

Relaxation Day
by Angie Rosillo, psychotherapist

Aaahhh. Relaxation Day! A personal day you've given yourself because you honor you. You make a cozy nest of your favorite comforters and pillows on the sofa, collect your favorite munchies and comfort foods, lean back, flip on the T.V. and start channel surfing. Determined to avoid mind pollution for one entire afternoon and in the hopes of actually learning something, you flip right by the daily garbage commonly known as Soap Operas, Talk Shows and Judge "Everything Under the Sun" stations and head right for the cable channels to see what they have to offer. Biography: Jack the Ripper...not! The Learning Channel: How to Rebuild a Carburetor...okay material, but pass. The Animal Channel: The World's Deadliest Snakes ...I don't think so! What to do? One last try and bingo! You actually discover something on the now aptly named Discovery Channel. But what becomes the next question. On the screen is a zany, madcap Interior Designer whose name you learn at the first commercial break is Christopher Lowell. Toutting his own brand of budget-minded, "you can do it", creativity-based interior design, you watch, amused and somewhat curious. He turns a flea market find into a work of art in minutes, designs a table centerpiece from items around the house, demonstrates three painting techniques that an eight year old could do and shows how to make interesting patterns on the ceiling by simply back-lighting a plant. All very inexpensively and without a degree from an interior design school. Just before his one-hour program ends (gee, where did the time go?) he shares success stories from his viewers.

Gradually you begin to think of things you could do to improve the ambiance of your own home. Doubt gives way to hope. Maybe you could complete a simple project. Just rearranging the things you already have would be a start. Getting rid of the clutter would be a big improvement too. And removing the layers of paint on the kitchen cabinets didn't look hard the way Christopher explained it.

Excitement replaces hope! Still comfortable in your nest, you cautiously consider the things you might change and the next thing you know you're making a list. To avoid being overwhelmed you pick one simple task. It worked!! You didn't think you could do anything creative, but you did and you love the results! You did it! You can't wait to get started on another item on your list.

And that is exactly how the W.I.I.T. program works. You learned how to recreate yourself. You've rearranged the things you already have: your thought processes. You've gotten rid of the clutter: your abuser's values. You've removed the layers of paint: the secrets and defenses you used to protect yourself. And you've made your list: your affirmations. You've avoided being overwhelmed: you're equipped with realistic personal expectations. You did it! You didn't think you could but you did and you love the results! And you can't wait to get started on the next step of recreating your life. Congratulations!

Now what I want you to do is send me your success stories. Tell me about anything you want. It may be the first time you caught your self in an old behavior and corrected it. Hurray! Or maybe you'd like to share about the first time you stood up to your abusers. Good job! Or maybe it will be about

something fun you did that you'd always wanted to do but hadn't done before. Didn't it feel great? I want to hear all about your success!! And everyone who reads this newsletter does too! Each issue we'll share some of your triumphs and everyone will celebrate your success. So write to me right away. I can't wait to hear from you!!! And in the words of Christopher Lowell... YOU CAN DO IT!!!