

Create Your Perfect Lifestyle: Time for New Year Resolutions

Joan Dickinson, Life Coach

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Editor's note: Today marks the debut of a new column in WellBeing, Life Coach by Joan Dickinson, Ed.D. Dickinson moved to Anna Maria Island eight years ago from Minneapolis, Minn. She's a life coach, a retired psychologist, behavioral health care director and consultant. She enjoys swimming, Kayaking, fishing, practicing yoga, meditating, walking and exploring nature. Her column will appear every other week.

Do you have unmet dreams? Have you given up on setting goals? Well, I hope not. However, if the answer is yes, or even if the answer's no, I invite you to pick up a pen and sheet of paper and have some fun with me today. Let me help you create your New Year's Resolutions.

You might be asking, "What qualifications does she have to help me?" Let me introduce myself. I'm a new Bradenton Herald columnist and a Life Coach with over 30 years of experience as a psychologist, behavioral health care director and consultant. Rather than spend time here extolling my credentials or explaining my life coaching business, I invite you to visit my web site, PerfectLifestyleCoach.com. I'd be thrilled if you sent me an email with your impressions of my column, web site or the relatively new field of life coaching.

Or you might be asking, "What is a Life Coach?" Short and sweet, I help people create perfect lifestyles and become happy. Now I hope you're smiling, as I am. I know that's a tall order, but actually quite achievable. I'll speak more about that in future columns. Goal setting, like New Year's Resolutions, is one good way to make positive changes and create your best lifestyle.

Here are some suggestions for creating your New Year's Resolutions. Ask yourself, your spouse or a friend the following questions. Sometimes others see a part of us we tend to overlook and might even know our deepest wishes. However, if you're alone, that's fine, too. Try to just write the first idea that comes into your head and don't evaluate the ideas as either possible or impossible. These questions are meant to bring up good possibilities for 2007 Resolutions.

- What was happening in your life when you were the happiest?
- If you had secret wishes, such as you might make on falling stars, birthday cake candles or turkey wishbones, what would they be?
- What would you like more of, or less of, in your life?
- If you were to die next year, what would want to accomplish in 2007?

Now make three positive affirmations or Resolutions from these questions. Of course you can make as many as you want. Don't leave any out just because you think they're not

possible. Make sure they are your goals, not others. Also, don't infringe on the happiness of others. Write something like:

- I will have _____ in 2007.
- It will give me great joy to _____ in 2007.
- I will be the happiest when _____ happens in 2007.

Now here's the crucial test to success: the Smile Test. If your goals make you smile, they are good goals for you. Do not worry that you don't know how they will be obtained. In many cases just intending for something to happen stimulates an awareness of opportunities we don't see at present. Now read your goals once every day during 2007, until they happen.

Will this work? What do you have to lose by trying it? I materialized my beach house three weeks after using a simple goal setting process. Fun. Goal setting is one step to becoming happy and creating your perfect lifestyle.

Joan Dickinson, Ed.D., is a life coach, a retired psychologist, behavioral health care director and consultant. She loves to swim, kayak, fish, practice yoga, meditate, walk and explore nature. Her column will appear every other week. She can be contacted at her web site, PerfectLifestyleCoach.com, by phone at 941-778-8356 or write to PO Box 731, Anna Maria FL 34216.