

For many people the best intent of new year resolutions has started to fall away by now. Good intentions to lose weight, get fit and restructure your career are all long forgotten. Our motivation may not be as high as it was when we committed to the resolutions for building our 'new self'. However, it is relatively easy to rekindle the resolutions and get back on to the straight path of goal achievement. There are some key principles that have to be assessed before setting yourself goals you may never achieve.

In coaching sessions, I look at the goals that people set for themselves and find that they fall into the following three categories:

- ◆ What people want to 'have or possess' in material or relationship terms;
- ◆ What they want to 'do or experience';
- ◆ And what they want to 'become'.

We often find that what people desire falls heavily into the 'having or possessing' category. This is not realistic or even balanced. Having or possessing something does not happen by accident. If you want to 'have' something you must usually behave in a set way to achieve that goal, or possession. Wanting



the dynamics of a balanced lifestyle and managing the transition. When we want to improve our situation, we have to consider and manage the impact any change will have on other aspects of life.

When setting new goals, people need to consider all aspects of their life. Our goals can fall into seven key areas which include:

- ◆ Career;
- ◆ Relationships and family;
- ◆ Material goods and possessions;
- ◆ Fitness;
- ◆ Health;
- ◆ Spiritual;
- ◆ Development & Learning

My friend had a 'Development' goal that would also help him achieve his 'Career' and 'Material Possessions' goals. What he had not considered was the negative part of the equation. In the shorter term, he may have to find other novel ways to still meet his 'Relationship' goals with his family. This is not easy, but knowing that investing in his 'Development' would require new way of dealing with other aspects of his life would, at least, prepare him to cope with potential conflicts and stresses before they arise.

Asking myself simple questions, and agreeing actions to accommodate potential conflicts, is critical. For instance:

- ◆ How will this change impact other areas of my life?
- ◆ What action can I take to minimise any loss to me and others for this period of time?
- ◆ Who do I need to talk with to ensure that demands on one part of my life can be compensated for in other ways?

And finally: agree with others how you can work together to ensure that any short term demands on your time can be eased.



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# Change your life: Balanced lifestyle

something for its own sake, without taking purposeful action towards that 'thing,' does not work. Wanting to have a new car, relationship, or material possession, without taking action towards creating the right circumstances that makes it possible, is no more useful than 'wishing it will happen'.

As we progress into the season most associated with growth, we find that increasingly people seek to 'spring clean' their lives. The good intentions and new year resolutions that were reviewed at the start of the year may not have materialised in quite the desired fashion. Perhaps we have focused on changing one part of our lives and failed to consider the impact that this can have on other areas. Sometimes this is because people compartmentalise their lives and fail to take account

## A regular column by Philip Atkinson

of the 'knock on' effects.

For instance, a friend had decided to pursue (part-time) a post-graduate management qualification whilst carrying on his full-time employment. Three months into the diploma my friend told me that life was getting tougher. As well as having to attend two night classes each week, he had to devote an additional four hours a week to reading and completing course assignments. He said he no longer had as much time at the weekends for relaxation and hardly ever saw his young children.

He also had the opportunity to apply for a promotion within his company and worried whether he could find the time to develop the new skills and if he could meet the demands of the new role. This was a clear case of failing to understand