

BELIEVE



SOMETIMES I'VE BELIEVED AS MANY AS SIX IMPOSSIBLE THINGS BEFORE BREAKFAST. LEWIS CARROLL.
Go confidently in the direction of your dreams! Live the life you've imagined. As you simplify your life, the laws of the universe will become simpler. Henry David Thoreau

As 2006 draws to a close, like many I suppose, I find myself reflecting upon where life and my choices have brought me this year. I believe that each of us has the power to manifest in our lives the people, experiences, and resources that we need or desire. But we can't do it if we don't believe.

We have to take some measure of responsibility for the life we have; and trust that ultimately the universe is fair and that with our help, peace and justice will prevail.

I also believe that bad things sometimes happen and that terrible things like racism and anti-semitism and war and poverty exist with very real consequences.

But only when we believe that we are powerful, valuable, special—only then can we become useful in changing the systems that allow these evils to exist. We have to believe more in

our unique human potential than we do in the fear that limits us from speaking out against injustice or standing up against oppression.

Of course this isn't easy, but not much that's worthwhile ever is. I made a lot of choices this year of which I'm very proud. Looking back, I can also see times when my fears prevented me from being an agent of change.

This is about reflection, not regret. My goal is to learn and grow every day from every experience. I keep a magnet on my refrigerator at home reminding me that I should strive to "Always Make New Mistakes."

I'm excited about 2007 as I know it will be a year of major change for me personally and for Common Ground Consulting. I look forward to sharing this journey with you and I hope our paths will cross often. Remember, "There is nothing like a dream to create the future."



William James ...

The greatest discovery of my generation is that a human being can alter their life by altering their attitudes.

THIS I BELIEVE*

In our March issue of Quick Tips, I wrote about developing a personal mission statement for your life. Many of you have asked me to share the one I developed for myself more than 14 years ago. Here it is . . .

- To love often and much—people and ideas and life itself;
- To take risks every day which challenge me to face my fears;
- To see my dreams as the foundation of my future and my passions as mortar for the bricks;
- To remember that only I am me, that I am special, and that others are too;
- To learn and grow each day from every moment and every experience;
- To know myself—my strengths and weaknesses, hopes and desires—and to be true to myself always;
- To share unconditional love—pieces of my heart—with my partner, children, parents, family, and friends;
- To search, uncover, and discover beauty in uncommon places and idealism everywhere;
- To help at least one person breathe easier each day, and everyone to be happy being themselves;
- To take care of myself—my heart, my mind, my body, spirit, and soul;
- To remember that who I am and how I live speaks more loudly than what I say;
- To use the privilege I have been afforded with integrity and as a tool for positive change;
- To believe that my life can be an intense example;
- To celebrate those with whom I share community, rejoicing in the differences that make it special;
- To act with courage and strength, discretion and compassion as a catalyst in the struggle for social justice.



There is only one thing more powerful than all the armies of the world, that is an idea whose time has come.
- Victor Hugo

QUICK TIP SERIES

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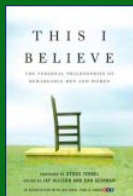
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*THIS I BELIEVE . . .

This I Believe is an exciting national project that invites you to write about the core beliefs that guide your daily life. National Public



Radio airs these personal statements from

listeners each Monday on *Morning Edition* and *All Things Considered*. By inviting Americans from all walks of life to participate, series producers Dan Gediman and Jay Allison are creating a picture of the American spirit in all its rich complexity.

This I Believe is based on a 1950s radio program of the same name, hosted by acclaimed journalist Edward R. Murrow. In creating *This I Believe*, Murrow

said the program sought "to point to the common meeting ground of beliefs, which is the essence of brotherhood and the floor of our civilization."

How about as a New Year's resolution, you take a few minutes to draft your own *This I Believe* essay? Take a few minutes. You'll be glad you did. You can get help at their website:

<http://www.npr.org/thisibelieve/about.html>