



From the Heart ~ Carole Lewis

Johnny and I have been at the bay for the last few weeks, and while driving into Houston early this morning to work out with my trainer, Donna, I heard a song that pretty much sums up where many of us are at the beginning of 2012. The song was, "Get Back Up" by TobyMac. The music was very upbeat, which I loved, but it was the lyrics that grabbed my heart. Here is the key phrase of the song:

*We lose our way, we get back up again
It's never too late to get back up again
One day you gonna' shine again
You may be knocked down but not out forever.*



As you know, I never share something with you that I don't have to walk out first. I had a wonderful fall season and was able to abstain from sugar for our entire fall session. As you know, sugar is what always trips me up, so for me it is something that I must abstain from if I am to lose weight and keep it off. In mid-December I flew to Charleston, SC, to attend the wedding of Megan Heath, Vicki's Heath's daughter. I went in a few days early so I could take part in all the festivities prior to the actual wedding. You probably know where this story is going, but in case you don't I'll tell you what happened. It started with me eating a delicious sugar cookie at Vicki's house. Vicki had Googled "Best Sugar Cookie in the World" and this was the recipe that appeared. We rode bikes every day and had a fabulous time, but that one sugar cookie wasn't all the sugar I had while there. I had sweets at the wedding reception, along with wedding cake. This still wouldn't have been a disaster, but I didn't stop when I got home and it was only December 18th! If you have a sugar addiction, you know what happens when you start eating sweets; it is a downhill slide, which is hard to break. Thankfully, I started working out again this week, which for me is my salvation from sweets, and had to face the music of my three pound weight gain.

As I look back on 2011, I realize that God has been so faithful to Johnny and me. This fall I wrote a new book *Live Life Right Here Right Now*, which will come out in July 2012. In the first chapter I said that Johnny and I might be starting on the last part of our cancer journey. At that time, Johnny spent a week in the hospital because he was so weak he could barely walk. In fact, I had to call the paramedics to get him out of the RV and into my car so I could drive him to the hospital. His PSA was over 200 and his CTC test was 48. A CTC (circulating tumor cell) count of 5 or more at any time during the course of the disease is associated with a poor prognosis, and is predictive of shorter progression-free survival and overall survival in patients with Johnny's type of cancer.

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Matthew 6:33:

But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

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Last week I received word that my new book manuscript is short about 16,000 words and that I need to make it longer by January 18th. I have been praying about what I need to add and after yesterday’s blood work report, I realized that God has given me another chance to revise what I said about Johnny. Johnny’s PSA is now 38 and his CTC is 5! God is in charge of you and me and we better not forget it! None of us is going anywhere until God calls us home. And until that day, we need to keep “living life, right here, right now!”

The start of a new year provides a great starting point to establish new habits, to pursue new goals, or to simply turn over a new leaf. Is that where you are as 2012 approaches—ready for a new beginning? The Bible tells us that “If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come .” (2 Corinthians 5:17)

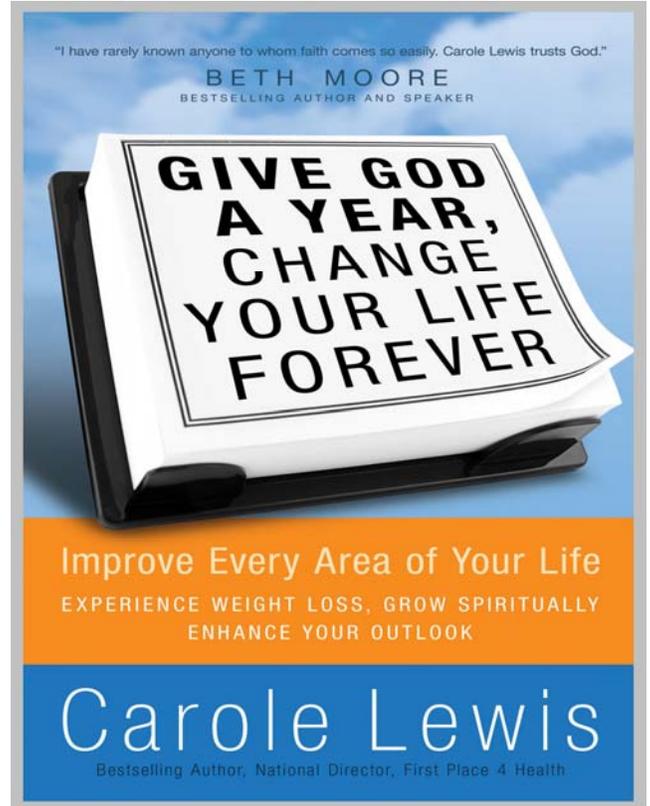
So, in light of these circumstances, I have decided to give God the next year and trust Him to be God for all of 2012. I would love for you to join me on this exciting journey so we can praise Him together in December for His faithfulness. I will start on January 1, and can hardly wait to do my part to “pray and obey.” God is always faithful to do His part, even when I am not.

