

## □ New Year Resolutions: Keeping Them Real

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Another time of the year when people try to think about their previous actions and words with a view to making necessary changes for better life style, or for better control of future repetition of certain evils in their life. As far as many great thinkers are concerned, the most important thing about the ritual New Year resolution is that it provides a point in time when collective thoughts and self evaluations are made real. For once, many stop the rat race and think about life, human behaviors, society and continuity. No matter how unrealistic yearly resolutions seem to look, they actually make some people think genuinely. Many do follow up on some of the changes they resolve to make. Even those who fall by the way side at least started the journey to change. The willingness to change is the first start.

“What makes New year resolutions real and manageable?; some one had asked me in an argument about new year resolutions recently. I told her that I have not been able to keep most of mine too, perhaps because of the unrealistic nature of all I wanted to change or due to my inability to prioritize values appropriately. She said that was her problem too. I told her that one resolution I asked God to help me keep yearly after some dark experiences is “to remember to keep my mouth shut when I am not sure of how to respond or say something; or when what I would say would hurt others disrespectfully, and also the wisdom and guts to detect unwholesome friends (popularly called unfriendly friends) in advance and run away before I could be trapped in their mess” She screamed that every woman should have those as a top list on resolutions.

She may be right. Research has shown that women in America (and indeed all over the world) talk too much and use almost three times more words than men daily. The research also found out that the reason is that mother’s functions call for constant speaking (and screaming). The average mother asks if the home work is done; or done right; announces that breakfast, lunch or dinner is ready; talks to each child in various setting and also to a husband at various settings, including when she accuses him of “infidelity”, real or imagined. The research described females as “talking gender”. I do not consider this depiction derogatory. Sure, we are and for obvious good reasons. The high verbosity of womanhood is God given and it has been

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abused like most other attributes God gives for better use. Traditional societies never gave women chance to speak out their minds. They were seen not heard. With time, some women muster courage and manpower to protest over gender oppression, and now women are just talking, sometimes talking too much ( and even cursing too like men in America). ‘ I am not afraid to say anything’ is a phrase often heard from women in America. Oh they are not afraid to talk as Oprah Winfrey’s and other talk shows televised indicate.

A Marriage counselor reported that many of the root cause of quarrels and break ups in marriage is just “some one using bad words, descriptions, innuendoes, outbursts, accusations, references etc that offends the other consistently until that other decides to get some peace through separation or divorce’. Some mothers have ran bad mouth to teachers on phone for unverified accusations from their untamed child. “oh you can’t do that to my child and get away...I am going to sue...” A New York base teacher confirmed this. he said “even when some mothers, especially single moms come to school to report what they consider child abuse by the teacher or another student, you find it absolutely difficult to take what usually comes out of their mouth....They over state the issues and demean the child’s responsibility and just want to you to accept that ‘he/she is only a child”. In the eyes of a mother the child never grows. Nothing is so sacred to reserve to privacy any more! Too much talking has caused more harm than good.

Woman to woman relationships in offices, gatherings, schools, and at home is often fraught with bad verbal communication. That is why many believe that most friendship between women would collapse at inception or thereafter due to parading of gossip and scandal over trivial issues. Just by some one talking too much or assuming too much avoidable wrongs have been committed by concerned parties. That is the reason most mother daughter, sister in law relationship hardly work out well any where in the world.

By abuse of power of speech or tongue, many damages have been done to humanity. So could any female reader of this piece in her 2011 resolution add; “ I must think first of any word I want

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to say out to others; my children, my husband/boyfriend, my father/mother, my brother/other males in my life, my friends, my workmates and indeed any body I have to say some thing to next year” I mean we all need to do this so that we can keep great friendship, relationships, marriage, and even our life from avoidable dangers. Sure great thoughts precede great action and so does bad actions are preceded by bad thinking.

The heart controls all. The next resolution may be “keeping wrong thinking low far below positive thinking.. giving others credit to be able to do right not wrong all the time, suppressing the urge to always associate evil deeds to others...perhaps that may affect what we say about them, even to or of “our enemies’. A nice word may make friend of an enemy. A philosopher wrote: **“Fear makes enemy of those that should be our friends”** The fear operates in the secrecy of our heart. For instance, fear of losing grips make many mothers in-law hold unto marriages of their sons/daughters and eventually strangulate it unknowingly: fear makes a suspicious wife cagy and insecure hence she grows into perpetual accuser of other women and may drive away great friends; fear make us lie against others; fear make us feel jealous of other people’s success and gravitate into scheming evil against them; the only fear that are lacking in the society most preachers say, is the “fear of God” which is the very “beginning of wisdom”

So next year...what fears would determine your action towards others...? Go ahead and list out your resolutions but please make it real and indict yourself first before you indict others, that is the first step to making it real. Pin point where you really need to watch and tell your close persons to watch you lovingly, not critically. If you do not want to be talking about others in gossip and scandals, just tell your circle of friends to remind you your new year resolution when human nature tends to over power you. I have started calling few friends I retained and have been asking them how far I have kept to myself to limit creating avoidable problems...they think I am crazy to ask them to grade me to the scale of 1-10. But how else can I keep it real? it is true., honest self evaluation first. That “keeping it honest”.

Many views stated that it is better to keep just a few observable resolutions than a long list of “can’t dos’. “Just the most two or three things that have been source of tears or stress” Be brave to keep your life saving resolution and if you fail a couple of times, it is still ok. You are just human. Great women keep few friends and invest their time in achieving more achievement for humanity. If you have extra time, instead of calling up a willing gossip friend to get into people’s business, why not start your biography ( I mean every woman in America needs to write a bio for posterity) for your lovely children or keep your daily memoirs to track out irresponsibility. Do something positive than just picking phone and gossiping for hours. Dismiss all gossip friends

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nicely. It is easy. Just stop calling them and they will trash away. Do not care if they complain about you and do not bother to explain your action to any body since your action is self preservative. "Self exclusion is the most effective type of intimidation and self preservation" they say. Hold unto friends that make you improve your self and humanity. Be a realistic New Year resolution maker and keeper. Teach your children to do same. Keep the right fear...."The fear of God.. the beginning of wisdom" Happy New year!