

## How to Set New Year's Resolutions That Stick – Part II of III

By Amy Scott Grant

Don't fall prey to New Year's resolutions that lose their fizz before Valentine's Day. Set powerful, meaningful resolutions and goals that maintain their luster throughout the year with the next step in the goal-getting process: figure out why you want what you want.

Simply take a long look at why you want what you want. What do you stand to gain from achieving this goal? Really visualize what it will feel like when you have achieved your goal. What would be different in your life? Would you look at yourself differently? Would other people treat you differently? Would you have more confidence? More stamina? More time? Less stress?

When you take a look at the underlying reasons for wanting to achieve this, you can tap into some powerful emotions to super-charge your goal. Let's assume your goal is to get in shape. If you are concerned about your health, getting fit could result in peace of mind. If you want to slim down to look and feel more attractive, perhaps it's positive attention that you're after. Maybe you want to wear smaller clothes because you know that will boost your self-esteem and confidence.

An added benefit of this step can occur if you suddenly realize your reasons are nutty, or that what you really want can be achieved by something different entirely. For example, if you always wanted a luxury yacht and you realize it's because you want to feel wealthy and successful, you may be able to create that end result from something different entirely. At least until the luxury yacht is closer within your reach (maybe in 2007).

Once you've determined why you want what you want, the next step is to create a plan of action. It's often said that "a failure to plan is planning to fail" and this is the step where many people fall short of achieving their goals. Let's revisit our luxury vacation example from Part I. Assuming that you determined October to be the best time of year to go, and you set this goal in January, you can create a plan immediately and have nine months to save money. A lot can happen in nine months (just ask any parent!)

By creating a plan of action, you can decide how much money you'll have to save each month to reach your goal, and which tasks must be accomplished by what date (e.g., booking airfare, making hotel reservations, requesting time off from work, etc.) Without a plan of action, you will have no way to stay on top of everything that must be done to achieve your goal, which can result in "Oh well, I guess we won't get to go to Europe this year either." Whether your plan of action includes Weight Watchers or SpyAxe, just create that plan and make 2006 the year to "make it happen." Remember to read the final installment for the single most important step in the New Year's Resolution/goal-getting process.

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