



#### **4 Easy Steps To A “Winning,” Rejuvenating Holiday Season”**

When I think of Fall, I think of the endless list of chores that needs to be done before the snow flies — like getting the gardens ready, washing the windows and decorating for Halloween. I also think of pumpkin and making my favorite pumpkin flan which “flavorizes” the house.

Despite cooking this recipe a “billion” times it seems that I still can’t find pumpkin at the grocery store. Again, this week, I was searching the canned fruit section of the grocery store for pumpkin. (Why can’t I remember it is in the baking section of the grocery store?) I was frustrated as I had many errands to do and felt like I was just wasting time. I literally backed up and almost knocked over a small, petite Asian woman holding 3 jars of jam in her arms. In broken English she said her husband needed a peanut butter and jelly sandwich and sent her to the store for the jam. She looked so puzzled. She was holding strawberry jam, preserves and jelly. I could see how easy it was to be confused. I thought I was being clear when I suggested she buy the least expensive jam until she grabbed the low sugar preserves off the shelf which cost a lot more. I told her I was Registered Dietitian and I didn’t care about a teaspoon of sugar in the real jam. She closed her eyes and looked up the sky and said in broken English, “You are a dietitian — I suppose to meet you today.” She asked me if she could ask me one more question. Of course I said. She stated, “I was diagnosed with breast cancer one month ago; what should I eat?” She then went on to say, she had a 4 month old and a 2 year old and the cancer is so “advanced” she has to go to doctors at Rochester... I said, “You mean you are going to Mayo?” Yes, she nodded. She was going to Mayo Clinic in Rochester Minnesota.

There is no language barrier for a mother’s teary eyes. We both got teary eyed as I asked her questions and suggested she go back to the produce section and just start eating lots of dark green and orange vegetables. What could I really say in 5 minutes to make a difference? I wish I would have gotten this woman’s phone number, as this brief encounter has humbled me the last few days and has gotten me thinking what is really important right now. I mean right now!

Everybody these days is “crazy busy.” Remember when people used to be just busy? Now they are crazed as well. I had an interesting conversation with a coaching client last week about her life feeling like she was on a merry go round. She wanted to be on the pretty white horse, not in the ugly brown cart. She did not seem to mind that her life was going round and round, but while going “round and round” she wanted to enjoy the ride on the pretty white horse.

Enjoying the pretty white horse is like living in the moment. Living in the moment is to be entirely focused on what is happening right now. (Like helping that mom pick out jam.) Do you allow yourself to savor the moment or do you blink away the present and give your focus to the “crazy busy” that is always waiting for you? Yes crazy busy is always waiting for you!

I believe life is just a string of moments which become days, and days which become months, and months which become years. How to stop your merry go round? Think WIN! What is important right now!? If you savor the present, you will live in the moment without guilt or regret and, honestly, life doesn't get much sweeter than that!

#### Chere's Call to Action:

- Think "WIN." What is Important right Now?
- Write the word WIN on a few index cards and tape them to your computer, bathroom mirror and fridge.
- Look around. What is life whispering to you right now? Stop and listen.
- Live in the present by using all of your sense. Listen to your life, smell your life and taste your life. Using your senses gets you in touch with the moment! When you are in touch with the moment, you will have no guilt-filled regrets.

I guarantee you will discover more simple joy than ever before and have the time to energize yourself and others...and what could taste better than that this holiday season?