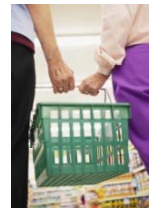




Good Morning, and welcome to Flight #2012. We are prepared to take off into the New Year. Please make sure your **Attitude and Desires** are secured and locked in, in the upright position. All self-destructive devices and emotions should be turned off at this time. All **negativity, hurt, and discouragement** should be put away. Should we lose altitude under pressure, during the flight, reach for a fellow TOPS member! They will automatically respond with encouragement and friendship. Once this is activated you can assist other passengers. There will be NO BAGGAGE allowed on this flight. The Captain has cleared us for takeoff -- Destination - GREATNESS!

Received the above from another TOPS Coordinator and thought.. what a great way to start the year. Makes you really think about the journeys we are all on. It is so important to make sure our **Attitude and Desires** are 'locked in' to our minds, so that we can choose the path that will lead us to greatness. We can only be successful when we keep our journey a priority. Many times things happen in our lives that result in our forgetting what we are trying to accomplish. When this happens, it is sometimes difficult to remain vigilant in regards to choosing healthy food and making sure that we are exercising. We all know the importance of keeping a food journal, but when challenges arise, as they always do, we let that task go undone.

One way to stay focused is to prepare a meal plan ahead of time. That way, we don't have to spend extra time figuring out what we are going to eat and choose something quick just so we can get on with our day. For those of you with computers and smartphones, using a program that allows you to journal on the computer or on your phone makes the task effortless. I use 'My calorie counter' which also saves the information and I can eat a particular item again already knowing the nutritional values. This program also accesses all the nutritional info on fast foods – so that when I am having to eat on the go, I can easily make the best choices. Some members plan for a week at a time, so that they can create a shopping list ahead of time. We all know how many 'not-smart' choices we can make when we are just going up and down the aisles at the grocery store. As I shared a couple of newsletters ago, a great way to shop is to only go down the outside aisles of the store. Think about the store you shop at. Where are the vegetables and fruit, where are the meats, where are the dairy products, where are the breads? Almost all stores have these on the outermost aisles. Where do you find the 'processed' food that are full of calories and preservatives? In the inside aisles. If you map out your store ahead of time and know which items you need from the inside aisles, you can just make your trips into those aisles quick. Don't scan the shelves looking at what they are offering. It is too tempting to just pick something you really don't need.



Negativity and Hurt and Discouragements– Why do we seem to use these as crutches? Why do we use



comfort food to ease the pain? Do you have someone in your life whose negativity is a constant stressor for you? Do you have someone in your life who you think needs to change? Is there someone who says hurtful things to you or others with no regard to how that may make one feel? There are ways of dealing with these without turning to comfort foods or becoming so frustrated we can't even think about taking

care of ourselves. Many of you have heard me say – If someone around you is negative, get away from them. Of course, this is not always possible, as it may be your spouse, employer, family member or close friend. We can't change the way they think or act. We can only change how we react to them. I have learned and am successful 90% of the time with just ignoring that person. If I react to them, it just feeds their need for attention and seems to keep them going. I have found that after about the third time my number one negative person complains about something that I don't respond and just ignore him/her, they stopped complaining about a particular event. How many of you live with an armchair referee or actually are one? They question or complain about every call or accuse the refs or telecasters of being biased. They yell at the TV. You wonder, why? since the people on TV can't hear them anyway. Accept it as just their/our way of expressing emotion. Some of us criticize others in our heads and some of us are vocal about our opinions. If we just accept these outbursts as that particular person's way of expressing emotion, we can find it easier to ignore and accept that it is not necessarily directed at us.

How much **BAGGAGE** do you have? How much do you let that baggage weigh you down emotionally or psychologically? We have to let go of past hurts, feelings of inadequacy, fears of rejection, whatever baggage we are carrying around. We have to realize that we are each unique and special. We need to remember that to someone we are the most important person in their life. We need to accept that we are who we are and make the most of our talents and abilities. If we want to change something about ourselves, that is our choice. If someone else wants us to change – that is their way of trying to control us. We can allow them to affect us or not. It is our choice.



Reaching out to our fellow TOPS members – this is what TOPS is all about ... supporting each other and the organization. Years ago chapter contests usually included receiving points for sending a fellow member a note of encouragement or calling a fellow member. Now, we include sending emails or texts. Face to face communication seems to have taken a back seat in our everyday lives. You can change that. I challenge each of you to call a fellow member every week and see how that makes you and the other person feel. You can create a closer relationship with your fellow members if you will just pick up the



phone and have a conversation about what is going on in their personal lives. Being able to share what is going on in our lives makes us closer as a family. The more we are part of the everyday life of each other, the stronger the bond of friendship will be. How well do you really know your fellow members? Let's all build that bond of friendship that we all want in our lives.

Well – I'll get off my soapbox for now. Back to reviewing your year-end resumes, confirming your winners and tabulating our areas successes. This has been an enjoyable break in my day and I hope you can get something from this newsletter to help you reach **Destination- GREATNESS!**

Cindy Moore
TOPS Coordinator #452
13636 Janwood, Dallas, TX 75234
Cell 214.797.1976 Email coord452@tx.rr.com