When we fall, and we will at some point this year, let’s remember the lyrics of TobyMac’s song, “It’s never too late to get back up again” and do just that. If we don’t quit, we will succeed.

Happy New Year,

Carole Lewis

Give God a Year, Change Your Life Forever!





Simple Ideas for Leaders

Three Ingredients for an Effective FP4H Class

There are many components of a First Place 4 Health class. However, only three essential ingredients are necessary for creating an effective class: A leader, a follower, and goals. These three components together form a productive class. A leader must be able to motivate and equip their members (followers) to do what is necessary to accomplish set goals. Without a leader, there is no accountability or guidance for the followers. If there are no followers, then you have no class! If there is no goal, then the leader is merely the person in charge of rounding up a bunch of wandering followers. Since this is January, it is the perfect time to take a look at how the leader can ignite their members to pursue dreams by first setting goals and developing plans to reach those goals. Colossians 1:28-29 contains this charge to a leader: *And we proclaim Him, admonishing every man and teaching every man with all wisdom, that we may present every man complete in Christ. And for this purpose also I labor, striving according to His power, which mightily works within me.* (NAS) The leader's goal is to have members who develop into complete and balanced believers, who are serving God better and longer! The following acrostic G-O-A-L reminds leaders what they must give to members in order to better equip them to reach their goals.

Guidance in Setting Goals

Members tend to set themselves up for failure by setting goals too high or making them too general. To help your members set smart goals, have them follow these guidelines:

SPECIFIC -- Encourage members to be specific with their goals, avoiding generalizations. For example:

- General - I will exercise this week.
- Specific- I will walk two miles, three times this week.

MEASURABLE -- Goals should be measurable to see if they have actually progressed. For instance, I can measure the specific goal above, by seeing if I actually walked two miles on three different days.

ATTAINABLE -- Help members set goals that are attainable in one session. Also, guide them to make goals that are reachable, given their specific strengths and weaknesses. An attainable goal would be to say all 10 memory verses at the end of the 12-week session. Saying the entire 119 Psalm would not be very attainable within that period of time.

REALISTIC -- Being realistic and honest is very helpful for setting goals. It would not be very realistic for me, a 40-something woman, to set the goal of being able to run a marathon at the end of a 13-week session, but I could have the goal of walking in a 5K walk/run. Have the members take an honest look at themselves and set goals that are realistic for their lifestyle, age, strengths, weaknesses, and even personality style.

TRACKABLE -- Smart goals can be tracked over a period of time. Ask members to keep track of their progress by using the First Place 4 Health Tracker. They should have goals that are physical, emotional, mental and spiritual. Using the Tracker each day they can check off the exercise, Bible study, and food selections—trackable goals.

Opportunity to Reach Goals

Give members many opportunities to succeed. All members have that one weight-loss goal they are striving to attain. However, having just one long-term goal can be discouraging. Give your members a weekly goal, then

reward them for meeting the goal. Have members write out at least four goals for the session that will include all four sides: emotional, mental, physical, and spiritual. The shorter the goals they set and reach, the more confidence they will gain in seeking to meet the long-term goals.

Accountability Along the Way

Weighing each week is a way to call members to accountability. The numbers on the scale are an indication of how well or how poor they are doing in regards to reaching their goal. If they do not weigh, the leader does not know how they are progressing. Proverbs 27:17 says, "As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another." People need other people to be accountable to in order to grow and in order to meet their goals. On the other hand, lack of accountability leads to members floundering and getting off course.

Love Unconditionally

Above all, love your members, no matter what the results. Extend grace and mercy along with the accountability. Communicate to your members that you accept them just as they are, but desire for them to be their very best - to be all God created them to be! Begin this New Year focused on the G-O-A-L of giving your members guidance, opportunity to succeed, and accountability with love. Have a blessed New Year!

