I'm addressing the Parent/Adult partnership in you. While the Inner-Child is the point of expression for these feelings, it's the Parent/Adult responsibility to DECIDE the feelings that you as a human being choose to experience. The Parent/Adult then takes ACTION on the decision. The Parent/Adult forces the self to make these new actions into HABIT. These habits for new ATTITUDES, and lastly the new attitudes foster new FEELINGS.

Whew!!!! That's a bit exhausting, yet invigorating at the same time! This process is so exciting to me that writing it down even for the umpteenth time still gets my blood going! I am passionate about this not only because I believe in the clinical foundation of what I saying, but also because I've been practicing this process for over twenty years and am living proof to myself that this really works!

Ok, that's it. No more... the rest is up to you. I'll just sit here and be quiet now... waiting for you to let us know your success stories! CHANGE NOW!"

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