

My New Year's Resolution

"My goal is to consciously give grace and mercy to those around me to work out the issues in their life."

I began my New Year's resolution a little early this year; and although it is a little corny, it's something that has been bringing me a new level of freedom and a deeper experience of peace during the holiday season. Most of us know the power that emotions have upon one's physiology and that there is a big difference in one's bio-chemistry when they live in fear compared to when they live in peace. Before I share my resolution, I want to apologize because as I describe the background behind my resolution, I will probably push everyone's buttons at least once. So let me apologize in advance if I trip your trigger.

Now months after the national election there is still tremendous emotion. It doesn't matter if you are republican or democrat, round the clock media is whipping people into a



frenzy of emotion to fuel agendas and entice viewership. Isolated sound bites from those in the spotlight, sometimes taken out of context, demonstrate that America seems fascinated by gutter and slanderous, outlandish statements. As we know, when producers cherry pick sound bites, words can be cast in a negative light.

In the wake of any passionate election, there is often uncertainty. Whether

you sense it or not, as we begin 2017, across the nation there is a lot of pain. Not only is there pain but there is real fear and animosity in ways we have not seen in our lifetime.

Fear of debt is one of the major fears. Beyond personal debt, many states are insolvent. And as we all know, our nation itself is deeply in debt. Pension plans are called into question; even banking systems around the world are threatened.

Fears of racism, fear of deportation, fear of sexism, fear of environmental catastrophe are real to many people. These are issues that have been brewing for decades that will have to be dealt with and the possible solutions generate fear.

Beyond fear, anger is rampant. I don't think I have ever seen so many people angry and yet justify their behavior as if it's okay. People feel so entitled.

So here is my resolution for 2017, "Just as I have been given grace and mercy to work out the issues in my life, my goal is to consciously give grace and mercy to those around me to work out the issues in their life. By showing grace and mercy I don't have to figure out why people are acting so crazy. I just give them the grace to figure out their own issues without the need to solve the issue or even understand it.

The other piece to that resolution is to give grace and mercy without self-righteously looking down at someone." You see, when I am positioning in my mind that I am right and you are wrong, most of the time I am subconsciously putting myself as your superior. We have self-righteous thoughts like... I KNOW the right way. I am superior, I'm smarter. You just don't get it. Why don't you get it?

But if I give mercy to people because I have been given mercy, my heart is free to respond in compassion. I am open. I don't have to assume responsibility to change them or fix them. I don't have to convince them. I can tenderly share my position in love, sensitive to the fear,

anger or pain they may be experiencing. I know that sounds kind of "warm and fuzzy" to just share your position with clarity and compassion.

Years ago, I would figure the universe would work things out. Now as a Christian, I trust God will sort out the details. But regardless of your faith, trusting that the processes of life will work things out will bring peace.

Many years ago I was trained to run therapy groups and the hardest lesson for everyone to learn was to "not try to fix people's problems" rather to shed the light of awareness on the process and the repetitive patterns that were taking place.

Isn't it true? WE all like to receive grace and mercy but I know for me, I have to "consciously give out" as much mercy as I like to receive.

As I mentioned earlier, when we feel entitled, there is a tendency to feel guarded and my heart gets hard.

In the few weeks that I have been practicing unconditionally giving out grace and mercy, I can already feel my heart opening.

And speaking of my heart opening, in closing, thanks for taking time each week to watch as we consider new research and review time tested clinical pearls. I appreciate you and the feedback you frequently share. Happy New Year to you, your family and your staff. I'll see you next Tuesday.