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A Long Winters Nap



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As a child I envied the bear...each winter they “snuggle up” for months. What can we learn from our slumbering forest friends? I believe they show us the value of rest, slowing down, and of taking this time of year to look inward.

These are resolutions that we repeatedly commit to...this year...this year I will take time for me...this year I will slow down...this year I will look inward, to learn, to grow. Yet time and time again, we fall into our old patterns. I will slow down next week, next month, next year. For how many of us does that actually happen? Why can't we seem to get there?

For me, it was because I was trying to change too much, too quickly. I had illusions of living in complete peace and harmony overnight. My vision was the equivalent of living a monk's life...all with two younger children running to soccer, a full time career, and laundry piling up. I had to start smaller. I chose one thing, something easy, something tangible to start with. I recommend starting with something that personifies the chaos or disorganization for you. For me this was reducing my exposure to television. I thought it would be difficult. Yet it wasn't until I started switching to music instead of the sound of television that I realized it was really quite simple. The common rebuttal from family is the need for background noise. Yet I found that there was truly more peace and harmony for me when I chose music in exchange for the tv. I can match my mood more with music. No longer are the telemarketers choosing what I should be thinking about...do I need to buy that exercise contraption...am I really too heavy...do I need some kind of medication...is there something wrong with my health? If I am cleaning, I can tune in to something fun and uplifting and dance around like a child if I choose, or I can elect for something relaxing to focus on myself and my inner thoughts, dreams, motivations. Before I realized it...I found those moments of peace, a quieter pace, and myself.

One of my lessons, was to focus on changing **my** environment, not that of everyone around me. I have learned that I can still have my peace and quiet and still let my husband watch his movies in his space. Yet having a place that is “my space,” to create that change, is a wonderful gift to give yourself...like our own little bear's den. So this year, I wish for you your own “den”...create a space of peace and tranquility. The space can be a physical space...it can be a room...it could be your office; as long as you find a way to shut out the chaos. It can also be place in time, I started taking 10 minutes before I went to bed to create my environment of peace. As you develop tools to do this, the peace and introspection will follow, as you intend it.

Perhaps for 2008 I will decorate my “den”...just to further make that space all that I have dreamt; my place of peace...harmony...and myself. The laundry is still out there, but it sure doesn't look as ominous after some quality time in the “den”.