

Changing Places

After 12 wonderful years in my house on Stanford, I moved. In March, I moved to a beautiful house on Lakemont Drive. It was a gigantic step for me, which is probably why it took me so long. Two years ago I began to feel the need to “push out the sides of my box”. I was feeling very cramped. I bought the house on Stanford largely due to what I call a miracle. The house on Lakemont was nothing short of a miracle also. Since I was young, I dreamed of living in a spacious house. I visualized it years ago with windows along the back of the house. The house on Stanford had an enclosed porch at the back of the house that had windows. When I walked into that house, I knew this was the house. Two years ago, I saw myself moving into a yellow house. When I walked into the house on Lakemont, spacious, large windows that looked out the back, a waterfall in the back yard, I knew this was the house. And later, after living in it a month, it occurred to me that it's a yellow house! Life is so much like climbing a ladder. We have a goal and we get there one rung at a time. For me, owning a house like this had been my symbol for success. It might be something else for other people. We all have our symbols for that represent each rung we climb.

My entire experience of buying this house and selling the little house on Stanford represents three major aspects of growth and goal achievement.

The first is that until you are CRYSTAL CLEAR about what you want, it isn't going to happen. We may think we're clear but if we haven't achieved it yet, then we're missing some pieces. Last fall after the Money Clinic, I was bemoaning to a friend that I was frustrated that I was still living in this tiny house. (Twelve years ago it was a castle; how our perspectives change.) My friend said, “Susan, you don't even know what you want!” I replied, “Oh yes I do; I want 3 bedrooms, at least 2 baths, large trees, hardwood floors, open, spacious, contemporary, large kitchen, laundry room, dog door, large yard for the pups, a deck, large windows so that it's light and airy, white kitchen cabinets, in the same general area that I'm living now...” My friend said, “Susan that is the most specific I have ever heard you be on this subject.” That night a friend of mine, unaware of any thoughts on this subject, faxed a sheet on a house in her neighborhood. It was almost exactly what I wanted. Well, I didn't get that house. After I found the one I finally bought, I was glad I didn't get the first one. Case in point, the more specific you are in detail the more likely you are to achieve it.

The second point I derive from a quote from Eric Butterworth that goes like this. “Pauses in life are not delays, but are necessary to the process.” Most often they are a time of preparation for what is to come. It took six months for my house to sell. It was a stressful and frustrating time for me. When it did sell, I got a loan that I shouldn't have qualified for, the woman who bought it paid over list, with no inspection, no clean up, move out whenever I wanted. All of the offers that fell through or were rejected didn't even touch this one. Now I look back and realize that all of that time was for preparation. We somehow sometimes get the idea that what we are experiencing is wrong. We never know the big picture. It's best to take advantage of whatever we are experiencing as part of the process that gets us from where we are now to where we want to be. Chaos precedes major leaps in our life. Trust that whatever is happening is part of where you are going. In other words, there are no setbacks.

The third point is that growth takes place at different times for different people in different ways. Sometimes it's a divorce, or an illness or a significant relationship. Sometimes

it's a death or loss of a job, career or financial security. Sometimes it's a class or travel or a mountain climb or a race. Sometimes we have control over it, sometimes we seemingly don't. No matter what, we have control over how we respond and what we learn from it. *People who are willing to voluntarily take risks will find exquisite resources in place for times when they are dealing with challenges. Playing it safe can feel good in the short term and can have devastating results in the long term.* When circumstances push you to the ground, it's the fighters that set goals and move on. I recently listened to a story about a woman who now as a successful marketing business. At the point in her life when everything was taken away from her including her children, she decided right then *who* she was going to be in the world. Instead of letting the experience define her, she defined herself in the experience. And the strength she derived from that decision carried her through step by step to where she is now. In every moment there is a decision about *who* we are and going to be. We only experience regret when we don't learn from something. So far, I've had no regrets.