

## Stay the Course

by Brenda Spina, MS, LMFT, LPC  
Director/Clinical Family Therapist

Recovery and healing processes may be confusing. These processes include varied experiences such as pain, humor, shame, grief, relief, peace, and turmoil. Recovery or healing journeys are like life. The next turn coming may hold any or all of the emotions listed. As tiring as it may seem to stay the course, this is exactly what we are called and encouraged to do. Paul, in Philippians 3:14 states, “I press toward the mark...” Paul had seeming amazing ability to focus on his eternal reward while staying the course on earth. Encouragement and challenge ooze from every passage written. As many of us know, he wrote from a very dark place: the dark prison of Rome.

As I focus on the year coming to a close, I realize “Stay the course!” has been a theme for me since early 2015. The theme is real in every area of my life. My course has not been easy; including many of the emotions listed earlier. However, the course is becoming less fearful and increasingly easier.

As 2015 comes to a close it is natural that we reevaluate where we are in our life’s journey. A small piece of any healing process involves the following questions. These questions challenge one’s integrity because they insist on honesty before the Lord. The questions free one as well because we know we serve the God who can forgive and strengthen us. Movement is forward in the character of His Son. As you reevaluate your own year, here are the questions you may ask yourself:

- Who has hurt you and how? (Be specific)
- With whom do you find yourself feeling resentful or hold a grudge?
- Who is the person you find yourself criticizing, gossiping or judgmental about?

- Who have you hurt? How? (Be specific)
- In what ways do you find yourself focusing on what they did wrong and blaming them?
- How have you used fake or false humility to make yourself look good?
- In what ways have you allowed people to think something about you or your work that is false?

The Lord himself is highly invested in freeing you from the potential bondage these choices create. Let's look to Him for a healthier and happier Christmas and New Year!

*“And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, WILL HIMSELF restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast.” (emphasis mine) 1 Peter 5:10 NIV*

*Compliments of Practical Family Living, Inc.*

*P.O. Box 1676, Appleton, WI 54912 (920) 720-8920*

*You are permitted and encouraged to reproduce and distribute our articles in any format provided that you credit the author, no modifications are made, you do not charge a fee beyond the cost of reproduction, and you include Practical Family Living's web-site address (<http://www.pfl.org>) on the copied resource. Quotations from any article are also permitted with credit to the author and citing the web-site. Any use of other materials on this web-site, including reproduction, modification, distribution or republication, without the prior written consent of Practical Family Living, Inc., is strictly prohibited.*