

'Think big and believe' advice works at any age

By Valerie Hill

RECORD STAFF

As a long-time counsellor and coach, Grace Cirocco concluded there was a common root to her clients' varied problems — low self-esteem.

"Low self-esteem (stems from) the negative messages we get every day," said the Mississauga-based seminar leader and training consultant. "They come from the advertising executives who will say that what they do is promote 'greed and need,' they make you feel you're inadequate if you don't have this."

As well, she says a chunk of the baby boom generation was raised by parents who spent little time making their children feel a strong sense of self-worth.

"Many were immigrants who came to this country and they were busy meeting the needs of their family," she said. "My parents' generation didn't have the (parenting) books and videos."

Cirocco will speak on Nurturing Faith and Action in Your Life at Binghamans next Wednesday, Feb. 9, as part of the K-W Counselling Services lecture series Work and Family Challenges. Her talk is free and runs from 7 to 9 p.m.

As a widely travelled motivational speaker, Cirocco sees Canadians as some of the world's most passive people, a trait which keeps them from achieving their dreams.

"I'll give you an example ... you go into a restaurant and get a salad and it's been on the shelf for hours, some of it is rancid and so you take it back and ask for your money back," she said. "They say 'nobody else complained about it' ... that drives me nuts. It's Canadian culture, we don't complain.

"In America, they tell you what they want, they tell you what they think."



Cirocco

Cirocco also talks about having enough passion and faith in God and in yourself to make changes, particularly in relation to work.

If clients say they really hate their jobs, "I ask them, 'what led you to be in such a state of despair?' I tell them to seek help; there are so many agencies in Canada in this whole career redefinition field.

"Start talking to people, put it out to the universe and say, 'I don't want to do this anymore,' pick up the phone and call someone doing the job you like, invite them out to lunch and ask them how they did it."

Once the person has established a feeling of self-worth, life should begin to improve.

"If you think you can do it, you have the raw faith you will take bold steps," she said.

There will, of course, be obstacles, such as negative people who say 'you can't do that,' but Cirocco suggests simply ignoring them.

As a young and relatively inexperienced broadcaster for CBC Radio, she wanted to cover the Calgary Winter Olympics, but met skepticism from her superiors who seemed to say, "who do you think you are?"

She persevered, found a way and received an award of distinction for her coverage.

Think big and always believe — that's the philosophy Cirocco lives by.

"I see people around me suck the happiness out of their lives because they can't let go of the little stuff," she said.

LECTURE SERIES

Grace Cirocco's talk next week is free, but call 884-0000 to reserve a place and please bring a non-perishable donation for the regional food bank.

She will speak in the ballroom at Binghamans Wednesday, Feb. 9, from 7 to 9 p.m.