

Digging Deep with Cynthia Brian

Reaping what you sow!

“Sow a thought, reap a word. Sow a word, reap a deed. Sow a deed, reap a habit. Sow a habit, reap a character. Sow a character, reap a destiny.” ~ Charles Reade



A gnarled ficus tree.

Photos Cynthia Brian

By Cynthia Brian

Where I grew up there were no preschools or kindergartens, so until I started first grade, my days were spent mostly outside in the dirt, playing or helping my parents with farming and ranching chores. I attribute a great deal of my horticultural acumen to those early years when a child's brain is like a sponge, soaking up information that will be useful later in life. I didn't learn to read until age 7 when I entered first grade and once I was introduced to the magic of literacy, I was

obsessed with books. Collecting soulful quotes and poems became a passion of mine and to this day I still have my handwritten notebook filled with my favorite scribbles.

The other day I decided to reread things that I've been saving for years and wasn't surprised to learn that I have always leaned towards positive, uplifting, life-changing and lofty adages, the majority of which are nature oriented. If you've been reading Digging Deep with Cynthia Brian for any of the last 11 years, you probably notice that I begin each column with a quote to anchor the theme of the article. I believe that quotes have the power to help us think clearly while re-framing events that may be happening in our lives.

The source is unknown in the following poem. It is one of my very favorites and I believe you'll find it enlightening as well, especially as we begin a new year and new leaf.

What You Sow, You Will Reap

If you plant honesty, you will reap trust.
 If you plant goodness, you will reap friends,
 If you plant humility, you will reap greatness.
 If you plant perseverance, you will reap victory,
 If you plant consideration, you will reap harmony,
 If you plant hard work, you will reap success.
 If you plant forgiveness, you will reap reconciliation.
 If you plant openness, you will reap intimacy.
 If you plant patience, you will reap improvements.
 If you plant faith, you will reap miracles.

But...

If you plant dishonesty, you will reap distrust.
 If you plant selfishness, you will reap loneliness.
 If you plant pride, you will reap destruction.
 If you plant envy, you will reap trouble.
 If you plant laziness, you will reap stagnation.
 If you plant bitterness, you will reap isolation.
 If you plant greed, you will reap loss.
 If you plant gossip, you will reap enemies.
 If you plant worries, you will reap wrinkles.

As gardeners, we know we need to be careful what we plant now because it will determine what we will reap tomorrow.

No wonder that we like to be surrounded by trees and beautiful landscaping. If you want to live longer, plant a tree that you love. Science backs up what we innately know when we are near trees: we become less stressed, improve focus, increase our feelings of well-being, and radiate joy. January and February are the best times to buy bare-root trees and shrubs. Keep the roots wet until the hole is dug and the tree is planted. I'm often asked what is my favorite flower or tree, and of course, I have no definitive answer.

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