



Charlotte Regional Office Counseling

Peace of Mind Should You Be Committed?

by Lori Fox, Counseling Supervisor

You know who you are. You're the one who sat on your sofa watching the Pasadena Rose Parade on television, volume low to tune out Teri Hatcher and the marching bands, half-sharpened pencil in hand, making your list of "New Year's Resolutions for 2006". Well, my friend, now that the year is well under way, how are you doing with that list? What's that, you say? You've already thrown it away? Just can't do it? Who needs tired old resolutions anyway? Take heart and read on because you are certainly not alone.

How many of us have already given up on the New Year's resolutions we so optimistically set only a short time ago? Lose weight, stop smoking, be more patient with the kids, attend mass more regularly...it all sounded pretty good a couple of weeks ago, right? Yet here we thinking, "Well, maybe next year."

What are we missing? What is that elusive "thing" that keeps us from achieving what we promise ourselves year after year? **Commitment. We need to be committed!** No, not to an asylum, but to making the changes that will lead to better living. As Goethe tells us, "Until one is committed, there is hesitancy, the chance to draw back...the moment one definitely commits oneself, then Providence moves too." When we take steps to honor our promise to ourselves, how could God who loves us not help us along? For those of us whose spirit is willing, but the flesh...well, not so much, let the following points strengthen your resolve and move you toward commitment.

- Believe in yourself. When we don't have the belief that we are capable of making a particular change, than our chances of accomplishment are pretty slim. When we fail, we tell ourselves, "Who was I kidding? I knew I wouldn't be able to see this through." If you are having a hard time buying into your goal, try "borrowing" someone else's belief in you for a while. A friend or loved one who says, "I believe you can do this," can be the beginning of building confidence in yourself.
- Be Accountable. It's a little too easy for us to let ourselves "off the hook". We tend to take our promises more seriously when they are made to another person. Tell a friend what you are trying to achieve. Invite that person to take an active role in helping you stay on track. Having someone to answer to can improve your commitment to a goal.
- Be Resilient. Like the song says, "I get knocked down, but I get up again..." Failure to meet a goal at the end of the day has nothing to do with our chances of meeting that goal tomorrow. Every day is a fresh opportunity as long as we choose to see it that way.
- Break it down. Sometimes we have trouble staying committed to a plan when it is too big, complex, or vague. Break a goal down into manageable steps with a timeframe for beginning and end. Instead of trying to lose thirty pounds in six months, try four or five pounds on a month by month basis.

The counseling team at Catholic Social Services is available to help people who are dealing with barriers to change. We offer professional counseling in a faith based setting. We are affordable, accept most health insurance, and can provide a sliding scale based on income. Please call 704-370-3238 to schedule an appointment, or visit our website at www.cssnc.org.

Now grab that pencil and commit yourself. Remember, the season of Lent begins on March 1st. We're entering a time of change and resurrection. The possibilities are endless!