



Resolutions...

So here we are. Already nearly a month into 2026. New Year's Resolutions. How are they working out for you? What's the saying we often hear? *The road to hell is paved with good intentions...*

Try again. Try harder. Each year. It can start to feel like "Groundhog Year." (Remember the movie with Bill Murray, *Groundhog Day*?) Or, like the Greek myth of Sisyphus, who pushes the rock up the hill but the rock keeps rolling down on him. Over and over again...

Can our efforts at change end up frustrating the best of intentions, leading us to give up...even to, dare I say, desperation? *Why try? It's no use.*

Maybe if I just wanted it more...

Maybe I'm too lazy...

We can beat ourselves up with these thoughts and end up falling back into our own version of Groundhog Day.

So, is there a DIFFERENT WAY?

Or, am I bound to a futility that makes me settle or just give up?

I believe there is a different way. I don't believe we are bound to futility.

I've shared this before, the words from, of all sources, Russell Brand:

Change is possible.

Hope is real.

IF those two statements are true, there MUST be a different way. A way that does more than just create New Year's resolutions; a way that leads to a better way...lasting change, transformation. What might it take to walk a path where the 10-years-from-now version of Mark looks different than the today version of Mark (and I'm not primarily talking about the physical Mark...that part of me is on the back nine for sure ☺).

Here's what I believe. And for me, this is essential if I am to find a DIFFERENT (better?) WAY.

We are not meant to do this thing called LIFE on our own.

More than self-help books and programs, and in so many ways, more than "religious groups" (church and others), the "Twelve-Steppers" have a leg up on most of us.

People that stick with a twelve-step program have evidence that change is possible and hope is real.

Recovery can and does take place.

It ~~may not be~~ isn't linear, but it can happen.

How, you ask?

Here's my belief: there are two relational components to the twelve-step programs, and they teach us a lot about human nature and our existence.

Simply put, there is a horizontal relational component and a vertical relationship component.

What do I mean?

I'll leave that to you to ponder...

But, I will give you a hint, specifically regarding that horizontal part. I find it in a variety of writings. Here's one...Found in the writing of John Donne's from the 17th century:

*No man is an island,
Entire of itself,
Every man is a piece of the continent,
A part of the main...
Because I am involved in mankind...*

Here's to change. Here's to hope.

May both be proved possible to you in 2026!