

# Ease and Do<sup>©</sup>

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## Happy New Year!

Now hurry up and change your life around.

Tis' the season to 1) be overwhelmed by all the things we think we should be doing, 2) to mull over all the things we did (or did not) accomplish in the previous year and 3) to plan ahead and develop the measuring stick that will propel us to start the process anew when next December arrives. I have come to view this as the aah and ugh season.

The aah's and ugh's of course are the hits and misses I accumulated throughout the past year. For some reason the end of the year is a time, *no it is **the** time*, to take stock of what we have done; to review the lessons learned and to develop our plan for the next year. Whether business or personal, the opportunity to move forward, beyond our past or current accomplishment is a compelling force. The thing is it becomes more like a wave of tidal proportion at this time of year. Does it have to be this way?

The spirit of a fresh start is a deeply ingrained component of the New Year and I'm confident that it will be around for a very long time. At the same time I think this annual event can be a bit misleading not to mention very stressful for some of us. I'd like to share a few thoughts that might take some of the New Years' resolution pressure off.

*New Years' resolutions; in conversation they're sort of like "how are you's"- everyone is asking about them.*

One of the funky things about New Years' resolutions is that they're sort of obligatory. How many times have you been asked- so what are *your* New Years resolutions? Suddenly the New Years goal setting is feeling more and more like a performance review- whew!

I have enough choices to make and obligations to fulfill. This New Years' resolution thing, tradition aside, is a personal choice. The next time someone asks me if I made a resolution I think I'll tell them I have- it is that I will not discuss the subject.

If it feels good for you then make one (or several). But do it because you want to; not because you worry about breaking tradition or worse still because someone else might ask you about it.

*If you do decide to make a resolution or two, at least plan to succeed.*

Given our seasonally congested band-width, many of us adopt resolutions without considering the feasibility or for that matter, the desirability of achieving them. I'm convinced this is one of the reasons that New Years' resolutions frequently fail.

New Years' resolutions are about personal improvement; there are few things as frustrating as failing to achieve our goals, probably none as frustrating as failure to reach our self-goals. But as we're well aware: *goals don't simply happen- we have to plan to achieve them!*

So if you decide to make New Years' resolutions, devise a plan to achieve them. With the choice between a well-planned resolution that has a fighting chance to succeed and a poorly or unplanned one with little chance for success- the choice is obvious.

*No matter what they say there are 365 days in the year; why wait for years' end to set new goals?*

For 364 days of the year we go merrily on our way; on the 365<sup>th</sup> day we declare our expectations for the next 364 days. It makes me wonder- whatever did we do with the other 364 days of the year?

The idea of a "new" year meshes smoothly with that of a new beginning, hence the New Years' resolution. It's not like we don't set goals throughout the year but something about this time of year is special. For example a typical resolution is to lose weight. After all the holiday feasting is over it's probably a good time to go for it. But let's say for example that in the middle of June you decide to make an on-going effort to eat smart, exercise well and maintain control over your weight. Just think what a relief it will be come the holidays when you can enjoy that feasting without worrying about how much you have to lose in the New Year.

It all comes down to this- resolutions can be made at any time. Why not make them when the inspiration is genuine and the motivation to succeed is at its peak? If it so happens that December 31<sup>st</sup> is the time and place, so be it! If it is not, there are plenty of other dates that will work just as well. When the time is right- go for it!

I hope these ideas inspire some consideration. Maybe you will make a resolution or two to implement them. I hope that the time ahead is peaceful and enjoyable for you and that when December 31<sup>st</sup> rolls around you will look back with fond memories of 2008.

As for me, I'll be busy trying to lose 25 pounds; at least that's what I told everyone!