Archived article written by Nancy Taylor

Need a Jump Start to Kick off the New Year?

These simple steps will kick start your weight loss. Do all eight for 14 days and you'll find yourself back on track. We can do anything for 14 days! If you are just beginning your journey with First Place 4 Health, this is an easy way to begin as you familiarize yourself with all aspects of First Place 4 Health.

- 1. Pray before you eat anything.**
Ask God to help you make healthy choices. You can't do it alone and you don't have to.
- 2. Weigh yourself.**
Weigh now—and again at the same time each week. Only weigh once per week. Weighing more often can lead to discouragement when you don't see a change quickly.
- 3. Write down everything you eat.**
Don't worry about counting it on your FP4H Tracker. Just get it on paper.
- 4. Don't eat any fried foods.**
None. Zero. No excuses.
- 5. Eat only low-fat dairy and meat products.**
Reduced-fat cheeses are easy to find and taste great. Trim visible fat and skin from meats and choose "choice" cuts of meat.
- 6. Don't drink any soft drinks, sweetened coffees or juices.**
Calorie-heavy soft drinks, coffee drinks and fruit juices pack on pounds if you're not careful. It's easy to lose track of how many liquid calories you are consuming. Abstain from all of these for the two-week jump start.
- 7. Eat as many vegetables as you want to eat.**
None of us gained weight eating vegetables. Eat as many as you want, except potatoes.
- 8. Drink 8 ounces of water before every meal and snack.**
It will help you feel full faster. Many times we interpret dehydration as hunger.
- 9. Sleep at least 8 hours per night.**
Studies have shown that sleep deprivation promotes weight gain.
- 10. Exercise at least 30 minutes a day, 5 times each week.**
If you can only walk a mile, then only walk a mile. Get serious.

You can find easy recipes to go with these quick start tips in the *My Food Plan* book, ISBN# 08307.59719.



Fit Tips

This is the Year!

Vicki Heath

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We have made some changes to our newsletter as you can already see. I will be sharing with you in my articles this year the basic principles of my new book *Don't Quit, Get Fit*. It's a new year with promises of opportunities for success – if we make some changes. We do not want this to be just another year with the same old resolutions that are never resolved. The last thing I want next year is to say “another year, another resolution without success.” This year can be different, but it will require work on our part. This is the first in a five-part series on helping you not to quit and FINALLY get fit.

Principal Number One

Stop believing the lies and focus on the TRUTH:

Jesus tells us “The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.” (John 10:10). Jesus is the same yesterday, today and forever and the thieves are still trying to steal our joy, deny our value and destroy our ability to experience life as God wants, especially if it can keep us from hearing and believing the truth.

What lies prevent you from moving towards the life that God wants for you? Are you ready to confront them? Here is one of the biggest lies that needs to be confronted by the truth:

LIE: I am valued by how I look, what I wear, and what I do.

We've heard this lie almost from the womb. The first time our mothers dressed us up in a cute little outfit and we got praised or when someone said, “look at those cute little cheeks,” we began to understand that our value was defined by the way others saw us. From those innocent, well-meaning comments to the outright attack on our value from the media and culture, we've been lied to our whole lives. Look good and people love you. Gain weight and be ignored.

TRUTH: My value comes in knowing I am fully loved by God

Listen to this amazing truth. Allow these words to touch your heart and mind as you consider the truth of your worth:

*How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God!
And that is what we are! I John 3:1*

As someone who has said yes to Jesus Christ as your ultimate guide and shepherd, you are no longer defined by what the world says, thinks or believes about you. You are a child of God! God literally lavishes you with love. He covers you with love. God does not see your body or your house or your car, but He sees you and He says, “I love you!” In fact, God loves you so much that He was willing to give everything so that you could be with Him. You didn't have to do a thing.

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On the first night of a FP4H class when we all weigh in, I can see fear on the faces of those who come in the door. Some have not weighed themselves in years and have no idea how out of control their weight is. Others weigh every day and know to the ounce how much they weigh. Like so many, we allow the scale to define us and have power over us. We let the things in life that happen to us, how we look, the kind of car we drive, the kind of job we have, determine our value. One of the many things that sets First Place 4 Health apart from other weight loss programs is that we tell the truth. As I continue to study God's word, I have come to understand that it is my relationship with Him that defines who I am, not what I weigh. I have had to have my mind totally changed and transformed by God's word.

