



CULTIVATING THE SEEDS OF CHANGE ©

Renée Canali, Life Coach Vol.1, Issue 4 April 2004

April is the month of change: weather changes are frequent and sometimes surprising. Here, in Maryland, we can experience spring, summer, fall and winter in the course of a week. Imagine how confusing it can be for animals and for plant life. It amazes me each year that the flowers and trees still know when to bloom and how to protect themselves from harsh weather. What resolution!

How resolute are you on your path to change? How do you persevere in your quest to follow through on intentions for a better, more satisfying, more fulfilling life? Are you resilient? Adaptable? Determined?

It is a custom for us to ponder, at the beginning of each new year, changes we want to make in our lives. Many times, we are unsuccessful at making those changes. It may be that we were not really clear enough about the change we desired. It could also be that we “chose” a resolution because it is something we feel we “should” want, do, or change. Without the power of clarity behind our intention, it is difficult to stay determined and focused.

In order for your desire for change to have a lasting affect, it is necessary to be clear about what it is we want. Ask yourself “What is the purpose of doing this-why is it important to me?” Keep challenging yourself to be more specific: Do you want to be a better person? What does that look like to you? Do you want to be more caring and more involved with loved ones? Do you intend to be more charitable? Are you willing to stop lying to yourself and others and live in truth and integrity? How will you feel when you are a better person: more energized, fulfilled, at peace?

Now that you are clearer about your intention, become more aware of the times when you are acting and feeling the way you’ve described. Become aware of how it feels when you experience the change you are making. “*A higher level of awareness determines your daily quality of life.*” (The Power of Focus, Jack Canfield, Mark Victor Hansen, Les Hewitt; pg. 6). Identify daily opportunities to practice behaving your way to successfully accomplishing your resolution. You will gain confidence in your ability to change, not by thinking about it, but by taking action and behaving your way to the desired outcome. By focusing on the change and its benefits to you it will be part of a conscious effort, not a subconscious desire.

The moment when you first wake up in the morning is the most wonderful of the twenty-four hours. No matter how weary or dreary you may feel, you possess the certainty that, during the day that lies before you, absolutely anything may happen. And the fact that it practically always doesn’t matters not a jot. The possibility is always there. **Monica Baldwin**

Let us not look back in anger or forward in fear, but around in awareness. **James Thurber**

Contact me by email: Renee@landofpossibility.com to explore the possibilities of Life Coaching. I offer a sample 30-minute session to allow you to experience what coaching is about.

GARDENER'S ACTION PLAN FOR APRIL 2004

Renée Canali, Personal Life Coach

April's newsletter raises the question "How resolute are you on your path to change?". Each year, we start with intentions of making changes that will increase the quality of our lives: lose weight, stop smoking, work less, enjoy more time with family and friends, get better organized. Do you claim any of these for yourself? What other resolutions have you made? One quarter of the way through 2004, are you closer to reaching that goal?

If your answer is no, not really, it could be that you have not established a habit of focusing on what you really want. A habit is an act repeated so often it has become automatic. It is an act that you practiced long enough that you no longer think about how to do it, when to do it or why you do it. It just happens. Are you holding on to a habit of procrastination and inconsistency, or a habit of improvement and consistency? Here's how you can successfully establish a new habit to support the change you desire.

The first challenge is to identify the change you want to make. Ask yourself, "What are the costs of NOT making this change?" Determine why you want to make the change. Ask yourself "What are the benefits I will get from making this change?" List everything you can think of. Once you feel you have a complete list of benefits, ask the question again, maybe by rephrasing it: "How else can I benefit from this change?" Next, ask "How will my life improve if I choose to change this?" Focus on the intention.

Now, find a way to incorporate this change into your life. In what ways can you practice this change? How can you be consistent in practicing? Who can support you in making this change? One way to keep focused is to establish a daily habit. Consciously think about the change every day. Repeat the benefits associated with this change. Remind yourself why you intentionally committed to making the change. If you need visual support, mark off on your calendar each day that you practiced the change. Keep track until you successfully practice consistently for 30 days; it is said that it takes 21-30 days for something to become a habit.

You have resolved to change something in your life because there is a benefit to making the change, not because you were bored and were looking for something new to do! Focus on what differences the change will make in the quality of your life. Allow yourself time to practice your intention. When your intention becomes a habit, celebrate! Acknowledge your efforts and enjoy the rewards. Then, choose the next intention and begin again. Remember: success is not the reward- it is the journey.

Learn wisdom from the ways of a seedling. A seedling, which is never hardened off through stressful situations, will never become a strong productive plant. Stephen Sigmund

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