



the MIND reader

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Resolutions are Stupid

By: Lindsay Simineo

They *are* stupid. Here you are, on the brink of another glorious year setting yourself up for failure with a completely undefined, unreasonable expectation. Its as though you are saying to yourself, "I want to feel really bad about myself on January 4th, how can I set that up? I know! I'll put myself in a situation to completely disappoint myself!" Now that the rant is past us, there are some very valuable ideals that come out of New Year resolutions; ideals that could change our lives. New beginnings, change in lifestyle, destinations, and personal achievements are all desires that we as the human race strive for. The problem with a resolution is that it is just an ideal. Without weight or structure the ideal does not pick up any momentum in our lives. When one looks into what they want to achieve in the new year, they should not be stupid. They should want something more than a resolution, an ideal. Instead what one should strive for is a goal. (continued on page 3)



"I think in terms of the day's resolutions, not the years'."

- Henry Moore

There's an APP for that...

Now that smartphones are with you almost all of the time, it will make a perfect companion on your journey to success and help you achieve your 2014 goals.



My Fitness Pal - Every successful weight management program suggests that you keep a food diary and/or an activity log. My fitness pal is a free weight loss app for apple and android that allows you to log your meals, recipes, and workouts easily so you are more likely to stay on track and succeed in your weight loss goals.



Tosh Finance - This all-in-one finance manager syncs with all your devices with an account on their website. You can track your expenses and view your budget to ensure you're not overspending. It also has the option to add bills so that you get reminded of those due dates.



Stop! Quit Smoking - LITE - This app helps you quit smoking using a rewards system. Reap the benefits of your efforts by looking at your success. This app has real-time displays that show money & time saved, health benefits and much more.



Any.Do - Having a to-do list and setting deadlines for each list item can help you manage your time better. Not only does it work across iOS and Android devices, it's now integrated into Gmail and you can set reminders right from your mailbox.

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Fear NOT

Editor:

Dr. Sheri Fluellen

Contributors:

Lindsay Simineo
Sheri Fluellen
Doug Blocksma
Kristen Cooper



Another fresh new year
is here . . .
Another year to live!
To banish worry,
doubt, and fear,
To love and laugh and
give!

This bright new year is
given me
To live each day with
zest . . .
To daily grow and try to
be
My highest and my
best!

I have the opportunity
once more to right
some wrongs,
To pray for peace, to
plant a tree,
And sing more joyful
songs!

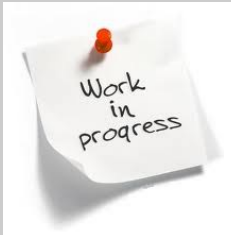
- William Arthur Ward

BE GRITTY

By: Sheri Fluellen

A research Psychologist in Pennsylvania, Dr. Duckworth, has been studying an idea that provides us a lot of hope, especially as we approach this time of year when everyone talks about resolutions, changes, and goals. It is quite useful and functional to look at our own life and ask some difficult questions: Am I doing what I want to be doing? Am I who I want to be? What can I do to make my life more meaningful? Where should I put my time, effort and money? Isn't that what prompts us to make resolutions? Now think back on when you last asked yourself such questions. Did you filter or prejudice your answers or did you allow the answer to stand, regardless of how infeasible it seemed? Dr. Duckworth is discovering that talent isn't really the single most important factor to your success. It is grit. So what is grit? Well it is not referring to the most basic southern comfort food. It is referring to a disposition to pursue very long-term goals with passion and perseverance, sustained over time. In many cases, it is level of grit that can be more predictive of success than talent. Now, be honest. If you really came to believe that you can succeed more on your grit than talent, would you be willing to entertain ideas that might otherwise seem out-of-reach? Geez, I sure would!

Grit really fits in well with another concept that I have recently been reading about: Stockdale Paradox. The Stockdale Paradox is named after Vice Admiral James Stockdale, who was a Vietnam Prisoner of War. As the highest ranking POW, he took the role of leading resistance and persevering through his 7 1/2 years of frequent torture in prison. He even went to the extremes of disfiguring himself so that the Vietnamese couldn't use him as propaganda, saying that their prisoners were being treated well (which they weren't). Through all of that, Stockdale persevered and never gave up hope that he would get out alive. In a hallmark business book called "Good to Great", Stockdale told the author, Jim Collins, his key to "success" as a prisoner. The key was dubbed as the "Stockdale Paradox". Here is the key/paradox: maintain unwavering faith that you can and will prevail in the end, regardless of the difficulties, AND *at the same time* have the discipline to confront the most brutal facts of your current reality, whatever they might be. The similarity between what the psychologist is finding in her research and what Admiral James Stockdale touted as the philosophy he found to be critical in his life can be boiled down to grit. It's not just running a marathon (perseverance) and its not just winning the Strongman competition (toughness). It is finding a way to do them both, at the same time, despite the obstacles you face. Figure out how to build your grit, and conquer the world!!



Fit Kids Have Better Memories

Research study finds that children who are more fit, perform better in recalling information than children who are lower than average in fitness level. Since this is a correlation, we can't simply conclude that improving fitness level will improve memory. However, we (the medical community) know enough about the physical and emotional benefits of physical fitness to say that YOU WILL experience a lot of good from gettin' moving! (3)



Don't
be
the
cat

Make a Resolution For Someone Else This

By: Dpug Blocksma

I don't care much for the candor involved with New Years Day. It usually is filled with hope and promises that are not based on much rational observation or thought. Quick, name the top three resolutions that you hear about (here is my non-scientific, completely biased answer): Change my diet, quit smoking and join a gym.

