

How to Turn Resolutions Into Goals

By: Tania Baidon

Many of us set goals or make resolutions on New Year's Day. "This year I will lose 30 pounds..." This year I will save 10% of my income..." This year I will..." And most of us will either feel like we failed or just plain forget those goals by about February 15th.

I thought about this and I think I know why. Most of the resolutions we set at new Years are "Shoulds" not our passions. "I should lose 30 pounds, but I really want a piece of that chocolate cake." "I should save 10% of my income, but I really want that new car/game/toy instead."

So how do we make a goal that sticks? There are several steps. What are you passionate about? What do you *really* want in your life, not what do you think you should do? The first step is to make your goals be things you *want*. The second part of step one is to *write it down*. If you haven't written your goals down, chances are you won't reach them.

The second step is to break it down into small steps. Often we get overwhelmed because we set lofty goals, but we don't know how to achieve them. Goals are like eating an elephant- you do it one bite at a time. Write out all of the steps you can think of, and what you need to learn or do to accomplish each step. These are your milestones. Next to the big ones put what sort of celebration or reward you want for accomplishing that piece. Now set deadlines. Set one for each step and for the goal as a whole.

Third, monitor your progress. As you check things off your lists don't forget to give yourself the rewards you wrote down. This is very important for keeping your energy up.

One of the best things you can do to insure you achieve your goals is to have an accountability partner. This can be a co-worker, a family member, a friend, or best yet, a trained coach. You can be working on the same goals, or different ones, but talk to your partner once a week or so and let them know what you have done so far and what you plan to do in the next week.

This helps in two ways. One, it makes sure you know what you are going to do next. Two, it means that if you don't do it you have to tell your partner. I know many people who stay up late the night before their meeting to finish the things they hadn't gotten to yet, because they didn't want to admit that to their partner. None of us like admitting failure, and an accountability partner keeps us on track.

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