

Turning Intentions into Outcomes

Spring has arrived: the days lengthen and suddenly there's an energy shift. To-do lists are populated with projects and people flock to nurseries for yard and garden supplies. It's definitely a time to make things happen and a good time to reflect on goals set for 2010.

Making Things Happen

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Next Step: Summer Fun!

As you plan the coming months for your children, you'll likely be considering what they'll do during the summer. Perhaps camp is one of the possibilities. Find out about the variety of camps available for your children.

More...



Worklife Balance

Planning Ahead for Elder Care

Are you one of the nearly 30% of American adults who currently spends 20 hours a week on caregiving tasks in addition to other responsibilities? Find out how caregivers can take more control over their lives.

Senior Savvy

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Memorable Motherly Advice

Remember those words of wisdom that Mom always had when you were growing up? Words and phrases that expressed concern, annoyance, and – bottom line – love. Check out some memorable examples of “classic Mom”.

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Take it from Mom



Turning Intentions into Outcomes

"I think that no matter how old...I become, I will always plant a ...garden in the spring. Who can resist the feelings of hope and joy that one gets from participating in nature's rebirth?"

~Edward Giobbi

Who can't help but feel heartened by the arrival of spring when the earth breaks open into a backdrop of greenery and splashes of color? The days lengthen and suddenly there's an energy shift. To-do lists are populated with projects and people flock to nurseries for yard and garden supplies. It's definitely a time to make things happen!

Perhaps it's also time to reflect on your vision for the year when 2009 morphed into 2010. What goals have already been pushed aside, victims of a hectic schedule? Or what's still laying dormant waiting for that sense of rebirth and renewal? Following is a series of questions to help you re-energize, and turn your intentions into outcomes.

- What do you want? Forget about goals for a moment – what do you REALLY want?
- When you have the life you want, what will it look like, be like – what kind of feeling will you have around your life? Joy? A sense of serenity? Or confidence that you're ready for anything?
- How will you know - what will tell you when you have what you want in your life? Try to be as specific as possible. "I'll know when I'm doing something with passion and purpose," or "I'll know when I'm debt-free and have extra income and a nest egg for my child's college education."
- What impact will living the life you want have on other areas, for example, family or close friends, or where you might be living?



- What's preventing you from getting what you want?
- What resources do you currently have – and what additional resources do you need to help get what you want?
- What steps can you take this week to help you move forward with your vision?
- How will you acknowledge your progress? Taking time to celebrate what you accomplish along the way is a critical – and often neglected – factor in success. Building on a sense of achievement can help get you through the hard times. And nothing begets success like success!

GETTING HELP

The professional counselors at Work & Family Benefits can provide information and resources for all of your WorkLife challenges. Contact us for free, prompt, and confidential assistance. We're always here to help.



Next stop: Summer fun!

The summer months offer rich opportunities for recreation and relaxation for children, but often require special planning. Depending on your child's age and stage of development, your location, finances, and other factors, you may want to check out community recreation programs, summer daycare, or other options. Perhaps camps are a possibility to consider as they come in all "shapes and sizes." Summer camps provide friendships, recreation, and new learning opportunities. Regardless of the type, a good camping experience is one which is generally recalled with great fondness.

Chances are that if you and your child are ready, you'll find a camp that's a perfect fit. Here is a brief summary of the various camps available for children.

OVERNIGHT

Overnight, resident - or "sleepaway" - camps provide children with a taste of independence in well-supervised environments. They may be co-ed or single sex, and offer a wide range of activities or focus on a specific interest. Camp sessions usually range from one to eight weeks.

Overnight camps generally serve children aged eight to sixteen. If your child is a first-timer, it may help to attend with a close friend. Talk with your child about the camp and any concerns, including where s/he will eat and sleep, how counselors are available to help, and how you may be reached.

DAY CAMPS

Day camps are usually co-ed and typically serve campers pre-school age through early teens. As with overnight camps, there may be a wide range of activities or a focus on a specific sport or interest. These programs are typically offered for either full or half days. Children can often participate for one- or two-week sessions or the entire summer session.



SPECIALTY CAMPS

These camps have a particular focus and can be either day or overnight camps. Special interests may range from acrobatics to zoology and include soccer, drama, weight management, scouting, computers, and more. There are also travel camps where campers go hiking, biking or canoeing through state or national parks.

CAMPS FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

While general camps can certainly accommodate children with disabilities, special needs camps can offer a unique experience for children with disabilities by providing the opportunity to be with other children who are differently-abled. All programming, activities and equipment are designed to meet the specific needs of the children. The counselors and staff are also specially trained to respond to both their physical and emotional needs.

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Planning Ahead for Elder Care

CAREGIVERS: TAKE CHARGE!

Are you one of the nearly 30% of American adults who currently spends 20 hours a week on caregiving tasks in addition to other responsibilities? Or do you expect to someday be a caregiver for an elder or other family member? Caregivers fill such a critical role in families and in our communities. In fact, according to the National Family Caregivers Association, family caregiving is the bedrock of the U.S. healthcare system, with caregivers providing 80% of all homecare services. But the unfortunate reality is that caregivers are often thrown into the role unprepared, overwhelmed, and unsupported. The good news is caregivers can take more control over their lives.

CAREGIVING WITHOUT NOTICE

The need for care doesn't always announce itself in advance. There can be an unexpected illness, accident or other crisis. Here are some ways that caregivers can take charge in such instances:

- **Be honest.** Before you agree to any responsibilities, think about what is already on your plate. Be open with those involved about any limiting factors. If you work, have health issues or other family obligations, you may need to set boundaries around what responsibility you can accept.
- **Ask for help.** If other family members are involved, advise them that you will need help in providing care. If they live nearby, they can volunteer time; if they are far away, they may be able to provide funding for expenses to defray the cost of supplemental help.
- **Consider all options.** Learn about assisted living/nursing homes, in-home care in the elder's home, and other options in making a care plan.

THE VALUE OF ADVANCE PLANNING

If you are a caregiver, or expect to be a caregiver in the future, there are steps you can take now:

- **Make it legal.** Having certain legal documents is crucial. Make sure that legally valid wills, powers of



attorney, and advance directives are in place. Wills distribute property after death. Powers of attorney name persons who may legally act if one cannot act for oneself. Advance directives advise doctors and family members of various preferences for medical treatment should one be unable to self-advocate.

- **Gather information.** Know your elder's doctors, medications, and pharmacies. Make a list detailing locations of important personal documents, insurance policies, safety deposit boxes and keys, and other property.
- **Communicate.** It is best if family members meet to discuss preliminary options before an aging family member or loved one declines in health or reaches the point of requiring assistance or supervision. And, if the elder is able, it is recommended that s/he participate in those discussions.

Caregiving can be challenging, but can also be uniquely rewarding, for it offers the opportunity and the power to make a difference.

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Memorable Motherly Advice

Remember those words of wisdom that Mom always had when you were growing up? Mothers usually had a vocabulary of words and phrases that expressed concern, annoyance, and – bottom line – love. Here are some memorable examples of “classic Mom:”

- Don't make that face or it'll freeze like that.
- What if everyone jumped off a cliff? Would you do that too?
- Just wait until you grow up and have a kid exactly like you!
- If I ever talked to my mother like that, I would have been grounded for a year!
- Call me when you get there just so I know you made it okay.
- Moms have eyes in the back of their heads, that's how.
- Close that door. Did you grow up in a barn?
- When I was your age...
- How do you know you don't like it if you haven't even tasted it?
- Because I'm your mother, that's why.
- This is harder on me than it is on you.
- I just want what's best for you.
- When you have your own house and you pay the bills, then you get to make the rules!



- If you can't say something nice, don't say anything at all.
- You're going to put your eye out with that thing!
- Never try on anyone else's glasses or you'll go blind.
- You'll ALWAYS be my baby.

Some of these phrases may bring back memories of your early family life. Your mother probably had her own special “momisms,” too. Here's an interesting question: How many of these phrases do you hear yourself saying today? Be honest now! It can be pretty astonishing to hear yourself echoing Mom's words. Then again, you know what they say: “What goes around comes around!”