It's time to confront the lies and begin each day saying, "I am a child of God who is loved. My worth is determined by God and not the scale or even my own view of myself."

Now the million dollar question for you this month:

Is there a lie that I need to stop believing?

Is there a lie you have believed about yourself that you know now is untrue? Identify the lie and write it down. In a recent consultation when I asked this question the response was: "I have believed that I am lazy and I know that I am not lazy. That is a lie that I know in my heart is not true."

What is the truth I need to focus on?

For every lie you believe about yourself, the Lord wants to give you His truth. If you believe that you are lazy, the truth you'll need to embrace is that God made you to work hard and has given you the resources you need. Even in my weakness He will be strong.

But he said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.' Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weakness, so that Christ's power may rest on me. 2 Corinthians 12:9

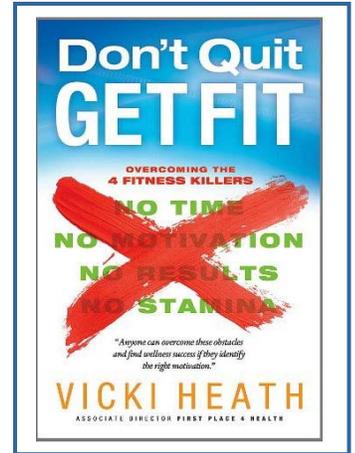
In prayer and Bible study, the Lord will show you what truth He has for you. In fact, that truth may become your lifeline for the year!

Identifying the lies and focusing on the truth can become the first step that God uses to empower you for success and to keep you motivated toward your wellness goals this year.

I am praying for you as you enter into a new life with Christ this year of 2012.

Staying focused,

Vicki Heath



Upcoming Events

Florida Area Leader's Meeting & Training

January 21, 2012
Trinity Christian Center
Lakeland, FL

Louisiana Area Leader's Meeting & Training

January 28, 2012
Madisonville, LA

Woven (Carole Lewis Speaking Engagement)

February 2, 2012
Westlink Christian Church
Wichita, KS

Digging Deeper Women's Weekend (Vicki Heath Speaking Engagement)

February 3-4, 2012
Sandy Cove Retreat
North East, MD

Pattern of Life Women's Conference (Carole Lewis Speaking Engagement)

February 24-25, 2012
Highland Lakes Camp & Conference Center
Spicewood, TX

Minnesota Area Leaders Meeting

February 25, 2012
First Lutheran Church
Rochester, MN

Better Together

March 3, 2012
First Baptist Church
McKenzie, TN

Pennsylvania Area Leaders Meeting

March 10, 2012
Trinity United Methodist Church
New Cumberland, PA

Mississippi Area Leaders Meeting

April 21, 2012
Rankin County Baptist Association
Pearl, MS

HIM Conference (Carole Lewis Speaking Engagement)

March 22-24, 2012
Hawaii Convention Center
Honolulu, Hawaii

Pennsylvania/Virginia Area Leaders Meeting

March 24, 2012
Crossroads Church
Oakdale, PA

Better Together

April 21, 2012
West Side Baptist Center
Hamilton, OH

Wellness Week ~ Sandy Cove

April 29, May 4, 2012
North East, MD

Summit 2012

July 27-28, 2012
Houston's First Baptist Church
Houston, Texas

Live Life!

September 22, 2012
Cross Winds Church
Oronoco, MN (Rochester Area)

Wellness Week ~ Round Top

October 11-18, 2012
Round Top Retreat Center
Round Top, Texas

For more information or to register for any of these events, visit our website, www.firstplace4health.com



Success Story

A Story of Hope & Inspiration

Well, 2011 is over and a new year has finally arrived. Have you resolved to get it together or are you ready to throw in the towel? Have you gotten off track and feel like a failure? Don't let the enemy rejoice over you so loudly that you can't hear what the Lord is telling you. God relates with our struggle and has given us His truth in His Word to help us get back on track. Micah could relate with our feeling of failure and disappointment when he wrote, "Do not rejoice over me, O my enemy. Though I fall I will rise; though I dwell in darkness, the LORD is a light for me." Micah 7:8. We may be down, but we will get up! We are the ones that got off track, but the good news is that we are also the ones that can get back on track! God will light the way. When we decide to get up and just do the next right thing, God will then do His part. Here is a letter from a FP4H leader. May her story supply you with the hope and encouragement you need to get back on track in 2012.

