

# Get SASSY!

by Marti Wibbels, MS, LMHC

**H**ow can today be different from other days? We've all heard statements like, "Whatever has your mind has you." Or, "Change your thoughts and you can change your world." But how can we actually do that?

When we learn to challenge old, negative thought patterns, we can transform them with positive attitudes. Since it's far easier to fall back on old ways of thinking than it is to come up with fresh perspectives, I've been encouraging people to use my SASSY—Talk-back technique to eradicate negative thought patterns.

Instead of accepting automatic thoughts, such as "My life will never get any better," "I have no friends," "I am a failure," or "I'll never be good enough," challenge debilitating self-talk by TALKING BACK, incorporating faith statements to transform thoughts and feelings. For example, to the automatic thought, "My life will never get any better," one could talk back by thinking, "It is a new day—and the Bible promises me that God's mercies are new every morning" (see Lamentations 3:21-26). To the internal belief, "I have no friends," one could say, "This is the week I'm going to learn to make friends—by developing communication skills, volunteering, looking for people with common interests," etc.

Prayer can help move us from one attitude to another, as we make the moment-by-moment choice to turn to God rather than to worry, fear, or dread. Psalm 46 offers hope and practical ideas for how to give concerns to the God who loves us. Choosing to trust God doesn't mean ignoring or numbing feelings generated by problems and real concerns. It's important to learn to allow our feelings to "inform" us. As we train ourselves to look at feelings objectively, we can identify practical steps to take to make this a happy new year.

This could be your time to get SASSY!!!! Being proactive rather than reactive, you could write down three positive things (see Philippians 4:8) to think when you're tempted to mentally review painful past or present events. Since old mental habits are so deeply entrenched that we can't change them without help, the first "S" in "SASSY" points us to God, who offers strength for the weak and comfort for the sad (2 Corinthians 12:9-10 and Matthew 5:4).

S—Supernaturally

A—Aware

S—Start

S—Speaking

Y—Yes's

What "Yes" will you choose today to make this week different from last week?