

MAKE YOUR NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS WORK FOR YOU

By Ellen Harris, LMHC, CEAP

Here we are again! A new year is upon us –the beginning of a new decade. And, most of us would say it's "none to soon!" The last ten years have been tough.

Time Magazine referred to the 2000's as "the decade from hell, the most dispiriting and disillusioning decade Americans have lived through in the post-World War II era." We've had the "Y-2K" scare, 9/11 attacks, violent wars, controversial elections, and an economic meltdown. Yet, we are still here. We are still working to keep our heads above water, and survive and thrive – despite the hardships we've endured.

The human spirit IS resilient. If we but look around we see countless brave souls who triumph over what may seem the most difficult and depressing lots in life. These are the people we most admire.

We all have choices. When things get tough, we can sink into a deep depression of negative thinking and dark moods, or we can get up everyday and focus on the things that are good in our lives. (Those of us who are blessed to live in Naples need only look out our windows to find something good and beautiful.)

Positive thinking works! It's not a cliché. According to Richard Carlson, "*What we think determines what we see – even though it often seems the other way around.*" Why not embrace as your New Year's Resolution, a commitment to change your thinking – to become aware of self-defeating, negative thoughts and beliefs, and let them go – replacing them with an effective, uplifting, self-affirming "attitude of gratitude?"

This is not a pipe dream! It's achievable. I plan to begin the New Year with a study group reading Richard Carlson's book, *You Can Be Happy No Matter What*. This short, simple book addresses five principles for keeping life in perspective. Won't you join me?

For more information, call me at 239-404-0862.

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