



CULTIVATING THE SEEDS OF CHANGE ©

Renée Canali, Life Coach Vol.1, Issue 2 March 2004

I live in Maryland, where, usually in mid January, we experience a mid-winter thaw: a few glorious days with sunshine and temperatures in the 40's or 50's, a hint of Spring in the air. It's about this time I find myself looking eagerly forward to the new year with all of its possibilities- possibilities of new experiences, new friendships, new outlooks. This is the time for me that the phrase "dead of winter" ceases to have any meaning. The dreary, darkened skies of winter lose their power over my thinking.

I find that this is the time when my imagination begins to bulge with fresh ideas for my life. I start to mentally draw a new plan for myself with new experiences to try, new friendships to tend and new paths to take. I choose short-term (annual) goals, mid-range (biennial) goals and long-range (perennial) goals. I choose some activities that bring me joy and some that create new interest, while I pare down some projects or obligations that no longer contribute to the overall picture. Before long, I realize that I am planning the new year like a gardener plans a garden. Like most gardeners, I like variety; plants that smell nice, look nice and add interest. Bulbs that stick their heads out in less than desirable conditions, annuals that burst with everything they've got, bushes that keep their splendor hidden until they are nurtured and trees that stand tall and strong in stormy times.

To prepare for the new year, my next growing season, I gather my tools and begin to cultivate the soil. At this stage, it is important for me not to disturb the roots that hold me firm in bad weather, but to carefully and deliberately weed out those habits, thought patterns and internal conversations that choke my very essence. I gather resources that will support and nurture me through all kinds of weather: Friends to encourage growth, family to feed me love when I'm in need of strength, relationships that I can lean on in stormy weather and lots of positive thoughts to provide warmth for regeneration.

Now that I have gathered the tools I need to support and sustain myself through another season of change and growth, I'm ready to till the soil, to plot the placement of each seed for the best crop of possibilities.

Let your garden bask in the increasing sunlight. Let new joys penetrate the soil. Let old fears and thought patterns melt like ice crystals in the soil. Be patient. It takes time for new ideas to germinate, for new patterns to take hold. Reflect on the first flowers of spring-the bulbs that store reserve throughout the harshest weather and muster their strength underground, unbeknownst to the casual observer, soon to send out their leaves as arms to welcome the awaiting world.

Tips for your personal garden:

- Dream/plan
- Set annual, biennial and perennial goals
- Prune back obligations
- Till the soil
- Weed out should's/ have to's
- Add amendments-those that bring joy

It is my passion to inspire and support those who wish to create easier, more rewarding lives. I plant ideas like seeds, give food for thought and like sunshine, provide support for sustained growth.

Renée Canali