

STRAIGHT

DIRECTOR - CINCINNATI
Gerald Rushing

NEW YEAR'S MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

Dear Friend,

Like many of you, I'm still wondering what happened to 1985. I was always told that the older one gets, the quicker time seems to go. I have come to the conclusion that I'm getting older (Bah Humbug!).

A New Year always brings with it an extreme variety of feelings and thoughts. Usually it's a time of new beginnings with resolutions to make oneself a better person; a time of hope and optimism that the New Year will bring better times; a time of question and fear because of the unknown events of the coming twelve months. Whatever the feelings you're experiencing and issues you're facing for the coming year, I want you to know that it's my prayer that 1986 will be your best year ever. Allow me to share what I mean by "best year". I wish that I could assure everyone of you health, wealth and happiness, but as we all know, that is in the hands of One greater than we. My desire is that if the year should bring health, wealth and happiness or sickness, poverty and sadness, this will be your best year of personal growth and serenity. Regardless of good or bad times, you can grow!

I would like to share with you a few things I have found to be most helpful to me for my personal growth and serenity.

- 1) I can only change me! Regardless of how much I may want people I come in contact with to be different, I only become frustrated when I try to change them. I must make sure I handle things appropriately and maintain my integrity.
- 2) Be open! Don't predetermine when and where growth will occur. I have grown in the best and worst of situations when I've had the attitude of "what can I learn from this situation?"
- 3) Listen! Granted, it isn't easy to sit and listen when someone is telling you something you don't like hearing and you think doesn't apply. When I listen,

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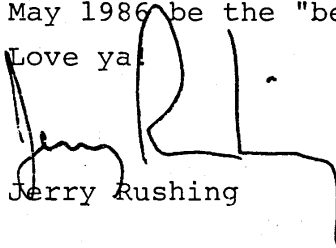
A family oriented treatment program for drug using young people and their families.

(really listen), I generally find out one of three things: 1) What they're saying is true, 2) my actions may be giving one message and I do not realize it. 3) I have greater compassion for the other person because I'm understanding more the way they are feeling and thinking.

4. Humble yourself! It's hard to be humble when you think you're right. The problem is most people think they are right, when in reality they're not! This is closely associated with being open and listening.
5. Be a risk taker! I found when trying to change a conditioned pattern, I must take a risk. Basically, I know myself well enough to know what doesn't work. I have to risk handling a situation differently. Remember, that in a situation of old conditioning, you can't trust your instincts, because the way you always handled a situation feels normal.
6. Don't pressure yourself! Sometimes changing old patterns takes longer than we like. Remember --- progress, not perfection. Also remember, that generally we don't change as quickly as others want us to. Keep in mind that sometimes we won't change as a means of showing the other person they can't control us. Go ahead --- prove to the world they can't control you. In reality, YOU LOSE!
7. Higher Power - I have found this to be the most important of all. My personal growth and serenity is in direct proportion to my growth with my relationship with God. For myself it is difficult to be open, be humble, etc. to others, when I can't be open, humble, etc. with God.

May 1986 be the "best year" you have ever had!

Love ya.


Jerry Rushing

P.S. I'm excited about great things for Cincinnati Straight. Let's pull together to make it Cincinnati's greatest year ever.