The main thing that got me back on track was I read the book Back on Track. It sounded like a great commitment, except that exercise was part of it. Usually when exercise was part of the plan, I would just say, "That lets me out." I had a hard time just getting around the house walking and experienced many falls. I wanted to do this so badly I started praying, without much faith, that the Lord would let me walk for exercise. I prayed that prayer for a couple weeks, and then the Lord told me to get out and walk what I could. I walked down the driveway. I did this for several days, then walked across the street as we don't have sidewalks on our side. I walked not quite half way down the block and back. I started trying the whole block and Jack stood in the front yard watching, in case I would fall. I just kept increasing it and asked God to give me a mile. The day I walked a mile I was so excited I could hardly stand it. I praised God, and then He revealed to me that I was walking through Him and all the praise and glory belonged to Him. I am very careful to let everyone know it is not I but the Lord walking through me. I started using these morning walks as prayer time.

We moved to the Mall where it is all level and safer for me. On my first round I pray for those that I know who are sick. The second round I pray for the First Place staff and all the leaders of First Place around the world. The third round I pray for each member of my First Place group. The fourth and fifth round I pray for my children and grandchildren. That takes two rounds, as we have a big family, and the sixth round is for individuals I know who need prayer. I am walking between two and two and one-half miles each morning. I am so excited in the morning when the alarm goes off that I jump out of bed and get ready to go! Jack is so slow that I am waiting at the door at 6:00 a.m. ready to get going. I do have a lot of pain as my artificial hip, which I received in 1977, was glued in and extra glue was put in to extend my leg to the same length as my other one. It has come unglued and is loose now, so it is very painful. They cannot do anything about it, because if they break the glue, it will also break bones. I have learned to live with it. I also have a curvature of the spine in the shape of an "S" that draws me to one side and causes a lot of back pain, along with the normal pain of MS. When I start walking, if the pain gets bad, I have a bench in the Mall that I call my "prayer bench." I just sit down and ask God to remove the pain from me so I can walk to His glory, and he has not failed me once. I get up and go again, pain free. I know Satan does not like that, so he sends blisters on my feet. After missing a week of walking once, I found I can wear 3 socks on the foot with the blisters and they don't even hurt. My group knows my walking is done through God, and they marvel at how good I am doing and encourage me. I have lost weight (33 pounds) and they remark on that a lot. As a leader, I tell them we have a God of the Impossible and anything they want to do to God's glory they will be able to do. I am a better leader because of what God is doing for me, and He will do it for them if they just trust Him. I know now that if God wants me to do something, I am going to do it. After walking, I am still stumbling around at home and can't walk into a store, but have to use a wheelchair. What a testimony I have for the grace of God. Jack is so proud of what I am doing he tells everyone. While I walk, he sits in the food court at the mall. I start my walk at the food court and when I finish, I do what I call my Victory Lap. The other day I sneaked a flag from home and on my Victory lap I carried this flag like they do in the Olympics. Jack about fell out of his chair, laughing. Also, I have not had a fall since starting walking through God. God is so faithful and I love Him more everyday. Joe Ann



Devotional

It Takes a Little Time Sometimes

Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.

J o h n 6 : 3 6

I wish I could say that I have followed the First Place 4 Health program perfectly, but that would not be the truth. The truth of the matter is I have been on this journey for several years. The most important part of the journey is that I have never given up on myself and neither has God.

There have been times that I was stalled and could not move forward and there have been times that I have even gone backwards. I see these times as a "big waste" but God sees them as times to pour out his mercy and grace on me.

At one point on this journey I felt I could not get turned around. I knew the direction I needed to go, but I was having a tremendously hard time getting turned around. God in his mercy brought to my mind, words to a song by Amy Grant. The words were: "It takes a little time sometimes, to get the Titanic turned back around."

I realized that my eating issues were much larger than just the physical aspect. There were emotional, mental, and spiritual issues involved as well. God is not worried about the amount of time it takes to get me completely turned around and I should not be either. His mercies are new every morning and each day is an opportunity for me to receive that mercy and find grace in my time of need.

The Titanic was a huge ship that went down, but God has assured me that even though my eating issues might be huge, I am not going down, because his mercy is much larger than my issues. Remember, it takes a little time sometimes to get the Titanic turned back around but God has an abundance of mercy to get you back on course. Be merciful to yourself and receive God's mercy as well.

