

THE NEW LEAF by Nancy Cramer and Cynthia Gray ( see note below)

Now that all your New Year's resolutions have been broken, it is time to make some resolutions that you will keep. These will be "down-to-earth" resolutions, ones you realize you ought to observe.

At Christmas time everybody was filled with the wonderful, joyous spirit accompanying that season. Each face wore a smile, each tongue said happy things. But now that Santa has come and gone, that spirit has departed also. Those smiles, those happy things should prevail over the entire year, not for just a few weeks. Look at the people around you—they are the same as they were before Christmas. Oh, Jack may be wearing a new sweater, or Anne a new blouse. But they are the same. That cheering smile at Christmas time can be even more cheering now.

"Oh, I wish I'd studied longer! Why didn't I take more notes? If only I hadn't looked out the window the day he was talking about non-electrolytes." These thoughts stare at you in an "I told you so" manner from your exam paper. Studying can be made easy if it is done steadily, not in a few and infrequent spurts purely from necessity. Take more notes read that chapter again, and that last minute cramming won't be required.

From every scene, every little incident, happiness can be found by the person who looks for it. The soft downy snow, resting in creamy drifts; the sun forming patterns of lace through the green leaves of tall singing trees; laughing faces of children at play; the tender look of a lover; the chatter of two little old white-haired ladies on the bus; the young-old inquiring gaze of a baby; the warm feeling from reading a lovely poem; the smell of chicken cooking on Sunday morning. These can all instill a sense of happiness. For some people this ability to find happiness in the little things of life comes easily. For others it is slow in coming—it has to be developed.

The new leaf to be turned over for 1949 is a mental leaf. All these things and multitudes of others depend upon your view of life. Although spring isn't here yet, it is time to do a little housecleaning—in your mind. N.G. (My maiden name was Nancy Greef. )

***(Note from the author: This was written many years ago as you have determined by now. I was an 18-year-old college student on the staff of the school paper. It reflects the values and interests that I write about today. In fact, you may have thought it was a recent product. But read my grandmother's confession: She admits that she confesses she "up and adapted it: to fit my ideas, but they originated with you, though I shan't give you credit!!! I'm not above using grist that comes to my mill."***

***My grandmother wrote a weekly column with the pen name of Cynthia Gray for her home town newspaper for more than 35 years and received national recognition for that. In her letter that accompanied my story, she admits she "adapted" my essay. I suppose that any gift I have for writing, I have her to be grateful for. I wonder now just how my original essay wrote, thanks, Bommie Greef!***