

SANTI SAYS: Celebrate the Light!

By Santi Meunier

Nature presents us with a great opportunity in this season of darkness. We will soon be approaching the winter solstice, the shortest day of the year. It is the marker for darkness, and yet all around us are celebrations of light.

The silent nights blanketed in snow and bone chilling cold push us to go within. We seek the warmth of a fire, a bowl of soup, or a kind friend. Nature, too, takes her rest, gathering strength in the stillness and the silence, and yet sleeping with one eye open to tomorrow.

We can take our lead from nature — stopping and reflecting on the past year, evaluating our successes and challenges. It is important to be a gentle observer. So many of us look at our lives through the eyes of judgment, focusing on our failures and mini-mizing our victories. There are those, too, who don't want to look at all, thinking that denial is an effective tool for coping. We can all laugh at the ostrich with its head in the sand, thinking it is safely hidden, and yet how often do we do the same thing?

Taking Stock

As we look at the past year with a gentle eye, ask yourself in each situation if the way you handled it was successful. Did it produce what you truly want?

For example: You wanted to lose 10 pounds. You went out and bought the latest diet book, signed up at the gym and bought a dress two sizes smaller for inspiration. What was your strategy and what method did you develop to measure its effectiveness? What was your attitude about your body and the fat and how did you self-talk on a daily basis? What were the unspoken messages that you were communicating to yourself in relation to this goal?

What did you loose and what did you gain?

If you used guilt and shame as tools for motivation, you gained more guilt and shame and probably more weight. If you looked at your body and the extra fat with hate and disgust, it most likely set the stage for the next binge. These methods do not work. They don't work for anyone. When we use functional tools, tools that work, as opposed to dysfunctional

tools, we get a different result. You are not a failure! The tools you are using are failing to produce the desired result. Change the tools and you will change the outcome.

Learn to evaluate holistically for optimal success

The physical aspect of the goal can be measured in pounds. Did you lose weight? Does your body have more energy and vitality?

The emotional aspect is in feelings. How do you feel about yourself? Is your reputation with yourself positive and enduring? If you failed to lose the weight, has your feeling about yourself and your body plummeted?

The spiritual aspect of the goal can be measured by the quality of your life - internally and externally. What did your choices create? Do you eat healthy foods and exercise because that is a way to love and show appreciation for your body, or do you eat to stuff and avoid uncomfortable feelings?

The choice of fuel creates the kind of journey we undertake and the direction it takes us. We can learn to choose wisely and effectively for our-



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remain tight in a bud was more painful than the risk to blossom."

We are ever-changing, creative beings. It is natural to heal, to grow and expand. If we are not able to achieve our goals easily, it is often because we are held back by disempowering core beliefs and attitudes. No matter how much darkness and discouragement you may be feeling right now, just remember the message that nature has for us this holiday season, "In the dark night shineth the everlasting light." I invite you to blossom where you are planted and to make your world a better place to live in.

In the coming months I will be sharing tools for identifying and overcoming self-defeating patterns, reprogramming negative core beliefs, winning goal-setting strategies and how to develop a one-year plan. If you have any questions or discouraging patterns that you would like to share please e-mail me at "Santi Says" Galactca@aol.com or mail your questions to 02835 65 Narragansett Ave. Jamestown.

selves, regardless of our old patterns. The pain of the past can motivate us to create a different future. Anais Nin said it so beautifully, "And then the day came when the risk to