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Think New Year's Dissolution Before Resolution

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Go From Dissolution Needed to A Clear Path to Resolution

Photo Credit: Thomas-Bethge

New Year's Resolutions don't have a great track record. Research suggests only 9% of Americans who make resolutions actually complete them. Further, 23% of people quit by the end of the first week and 43% by the end of January.

So I want to suggest a new way for you to think about creating your resolutions:

START WITH DISSOLUTION!

What do I mean by that? We live in a world with a mentality of MORE! We push ourselves to do more, be more, add more, think bigger and better, etc. Then we wonder why every minute of our days are crammed full and we're exhausted, overloaded and stressed.

START WITH DISSOLUTION!

Dissolution means the end of a partnership. Partnerships don't always mean people – partnerships can be the things, activities, priorities and goals we are partnered with in our lives. We have a tendency to keep adding more and thinking we can do it all. But the truth is, our lives are too full already and there really isn't room in our 24 hours per day to do it all. As a result, something or someone usually suffers. A coaching client of mine once said she had a hard time saying no to good worthwhile causes and volunteer requests. She mentioned one that was tugging on her at that moment. I asked her, "If you add this to your life, who or what will suffer as a result." She was a single mom and she took no time to answer. She said, "my daughter". As she said it, clarity hit her and she now had a new perspective and the strength to say no for the first time without guilt.

SO BEFORE YOU CREATE A RESOLUTION, WHAT ARE YOU WILLING TO DISSOLVE?

Here are a few questions to think about:

1. **What do you want your life to look like?**
2. **What do you want to look back on in 10, 20 or more years and swell with pride that you lived well with exactly the right priorities?**
3. **What are you doing only out of obligation or the "supposed to" mentality?**
4. **What doesn't bring you joy? Why are you doing it? What will happen if you don't do it?**
5. **If you feel obligated or pressured by other people to do certain things, who is controlling your schedule, your life, your priorities? TAKE BACK YOUR LIFE! You're the only one who is responsible for the results, which means you are the only one who should be making the decisions about your priorities.**
6. **What are you doing just out of habit? Here's an important story I often use: a woman was cooking a roast and cut off both ends before putting it in the roast pan. She suddenly stopped and asked her mom why she was taught to do that. The mom replied that she didn't know, that her mom had taught her to do the same. So they called up grandma and**

asked the same question. Grandma's reply was that she never had a roast pan big enough so she always had to cut the ends off of the roast first. What are you doing out of habit because that's what you were taught to do or have gotten into the habit of doing without ever re-examining it?

7. What can you do differently, more efficiently, less often, or not at all?
8. What value does this bring to your life in comparison to other things or in comparison to something you want to add?

IF EVERYTHING IS A PRIORITY, NOTHING IS A PRIORITY!

SO CHOOSE!

I remember a family in our church once telling me they allow each of their children to choose one activity they want to be involved in at any one time, otherwise, they never have family time together and all they do is run around from here to there picking up and dropping off kids.

What do you need to choose and what do you need to let go of?

After your dissolution selection, if you have room for something new, here are some tips for success:

1. **Start with planning and exploring the questions I've set out for you to think about. A new resolution can include the planning, which can be what starts January 1st. That gives you the time to create a plan that's actually going to succeed!**
2. **Break it down into doable chunks** – often times, things on our to-do list lay dormant because we've written some big project on the list as opposed to individual tasks that are actually in doable sizes. Break it down!
3. **Decide what you need in order to get started** – sometimes getting started is the hardest part. Sometimes just gathering together the items or resources we need is motivation enough. Let that be your first task. Or make a list of the things you might need to purchase and let that be your first task on the list.

4. **Set small goals to begin with** - Instead of starting a new year's resolution with gusto, think about starting small and building on small successes to the level you really want. Sometimes it's also a matter of gathering together all the tools or resources you need to make a good plan. Just doing that can be motivational. For example, instead of saying you're going to go on a diet and lose 10 pounds and starving yourself for the first week of January, think about starting with some diet resources to read so you can decide on some small choices you can really live with and maintain, then others you can build on as next steps.

5. **Set intermediate targets to the big goal** – Big goals often fail because it's the only target and after a while it feels overwhelming. So again, start small and also set intermediate targets so you can have successes to build on and be able to celebrate success along the way. It will reinforce your success knowing you're on the path to accomplishing the big goal.

6. **Have an accountability partner** – This doesn't have to be some big formal thing where you meet at certain intervals, which then itself becomes another burden. Just telling a friend what you have resolved to do is enough to keep you accountable, because you know that friend is going to ask you about your progress sooner or later. Make it whatever you need it to be to hold you accountable and give you that extra boost.

7. **Figure out the obstacles ahead of time** – There are always obstacles! It can be scheduling conflicts, the inability to do something every day or every week, or an unexpected emergency or crisis that shifts needs. So build those things into your plan! Don't let them derail you, instead, plan what you will do when the obstacles arise, so you aren't "failing" when it happens. You may be diverted, so build the road with paths to get back to the main road when you are diverted. Maybe it's as simple as exercise "on average" vs. a set three or five times a week. Give yourself a break. Too many hard rules lead to a feeling of failure.

Good luck with your dissolution and resolution process this year.

I've already decided on my dissolutions and I'm planning to use that time for more fun, inspiring and rejuvenating times playing and traveling with my husband and looking forward to more sunshine and less computer glare. Feel free to ask me how I'm doing!

If you would like a little help and encouragement, reach out to me for one of my complimentary calls and I'll give you a boost!

Here's to your success!

*Best Wishes,
Joy*

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