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5 Strategies For Lasting Change

By Helaine Iris

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"Be the change you wish to see." Mahatma Gandhi

In the last issue of Along The Purpose Path I told the story of a client who's been working to make a change in her life. She wants to grow her business while at the same time, decrease her stress level and increase how much she enjoys herself. She's not alone.

My client's breakthrough began when she made a mental shift from a state of striving to state of thriving.

What seems to make the difference between those who thrive versus those who strive comes down to the willingness to identify what is and isn't working in life; and then making the appropriate changes. Yet, studies indicate that most – over three-quarters of us – fail to follow through on the changes we set out to make.

The reality is change is difficult for just about everyone. Those who do manage to follow through on life changes aren't simply lucky. Instead, they've mastered the skills to not only make change easier, but also to make their changes sustainable over time.

It's a cliché that bears repeating. Rome wasn't built in a day. Change happens one step at a time. The most effective change a person can make is when it's taken in small increments. People often get stopped because they don't shift their focus from the big picture long enough to effectively plan. When you don't have a solid plan, and support for your plan, it's easy to get bumped off course and become disillusioned.

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The good news is every time you successfully implement a change, small or large, your life gets better. Success builds new evidence that change is possible. It spreads confidence and a sense of achievement throughout your life.

It's New Years Resolution season. It seems there's something magical about new beginnings that inspires most of us to reexamine our lives, renew our commitment to a goal or resolve to make changes. Some of us aim even higher toward a complete reinvention of our selves.

As a Coach, I earn my living by helping people make changes in their personal and professional lives. So it won't surprise you to hear me suggest these five strategies you can begin using to make changes, stop striving and begin thriving in the year ahead.

1. Identify the "gap"

A "gap" represents the difference between where you are currently and where you want to be. An example of a gap might be: I want to be exercising regularly but I'm currently not exercising at all. Or I want to start my own home business and I'm currently employed. There can be small gaps or there can be big gaps.

Having the life you want is really a matter of identifying and closing your gaps. This perspective can reduce the feelings of overwhelm. Instead of looking at life as one huge problem, you begin to see a series of gaps that needs filling one at a time.

Once you identify your gaps, you have a road map to follow.

2. Reveal and disqualify the disempowering beliefs that energize your gap

Now that you have identified your gaps you can begin to close them.

At the heart of every gap is an underlying belief or story that is limiting. It's necessary to flush out these disempowering beliefs that may get in your way of closing the gap. Usually, these beliefs are transparent to us, and we aren't aware of how powerfully and pervasively they operate to control our choices. When you shine the light of awareness on these beliefs, they're neutralized, and you're able to make more empowered choices in closing your gap.

Let's play with examples. What might be a disempowering belief behind my exercise example? What thoughts or stories might be transparently shaping your inability to stick to an exercise program?

I can't follow through anything
Exercise is hard and I hate it
There's not enough time

Once the limiting thought is revealed, now what?

3. Build a positive case for yourself

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After revealing the belief, it's important that you find out what's true about you and your life. You need to inquire to discover if your beliefs are real obstacles or if they're just a product of old thought patterns.

Go back to the exercise example. "I don't follow through on anything." Is that true? Can you find examples of where you have followed through on something? If so, make a list that disqualifies this particular belief.

This process will help you build a more positive case for your own success, and when you notice yourself slipping into the old thought pattern, you can shift to what's true something more true and much more positive. It's really a matter of building new thinking habits and practicing them.

When you get to the truth, you feel better. In the example, all the energy tied up in resisting exercise can now go into exercising.

4. Make a plan and take action

Here's where the rubber meets the road. All the inspiration and awareness will only go so far. Who hasn't had the experience where you get inspired about something and go off to accomplish it only to lose steam and give up on your dream or project?

That's where having a solid plan comes in, an action plan. Write out the steps of your plan. Be specific.

An important part of designing a successful action plan is building an accountability structure. When you're accountable to specifics or someone else you have a better chance of following through with what you say you want.

This brings us to the last step.

5. Create a circle of support

We all need support. Often the difference between getting successful results and not, depends on how well supported you are.