These are good goals, and certainly would raise your quality of life if successfully embarked upon. The other commonality that they share, though, is that they are very ego-centric. They are concerned with the betterment of your own life first, and the betterment of your relationships or your community second. They are also most likely reflections of the constant thoughts in your mind as you pull away from the fast food drive through or find yourself paying that excise tax for the next pack of Reds. They are constant, they are close to the vest, and they are heavy.

So I would propose that this year your resolution-energy be spent considering how you can have an impact on someone else before yourself. This could be any number

of things, but most certainly would be described with some verbs directed towards another person first. Play more games with my kids, my nieces and nephews, my grandkids. Volunteer to clean out kennels at the shelter. Cook food with other volunteers for the needy. These are things that are so much less about results, and so much more about giving to those who may not even realize that they need your help. They still require energy and resolve, but are not only your mission to complete.

And to be honest, this whole premise still does point back to your own self. Surprise! Even though you set on this path in a quest to help others, you will still find that personal growth and reflection are very much side-effects of making a resolution for someone else. I wonder what those reflections will consist of when your motivations began with another person's heart and need in mind, and how that may make you feel great about your 2014.



Resolutions are Stupid (continued)

There are many differences between a goal and a resolution. First, a goal is *measurable*. This means that you are able to measure your progress along the way. By making measurable goals, you can not just track your progress, but also assess if you are struggling so that you can make necessary adjustments. Your measurable goal is like a map, helping you navigate to the desired outcome that you are striving for.

Second, a goal has a *deadline*. Without a deadline, many of our "resolutions" never are achieved. There was just no reason to finish them, or no accountability in place making sure they were done in time. It is easy to walk away from something when the deadline for that task is "indefinite". Thus putting a deadline to your goals increases the chance that they will come to be fulfilled. A great deadline could be "by the end of the year" or "by Memorial Day." Deadlines add structure to the overall goal and the process that is taken to get there.

Finally, a goal has *steps*. Many times when a resolution is presented it is the end result, with the person not mentioning how they are going to create the result. When Steve says "I'm going to end world hunger!" for his resolution, please ask him "How are you going to do that?". Chances are when you do, Steve is going to panic. Steve will panic because he focused on a resolution, an ideal, instead of an actual goal. When one is serious about a goal, they will list out the steps they need to complete in order to complete the goal. Steps give the goal the weight it needs in order to have the momentum it needs to be a present force in our lives.

Which person has the greater chance of being successful?

The person who says "I'm going to lose weight", or the person who says "I am going to lose 20 lbs by June by journaling my food and working out three days a week".

This holiday. I invite you to not be stupid. Do not set up resolutions that are undefined and leave you lost. Set up life changing goals, with the measurable progress, deadlines, and steps needed to make you successful. By doing that, you will find that you are not just less stupid. You will find you are more awesome.



YOU CAN'T CHANGE THE WORLD BUT YOU CAN CHANGE YOU

By: Dr. Sheri Fluellen

It's quite obvious (or is it?) that we can't really change the world or people around us. The best we can hope to do is to exert our influence. The reality is that we are influencing our world every second of every day, so let's make that influence count and be intentional about it. Here are some things to consider, as your perspective and interpretation of events are often more influential than just the facts themselves.

- Each day focus on what you *get* to do, not what you *have* to do. Life is a gift not an obligation.
- Difficulties and challenges are opportunities for growth. (Thank you Air Force for helping me learn this one!)
- Maybe you were allowed to go through a very difficult time to be a blessing to someone else. Life isn't always about just you.
- Intentionally notice and comment on things that you are seeing your loved ones doing **right**. Sometimes we only point out the things we don't like, which can keep us stuck in negative feelings towards others.
- Develop a personal mission statement and make sure that the major things in your life are consistent with that. Don't be afraid to weed out the things that detract you from your purpose, mission, and passions.
- Give people the benefit of the doubt. No one is perfect and we all act on misinformation, misunderstandings, and out of our own human selfishness.



**516 & 518 E 18th Street
Cheyenne, WY 82001
Phone: 307-509-0772
Fax: 307-426-4133**

**314 N Last Chance Gulch #306
Helena, MT 59601
Phone: 406-686-6463
Fax: 307-426-4133**

OUR admin TEAM

Kristen Pelle
Office Administrator
Kristen@mindspatherapy.com

Tonia Carter
Billing Manager
Billing@mindspatherapy.com

Stephanie Bledsoe
Administrative Assistant
Stephanie@mindspatherapy.com

OUR TEAM in Cheyenne

Dr. Sheri Fluellen, PhD
Licensed Psychologist (WY & CO)
Sheri@mindspatherapy.com

Linda Malm, MS
Licensed Professional Counselor (WY)
Linda@mindspatherapy.com

Sarah Tilley, MA
Licensed Professional Counselor (WY & VA)
Sarah@mindspatherapy.com

Doug Blocksma, MA
Provisional Professional Counselor (WY)
Doug@mindspatherapy.com

Lindsay Simineo, MA
Provisional Professional Counselor (WY)
Lindsay@mindspatherapy.com

Mark Russell, MA
Provisional Professional Counselor (WY)
Mark@mindspatherapy.com

OUR TEAM in Helena

Jim Patterson, MA, MDiv
Licensed Marriage & Family Therapist (WY & MT)
Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor (MT)
Jim@mindspatherapy.com

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