Action Item: Stop being so hard on yourself in your First Place 4 Health journey. Rest in the fact that God is not going to let you go down, His mercy and grace will get you back on course no matter how long it takes.

Prayer: *Merciful Father, Thank you for your wonderful and much needed mercy. Help me to receive it each day and never give up on myself or on you. Help me also to be merciful to others. In Jesus name, Amen.*

Debbie Norred
Lynn Haven, FL

*Taken from Better Together, FP4H Devotional Book. To order, visit our website,
www.firstplace4health.com or call 800.727.5223, x1002.*



Quick & Easy Crockpot Favorites

Did you get a Crockpot for Christmas? If not, you can get one for around \$15 at your local discount store. Here are some great recipes that you can put on in the morning and its ready to eat when you get home in the evening. Yum!

Healthy Vegetable Soup *Serves 8*

1 cup onions, chopped
1 cup carrots, sliced
1 cup zucchini, sliced
1 cup dry lentils
1 cup parsnips, chopped
1 cup celery, diced
1 cup smoked turkey sausage
4 cups vegetable broth
salt
pepper
2 cups chopped Kale

Put all ingredients but Kale in Crockpot on low for six or more hours. Add Kale 5 minutes before serving and cook until wilted.

Nutritional Information: 150 Calories, 21g Carbohydrate, 3g Fat, 10g Protein

Slow Cooked Peaches *Serves 4*

4 cups sliced fresh peaches
1/3 cup biscuit mix
2/3 cup whole rolled oats
1/4 teaspoon cinnamon
1/4 cup brown sugar
1/4 cup sugar

Spray Crockpot with non-stick spray. Mix dry ingredients together. Stir in peaches and pour into Crockpot. Cook on low 4 to 6 hours.

Nutritional Information: 246 Calories, 56g Carbohydrates, 3g Fat, 5g Protein

Spiced Pot Roast *Serves 6*

1 ½ lb. peeled, seeded and diced butternut squash
1 lb. peeled, trimmed and diced rutabaga
2 medium leek, white and light green parts only, thinly sliced
4 tsp. Moroccan spice blend
1 ½ tbsp. molasses
½ tbsp. olive oil
3 cloves garlic, finely minced
2 ½ lb. choice bottom round roast, trimmed of visible fat
4 sprigs fresh thyme
1 bay leaf
½ cup chopped fresh cilantro, optional

In a 5-6 qt. slow cooker, add squash and rutabaga and scatter leeks over top. Add 1 cup water. In a small bowl, combine spice blend, molasses, oil and garlic; mix to form a paste. Rub mixture over entire roast. Transfer roast to slow cooker and top with thyme and bay leaf. Cover and cook on low for 8 hours. Transfer roast to a cutting board, tent loosely with foil and let rest for 10 minutes. Slice against the grain and divide among serving plates. Spoon squash mixture onto plates, dividing evenly. If desired, drizzle with any accumulated pan juices from slow cooker and sprinkle with cilantro.

Nutritional Information: 363 Calories, 10g Fat, 26g Carbohydrates, 5g Fiber, 42g Protein

Have a healthy recipe to share? Send it to lisa.lewis@fp4h.com.

REGULAR EXERCISE + HEALTHY EATING + WORSHIP TOGETHER = BALANCE

WELLNESS WEEK • APRIL 29 - MAY 4, 2012

FOR MEN AND WOMEN WITH A SPECIAL TRACK FOR PASTORS AND THEIR SPOUSES
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- * Practical information on nutrition and health
- * Motivational messages for growing spiritually
- * Daily Bible study and devotionals
- * Delicious First Place 4 Health meals
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- * Physical assessment testing
- * Praise and worship
- * And more!

Cost:

- * **Single occupancy \$895**
- * **Double occupancy \$775**
- * **Triple occupancy \$725**

Great Christmas gift!

About Sandy Cove:

Join us amidst the tranquility of Maryland's lush green forests and the views of Chesapeake Bay's beautiful headwaters at Sandy Cove. Situated in a spectacular setting at the headwaters of Chesapeake Bay in North East, Maryland, midway between Baltimore and Philadelphia, Sandy Cove will offer you the chance to rest, relax and rejuvenate yourself and your walk with God.