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“There is a woman at the beginning of all great things.”

Alphonse de Lamartine quotes (French Poet, Writer and Statesman, 1790-1869)

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Spring into new beginnings – October 2008

We are into the second month of spring and I am rejoicing. I know winter is part of the cycle of life and essential in the grand scheme of things, but spring! Spring thaws me from the inside out. It generates feelings of light-heartedness and well-being. It signifies a time of growth, rejuvenation and new beginnings. This is beautifully demonstrated in the flowering gardens, and the warm whisper of the breeze. My 'new beginning' is getting back into Mother Nature, reconnecting with both 'her' and myself. And what am I springing into? Great health! After months of moving through a health imbalance, I am finally feeling like I know my body again.

So why don't you spend a wonderful spring afternoon to sit quietly and think about what needs to be weeded out and what needs some rejuvenation in your life. Harness the delicious energy that is spring and use it to encourage your new ideas and goals to grow. May your dreams blossom.

Natalie

New Beginnings

By Maralene Strom

Over the past several weeks there has been so much news of endings. End of tournaments, end of life, end of businesses, and end of relationships. All of these endings could cast a pall of depression over us. We wonder why things have to end.

This column is going to focus on beginnings. It is like Spring which sends a natural message of new growth, after a season that has hardened seeds to be ready for their explosion into life. Spring has a sense of renewal and freshness.

Marsha Petrie Sue said, "Every day is a new beginning. Treat it that way. Stay away from what might have been, and look at what can be."

In my own life experience, I have felt that there were those times I was facing an ending. It was so overwhelming I was not sure that tomorrow would ever feel the warmth and joy again. Miraculously, I discovered a newness of living that was not on my radar screen. I experienced living life as it opened up to new vistas.

Beginnings require that we let go of yesterday to live today. If we hang onto yesterday wishing we had lived it differently, we reach the sunset of today only to realize that we have compounded our regret for not having lived another day. We sit in despair not beginning because we could not let go of the ending of yesterday.

It is true that yesterday may have been a life altering event. There is a time to grieve for a loss, a missed opportunity, an error in judgment, or just making the mistake of not trying or engaging. Whatever it is, we cannot live the day over again. Nor can we make someone else do what we wished or change what

Recipe

Spring Salad

- Baby cos lettuce
- 50g walnuts
- 1 apple with skin on, finely sliced
- 4 spring onions, finely sliced
- ½ cup feta, broken into pieces
- Mint for garnish
- Dressing
- 3 tbsp olive oil
- 2 tbsp balsamic vinegar
- Salt & pepper
- Combine ingredients in a bowl and toss with the dressing.

Serves 2

This Month's Poem

Spring Song

by Robert Louis Stevenson

THE air was full of sun and birds,

The fresh air sparkled clearly.

Remembrance wakened in my heart

And I knew I loved her dearly.

The fallows and the leafless trees

And all my spirit tingled.

My earliest thought of love, and Spring's

First puff of perfume mingled.

happened.

Maria Shriver said life-altering experiences make us then live the altered life direction we are pointed toward and make it into something worthwhile. I've thought a lot about that fact of living. How different our lives have become because of what looked like the end, and it became the beginning of a whole new life experience.

Beginnings are not a once in a lifetime event. They begin every day. When there is an ending, is it not really just the beginning of something new? I came across this quote, attributed to Semi sonic, "Every new beginning comes from some other beginnings end."

The end of childhood begins adulthood. High school graduation begins a future holding a variety of options and challenges into a world of discovery what it means to be adult. The end of a career begins the discovery of retirement and new challenges yet to unfold.

Relationships end and new ones begin. Marriages may end in divorce or death. It is the beginning of a life not planned for when there were two and now there is one. Children leave home, the nest is empty, and time is open for something else to fill it. Explore a new career, an opportunity to serve the community, or rediscover the person who is full of gifts that could not emerge until this time of their life.

Jobs are lost to downsizing or relocation and now the door opening requires a new look at skills unused but valuable. Could it mean more schooling, creating a small business or something outside of the box only dreamt about?

Beginnings are often fearful, for we do not know what the ending looks like or how it will change or alter our lives. However, without them we have lost living to the fullest potential given to us.

Edith Lovejoy Pierce said, "We will open the book. Its pages are blank. We are going to put words on them ourselves. The book is called Opportunity and its first chapter is New Year's Day."

It is Spring! Today is the beginning of another day of life. It is up to you to leave yesterdays pain and hurts behind which hinder your own ability to plant seeds of new growth and discovery.

Life is short, spring into action and live today's beginning. Who knows what the next ending will mean for your next new beginning.

<http://www.adventuresinlivingsite.com>

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Maralene Strom is a speaker and author teaching on topics dealing with grief and recovery, motivation, life at 50 and beyond -- let her help you discover your life's meaning as you journey now and into your future. Visit <http://AdventuresInLivingsite.com> to receive her newsletter.

In my still heart the thoughts
awoke,

Came lone by lone together

Say, birds and Sun and
Spring, is Love

A mere affair of weather?

Blooming Reading

Here are some books to
sprout new ideas –

The Seasonal Tasks for the Practical Australian Gardener

By Peter Cundall

Each Day a New Beginning: Daily Meditations for Women

By Karen Casey

Spring Is Around The Corner - How Is Your Garden?

Spring is in my opinion the most wonderful time of year for the gardener. You can shake of that winter weariness and get ready for a new gardening season.

The most difficult part of spring gardening is trying to manage your impatience. Don't start digging around too early. The soil must be dry enough to have it fall apart when you pick it up. When it still sticks together like glue that's definitely not the case.

Early spring is the best time of year to change (parts of) your garden design. You can transplant existing shrubs and perennial plants before they begin to leaf out. This also is the time to prune your trees and shrubs. Cut back the remaining dead foliage from last season and remove dead, damaged or diseased branches of trees and shrubs.

And then flowers! That's really what spring is about isn't it! There are many that are suitable for cool spring weather. Think of sweet alyssum, some snapdragons, stock and sweat peas. You can also start some perennials like hostas and daylilies.

Start some Violets, Marigolds, Carnations, Geraniums and Impatiens inside to transplant to your flower beds in early spring. Or if you have some space left in your garden you can set up a "Cold Frame". Ready-made cold frames are available in different sizes. A cold frame "captures" the spring sunlight and warms the soil it surrounds. That way it is ideal to "harden off" houseplants and transplants for your summer garden. You can use the cold frame for direct seeding as well.

If you have unplanted areas in your garden a great spring project is to lay out landscape cloth on that unplanted area. Landscape cloth is an excellent weed barrier. It comes in different weights, heights and fabric choices. This cloth can then also serve as a great map to precisely plant your transplants.

Weeds start to grow very early but still have shallow roots in spring so get them out when you spot them. Getting on top of the weeds now means a lot less work in summer, and I'm sure that digging out weeds in the burning sun is not your favourite pastime.

These two measures will definitely intimidate your perennial weeds to the extent that they will prefer your neighbour's garden over yours.

And most of all enjoy your spring garden, watch it grow and blossom into summer!

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