

Worrier to Warrior

Category: Turning Over a New Leaf

written by Ronna L. Edelstein | January 2, 2020

I am a worrier. I worry about real and imaginary things, about significant issues and minor ones. My goal for 2020 is to stop being a worrier and instead become a warrior.

I want to embrace each day with courage, not with angst. Perhaps if I do, I will no longer suffer from 24/7 headaches that challenge my ability to concentrate for any extended period of time. Maybe I will stop losing myself in reruns of *Law and Order: SVU* and instead engage in real life adventures—solo or with friends—at a museum, theater, or restaurant.

Worrying makes me feel older than my 72 years. It depletes me of energy and ruins my appetite—I subsist on dark chocolate M&Ms to give me a sugar high instead of on foods rich in protein. Because of my worrying, I find it difficult to admire a sunset, to smile at trees glistening under a fresh layer of snow, to laughingly dismiss the simple inconveniences of life. With less worrying, I will not become younger than springtime, but I will be able to see spring even in the darkest days of winter.

My challenge is to find a way to go from worrier to warrior. This transformation will require inner courage—the strength to convince myself that life is not bleak and that I have the right to enjoy my days. This change in attitude must come with a change in diet and routine—cooking healthy dinners, exercising more, and less often lying on the couch hidden in a blanket. It must come with a change in how I see myself—not as a victim of life, but as an adventurer eager to make the most of each day.

My past experiences with turning over a new leaf at the new year have not been successful. My promises to become an optimistic, outgoing, energetic person usually fade by the end of the first week of January. When this occurs, I console myself by saying, “There is always next year.” But the older I get, the more I realize that next year is not a guarantee.

This is the year, then—the year that I put my worrying into a box and place that box on the highest shelf in my closet. This is the year that I charge into life and make each moment special. This is the year I become a warrior.

Ronna Edelstein

Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania