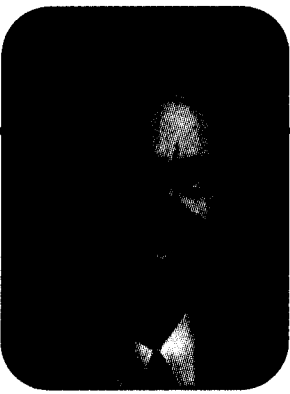


# 2003 ~ The Time to Hesitate is Through!

by Doctor Debug



**Natural Life News & Directory welcomes our new columnist, Ron Sterling, M.D. (a.k.a. Dr. Debug.)** a general and geriatric psychiatrist from Seattle, with 27 years of experience providing counseling and psychiatric services to adolescents, adults, seniors, couples, and families. He has been writing columns for newspapers and magazines since 1998 which have included subject matter ranging from good manners to senior mental health. He hosts and maintains the well-known Internet mental health center, *DearShrink.com*. Dr. Sterling is licensed in Washington State. He graduated from Loma Linda University Medical School in 1972, the University of Hawaii Psychiatry Residency in 1975 and the University of Kansas Geriatric Psychiatry Program in 1999.

## Dear Doc:

I am 27 years of age and I am working towards a Ph.D. in economics. Sometimes, I am amazed at how I have made it this far because I am a great procrastinator. I almost always wait until the last possible minute to get things done. In my personal life, forget it. I am constantly late to appointments and I often screw-up on promises.

A lot of people have given up on me. My girlfriend thinks I am angry about something and that procrastinating is just my way of rebelling. I plan on making a

**New Year's resolution about being on time. Can you help me on this?**

*Signed—Resolute in Redmond*

## Dear Resolute:

Thank you for writing! I promise to answer your question... sometime. Ummm... just kidding!

I think there are no Procrastinators Anonymous groups mostly because such dilly-dalliers and their friends generally don't take the problem seriously. Many Americans have what I call a "Popeye Complex." That "I-am-what-I-am" attitude seriously disables even believing in the concept of growth and change. By writing to me, you may be taking the first real step toward working on your stalling syndrome.

The short answer to your question is your girlfriend is probably correct about your conflict. However, there are many other possibilities. It isn't just laziness that gets in the way of us reaching our goals. As most therapists would say, "it goes much deeper than that."

## Debugging Procrastination

There are two major reasons that people procrastinate: they were either overindulged or underindulged as kids. Not all of us were overindulged or underindulged. Sometimes, our parents actually got it close to right and didn't contribute to any major conflict over the issue of responsibilities.

The overindulged folks often have an "entitlement complex." Unless someone more powerful like a boss or a teacher comes along, these folks just don't feel that they have to do anything on anyone

else's schedule. These are the "spoiled brat" procrastinators. What they do is just plain rude, but they don't care. In fact, they generally don't get that they even have a problem. Do you know any spoiled people who do?

The underindulged folks are those who were always being told what to do and when, and never got much of a vote. Because they were so controlled or intimidated, as soon as they got the chance to do what they wanted to do, they went for it, big time. Even if what mom or dad told them to do is good for them now, they are not going to do it, no matter what. They may continue to rebel even when the rebelling process screws them up.

The most useful word for understanding procrastination is "stalling." By stalling, we can appease the demands of requirements or responsibilities while at the same time satisfying our inner reaction to rebel. By essentially saying to ourselves "in just a minute," we neither openly defy nor immediately obey. It is a classic self-defeating behavior pattern. Nothing gets accomplished quite like it could, when it could.

## Debugging Broken Resolutions

Because making New Year's resolutions is a well-known tradition, it carries the same emotional tension as parental demands. So, we may try to dismiss New Year's resolutions as trite and banal. This rationalization makes for a great escape for those of us looking to view the resolution process with disdain (that would be the brat type) or to look at resolutions with

Continued on page 36

Continued from page 11

## Hesitating is Through!

a sense of “don't tell me what to do” (that's the rebellious type).

If you find yourself not celebrating the concept of resolution-making, you can bet it is for an emotionally-charged reason. Your programming is getting in the way. Before you can change, you have to believe in the process of change, which starts with a resolution.

Recognizing our emotional response to the concept of resolutions allows us to get past our rationalizations for dismissing them.

Maybe New Year's is not a good time to be making resolutions if you are the rebellious type. Consider giving your resolutions more meaning by making them on or around your birthday—a more personal day of renewal.

Most of you Jim Morrison fans are going to find this severely perverted, but one of the ways I keep myself on time and making those stepwise changes I want to make is by singing to myself—“the time to hesitate is through, there's no time to wallow in the mire...”

I guess that proves that even the wrong song with the right lyrics can work, if you let it!

— Doctor Debug ■

## Feeling bugged? Write to

**Doctor Debug**, a psychiatrist with 27 years of counseling experience. Ask him about mental wellness, or send questions regarding personal, social, relationship, medication or sexual concerns. E-mail sent to Doctor Debug is read only by Ron Sterling, M.D. No identities, whatsoever, will be revealed in any published answers.

Disclaimer: The content offered by or through Doctor Debug is for information only and is not intended for medical, psychiatric, psychological or behavioral health diagnosis or treatment. Never disregard professional advice or delay seeking it because of something you have read in this column. Copyright 2003, Ron Sterling, M.D. All rights reserved. **E-mail: deardoc@doctordebug.com.** Back issues available at doctordebug.com.

Continued from page 14

## Myofascial Release

standing next to your garbage can and that alley leads to New York. You get the picture. Now imagine this is a three dimensional body with internal organs.

Shred a piece of jerky and hold it up to the light. Note the fine, feathery wisps of tissue that are opaque and colorless. That's the fascia. The reddish brown tissues are the muscle fibers.

When fascia is injured from trauma, an over-use pattern or even emotional trauma, the tissue tends to

contract and become relatively dehydrated. Electron-micrographs of mouse fascia prior to injury show wavy collagen fibers like an open shower curtain. Two weeks after an induced injury, the same fascia biopsy appears kinked and pleated like a closed shower curtain.

In this state, extensibility and proper movement are diminished. The pain lights come on. The restrictions transmit tension down the pathways and can interfere with joints, nerves, viscera (internal organs)—just pick a system. We are fascia!

The therapy for restoring the myofascial system is a boring spectator sport. It is slow and tedious because collagen fibers deform (stretch) more from the function of steady pressure over time rather than the intensity of the stretch. Treatment sessions are quiet and contemplative. I like to play relaxing music when I treat. Techniques include finger or flat-hand contact or traction on the neck or the extremities, sometimes in conjunction with range-of-motion movements. The result is a lasting effect of resolved pain and the return of the qualities of movement and strength.

Now my patient can do those home exercises without generating more pain. Her life has just gotten a little better. ■

*Terry Kennedy, MPT, is available at Health in Motion Physical Therapy, Inc. with offices in Bozeman and Livingston. Call 222-8842 or send an email to: terrykennedy@webtv.net.*



**Boulder Hot Springs**



Call **406-225-4339** for Reservations

Featuring: Yoga with Judy Landecker & Delicious Organic Foods  
Free Time to Hike, Rest, Enjoy the Geothermal Waters & Get a Massage!

[www.BoulderHotSprings.com](http://www.BoulderHotSprings.com)

## RESTORATIVE RETREAT

**APRIL 25-27, 2002**

**\$210/person**

Registration is from 4-6 on Friday  
followed by dinner at 6:30 p.m.  
Schedule will be posted at registration