Reframing Resolutions

I don’t know about you, but I’ve written countless New Year’s resolutions that never made it to February. I vowed to eliminate sugar from my diet, refuse an additional glass of wine, never sleep in during the week, restrict the amount of television I watched, and stop snacking in the afternoons while writing. I’m sure you can predict how long these declarations lasted.

Of course, at the time it seemed the right thing to do. After weeks of Holiday indulgences, I had a strong urge to become a better, healthier, fitter, and more productive version of myself. So, I’d sit down, pick up a pen, and begin to write what I believed would help me accomplish this goal. Never did I pause to consider what each mandate involved. Instead, I stoically did my best to meet these unrealistic expectations until it was time to wave the white flag.

Still, these repetitive letdowns only made me want to try harder the next year. Confident I could craft more precise and manageable resolutions, I kept attempting … and kept falling short of maintaining the desired behavior. This made me wonder. Did I lack discipline, or could it be that I set myself up for failure? Unsure of the answer, I decided to examine the ritual I conducted each January first.

After rehashing my approach to this whole resolution routine, I realized my goals reflected what I no longer wanted to be, not who I wished to become. Utilizing worlds like “should,” “not,” “eliminate,” and “stop,” I was punishing myself, inflicting harsh rules and regulations so I’d *get back on track.*

But what if I shifted my approach? Could I rephrase my resolutions to allow for expansion, creativity, growth? And what about adding positives into my life instead of merely subtracting pleasurable activities (chocolate, wine, sleeping in)? How could I elevate my life through joy, compassion, and optimism?

If we permit ourselves to eliminate restrictive wording and instead focus on high vibrational language, we become empowered to create the best versions of who we are. By concentrating on encouraging verbiage, we elevate, a very different approach from shaming in hopes of correcting unproductive patterns and habits.

It’s when we shift our perspective of *how* we approach a situation that new possibilities appear. No longer do we feel the need to criticize past indulgences. Rather, we choose to inspire ourselves to do all we can to become our best.

I like to think of it as sitting in a different seat at the dining room table. By simply switching chairs, we adjust our point of view, seeing solutions, connecting the dots, and better understanding why those resolutions never worked. It’s then that we realize what must occur for us to succeed.

This year, I’ve revised my resolutions. While the end goal may be the same—a better, healthier, and more productive lifestyle—I’m choosing words which make the changes feel possible, and I’m allowing space for when I cannot fully show-up. After all, I’m just human.

Here are my amended resolutions:

*I choose to nourish my body with fresh, organic, whole foods.*

*Before having another glass of wine, I will ask myself if I truly desire it.*

*I will strive to rise by 6:00 a.m. but will honor my body if it requires more sleep.*

*If I want to watch TV at night, I’ll choose a high-quality show.*

*I will be present and focused while writing, allowing frequent breaks for movement.*

I think you get the idea. This is not about selecting the easy route—rather, it’s allowing ourselves grace. The sought-after end-results are still the same, it is the *how we get there* that is different. By opting for a positive approach, one which entices us to want to improve, we are more likely to reach our goals. Perhaps it’s merely wordsmithing, but if it produces the desired results, then I’m all for it.

Happy New Year! And may your resolutions be reworded and rewarding!