

I Believe in a Better Tomorrow....

By Deb Landry

I believe in God, in the Universe and in myself. I believe that the world is an astonishing place even though we are engrossed in economic crisis, hunger, war and corruption.

I believe that people focus too much on the little things and not on the big picture. I believe that we as humans are very hard on ourselves. We are our own biggest critiques.

For instance, as New Year's is upon us, we are thinking of the laundry list of personal clean up. We all have good intentions to make the list of New Year's resolutions with hope to make our lives easier, healthier and less stressful and then by February we are disappointed that we didn't stay on course.

Sticking to our resolutions or making changes can be difficult but it is not impossible by any means. Just making a resolution to change one thing will make you healthier and it's a wonderful gift to give ourselves. The American Psychiatric Association offers some tips to help you focus and be more successful with your New Year's Resolutions.

Try again. Everyone has made, and broken past resolutions, that does not mean that you won't succeed this time. Start with a positive approach, including thinking about what has disrupted your good intentions in the past. Don't discourage yourself with a negative outlook.

Don't make too many resolutions. Trying to eat better, exercise more, quit smoking, and reduce stress is too much to tackle at once. Pick a realistic, attainable goal with a reasonable time frame.

Choose your own resolution. Make sure this is something that you want to accomplish for yourself and not for friends or family. When you attain the goal, they will benefit from your success as well.

Make a plan and write it down. Plan what you'd like to accomplish in three or six months. Achieving small goals over time gives you a sense of accomplishment and motivation to keep going. Writing your goals, down is a good way to keep track of your progress.

Involve friends and family. They can support your efforts, and can motivate you to keep going. Setting a personal goal is not a "promise" which can never be broken. Don't paint yourself into a corner by overstating what can be a realistic change you plan to make.

Forgive yourself. If you get off track, don't think that you failed. Review your plan and make adjustments.

Congratulate yourself. Reward yourself when your intermediate goals or resolutions are met.

The most important point to consider when deciding on your resolutions is to decide if you are truly willing to make the change in your life. Deciding to make the change just to have a resolution will not keep you motivated to attain your goal. Many people fail because they are afraid or don't fully realize how the goal can benefit their every day lives. When you decide on your resolution, make a plan of action and list the ways it will improve your life. When you can see the prize, you are more likely to keep up the fight.

I believe if we trust in ourselves and find our inner child, we can nurture our way through our personal growth just the way we nurture our children's growth. Eliminate the "I want" and "I wish"; change your inner dialog to "I am". Give yourself a break, and enjoy a stress free New Year.