

# Seize the Season

So, you've made it through the holidays and, depending on where you live, winter. Spring is here. We're all headed outside more often. There are new leaves on the trees. The snow has melted. It is all good. How do you make the most of the new season? Try these 10 ideas to take full advantage of this inspiring period of growth and change:

**1 SPEAK NICELY TO YOURSELF.** Do you know that you talk to yourself at the rate of several hundreds of words per minute? Pay attention to the messages you are sending. Often the messages we send ourselves are negative. This can create stress, hinder our performance, and take the fun out of things. The good news is that, just as negative messages limit potential, positive messages can help you soar.

Listen to your self-talk. If it is negative, change it! Follow these three steps:

- \* Recognize the negativity.
- \* Stop the message repetition.
- \* Replace it with a new message.

Perhaps you tell yourself that you cannot do something. Stop repeating that message. Create

a positive mantra to replace the negative. For instance, instead of telling yourself *I cannot*, replace the phrase with *I am capable*. Negative self-talk is a habit, and the keys to breaking habits are practice and awareness.

**2 VISUALIZE YOUR GOAL.** The combination of positive self-talk and visualization is very powerful. Years ago a colleague told me to close my eyes and visualize shooting a perfect basket. I am not a basketball player, but I followed his instructions. A minute later he handed me a ball and told me to make the shot that I had visualized. I did it! I told myself I could do it, visualized what it would look like, and I did it. The next time you do something athletic, try this combination of positive self-talk and visualization. Does it help your performance?

**3 TRY SOMETHING NEW.**

Have you always wanted to learn to play the trombone or paint or ride a unicycle? Spring is the perfect time to take a class or explore. Break out of your box!

**4 LET GO OF ANGER.** Are you clinging to feelings of anger from the past? Ask yourself if holding on to this is helping you in any way. Do you know that anger is the emotion many people feel before the onset of a heart attack? Let go of the anger and keep your heart healthy!

**5 CELEBRATE YOURSELF EACH DAY.** Will it be a bubble bath or bringing a special lunch to work? Do something nice for yourself daily. What is the first thing you are going to do?

**6 DE-CLUTTER YOUR LIVING SPACE.** While young children find clutter very appealing, adults find



it distracting. Set aside some time each day to de-clutter—whether it's your junk drawer, your closet, your pantry, or your glove compartment, you'll be surprised how clearing out even small spaces opens up psychological space as well.

**7 SCHEDULE A TECHNOLOGY-FREE HOUR EACH DAY.** That's right, turn off all the devices and be in the moment.

**8 NURTURE YOUR SOCIAL NETWORK.** Friends not only make you happy but help you stay healthy. Interestingly, telephone contact has been shown to produce the same health benefits as face-to-face contact. So, unless you are using your computer to Skype, power it down and pick up the phone!

**9 MIND YOUR BODY AS WELL AS YOUR SPIRIT.** Follow the advice you give to your children: eat well, exercise, and get enough sleep.

**10 BE GRATEFUL.** Just as the natural world revives and produces new life each spring, you too can seize the season as a chance to blossom. Push your limits in some way each day and take note of the positive results. Whatever the changes, small or large, consider documenting your season of change through photographs or journaling—and take note of the story you're writing with your life. And don't forget to laugh each day! ❀

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inner wisdom. Her international practice includes clients from all walks of life. Denise received her master's degree in social work from Columbia University and has been a mental health professional for more than 15 years. She shifted her focus from therapy to coaching in 2006.

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## **Bone Up on Bone Health** *continued from page 54*

cancer about the serious affects that cancer can have on their bones. The campaign highlights recent study results in three reports focused specifically on breast cancer, prostate cancer, and multiple myeloma that show the impact of cancer on patients' bones. The reports feature the results of physician and patient surveys, patients' personal stories, and tips

for speaking with your doctor. The reports are available at [www.bonehealthinfocus.com](http://www.bonehealthinfocus.com); the reports and the website are also available in Spanish.

### **WHERE SHOULD PEOPLE GO TO LEARN MORE ABOUT BONE HEALTH AND BREAST CANCER?**

If you or a loved one has breast cancer, be sure to talk to your doctor

about bone health. Additional tools and resources are available at [www.bonehealthinfocus.com](http://www.bonehealthinfocus.com).

Women with breast cancer should take action to protect their bone health by speaking with their healthcare providers about the things they can do to improve their bone health, including available treatment options. ❀



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