

A resolution, and a plan, to achieve goals

Published Saturday January 2nd, 2010

G8

Why is it that often New Year's resolutions fall short of our good intentions?

 [ENLARGE PHOTO](#)



Who hasn't made an ambitious New Year's resolution and not been able to keep it for more than a short while?

I know I have. In fact, I have made dozens of them. Sometimes they are repeats. Oftentimes they are new goals that I think are more attainable than past ones.

Wouldn't it be nice if we could make resolutions and actually keep them?

One of the reasons why we don't keep resolutions is because we don't take them seriously. There may be nothing at stake.

Sometimes we set a reward attached to an achieved goal. Perhaps the reward then becomes the goal with the resolution the means to an end. That's not all bad. It's a bit of a mind trick, but there are no rules against that.

One key ingredient to success is to make your goals achievable. Make just one resolution that you know you can keep. You could set one other more ambitious target as well that might be attached to a nice reward.

Be gentle with yourself. The celebration of the new year begins in winter. This is perhaps a good time to determine what you wish to be resolved, but wait until the spring to enthusiastically carry out your goals. Achieving even the smallest feat can have huge positive value. Spring, being a time of renewal, is apt for launching a new regime, to clear away old habits and follow a new course of action.

Another way that may help us keep our promises to is to tell others about it. This creates a small support group that can help us stick to our goal. It can be beneficial in many other ways as well.

For me, the most important factor in keeping a resolution or reaching a goal is to truly have my head wrapped around the idea. This involves an old technique learned from my father. It's the pro-and-con yellow pad technique.

Simply draw a line down the middle of the pad and list the pros of the behaviour you want to change or abandon on one side of the line and list the cons on the other. If it is a worthy goal you will soon realize the pros far outnumber the cons.

The next step is to spend some quiet, meaningful time thinking about the list of reasons for change. This

mindful process allows the ideas to set.

After such techniques, transformation can happen with surprisingly little effort. It has worked for me and it can work for you, too.

Achieving goals can help foster self-respect. This is the first and most important step to having respect for others.

The underlying principle or dynamic at play here is a combination of self-respect and compassion. This is the foundation of any healthy society and thereby the individuals within it.

We can achieve any goal we want as long as we follow these simple steps. Have a clear intention; make a goal that you understand and truly desire; and be sensible about when you begin to start working toward your resolution.

The ultimate goal is a happier and healthier you. In turn, that will spill over to those around you.

Happy New Year everyone!

Jay Remer is certified by the Protocol School of Washington as a consultant for corporate etiquette and international protocol. He lives in St. Andrews. Email your etiquette questions to jay@etiquetteguy.com and visit his website at www.etiquetteguy.com.

Please **Log In** or **Register** FREE

You are currently not logged into this site. Please [log in](#) or [register](#) for a **FREE ONE Account**.

Logged in visitors may comment on articles, enter contests, manage home delivery holds and much more online. Your **ONE Account** grants you access to features and content across the entire CanadaEast Network of sites.