I was just working with a client who wanted to introduce a new routine into her life. She questioned her ability to stick to it. When I asked her what in the past helped her stay on track with something new she said, "Telling someone my plan made me more accountable. By speaking my intention out loud made it harder to just blow it off". Then I asked her whom she would tell about her new plan. She decided to tell her husband and use him for her accountability. You could take it a step further and ask the person to periodically check in with you how you are doing with your commitment. Now, that's support.

A circle of support can mean a lot of different things. It can be your partner, your best friend, colleagues at work, or your family. Meaningful support can be any or all of these people, the more support you have the better. The only critical distinction is that you are supported for YOUR agenda, not the supporters.

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Establishing and calling on your "circle of support" will help you sustain yourself through all of life through challenging times and through great times.

Why not give this strategy a try. Begin to thrive in your life. I'd love to hear your thoughts, feedback and successes. Email me at <mailto:helaine@pathofpurpose.com>

It's YOUR life...imagine the possibilities!

~~~~~Helaine Iris is a certified Life Coach, writer and teacher that loves her life. For a solution focused complimentary session visit her website <http://www.pathofpurpose.com> or call her 603-357-8546 or email her [helaine@pathofpurpose.com](mailto:helaine@pathofpurpose.com)

## 7 Tips For Lasting Motivation And Greater Success

**By Peter Murphy**

Lasting motivation is possible once you adopt an outlook that allows you to be more successful. Here are seven tips you can use today to overcome procrastination and start achieving much more.

1. Success is not achieved accidentally. It is a systematic, deliberate process of deciding what you want to do with your life, what you will do when you get there, and what the steps are to get you where you want to be.

One of the most important aspects of success is the ability to visualize your path and stay focused on your goal until you reach it.

2. The sooner you envision your dreams and develop a plan to turn them into reality, the faster you will accomplish your goals.

Mental pictures are a mechanism to lead you down the path of true independence and motivation. Procrastination is a self-defeating behavior that develops in part due to low self-esteem and fear of failure.

Your imagination is like a preview of your future. If you don't use your imagination your life will remain mundane and unfulfilling.

3. Overcoming procrastination is the first step in helping you create the lifestyle you desire. You must change the habits and behaviors that led you to procrastinate in the first place.

Change is a slow process so be sure to reward yourself along the way for small achievements. Instead of focusing on the difficulty of a large task, break it into smaller jobs and create a timeline for finishing them.

4. Several small jobs done over time are much more manageable than one large task with no end in sight. You'll be astonished at how much you can get done if you concentrate on one thing at a time

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instead of cluttering your mind with multiple tasks.

Try tackling the more undesirable tasks early in the day so that by afternoon you can pursue more pleasant activities.

5. Relieve yourself of the pressure created by clutter in your office or home. Develop a filing system, rid yourself of unnecessary papers, and give yourself an organized place to work.

When you exercise self-discipline in your surroundings as well as your behaviors, you will make major strides in accomplishing your goals in a shorter period of time. No matter what is happening around you, keep your mind focused on the reward you'll receive by reaching your goals.

6. If people or outside forces distract you, use the power of the human mind to block out what impedes your progress and concentrate solely on the task at hand. You will make remarkable progress by refusing to let others alter the path you have chosen.

Overcoming procrastination and staying motivated is the way to lifetime success and happiness. You'll achieve your goals rapidly when you stay focused on your destination and the rewards that will follow.

7. Review your habits and way of thinking to determine what you are visualizing most of the time. If your visions do not lead you in the direction of accomplishing your goals, then you must change them.

Discipline yourself to concentrate on your goals the majority of the time, and if you stray from the path, get promptly back on.

Imagine what the rewards will be when you finally reach your destination and keep that thought foremost in your mind.

Procrastination is of no use to you in your quest to fulfill your dreams. Lose those old habits and replace them with habits that lead to self-motivation and control over your life.

Remember this. You can sustain lasting motivation over time once you discover the motivation strategies that are right for you.

Peter Murphy is a peak performance expert. He recently produced a very popular free report that reveals how to crush procrastination and sustain lasting motivation. Apply now because it is available for a limited time only at:

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