



The here and now

Mark Pritchard-Jeffs

At last! Spring is in the air and it seems like an age since I

made my New Year resolutions. Actually, I made only one this year - to give up all alcohol for the first three weeks of January. (I had a skiing holiday booked in St. Anton in late January, so didn't want to do the whole month - for obvious reasons!). I actually managed to achieve my goal quite easily and effortlessly and I didn't think much about it again until yesterday, when I got a promotional email from a friend and colleague of mine, Derek Mills. Derek's email included a review of some research he'd done, suggesting how ineffective New Year resolutions were. I had a quick look on Google and apparently he is right, over 80% of all our New Year resolutions are never achieved!

I recalled another insight Derek gave me many years ago, when I very first met him. On that occasion, his telling insight was around the critical importance of us maintaining a daily focus on our most sincerely held and deeply valued daily standards. His assertion and belief was that if you wanted to be happy and fulfilled on a consistent basis, you shouldn't focus on the future (which is where goals reside). Instead you should focus on maintaining high personal standards for your thinking and behaviour in the here and now. In essence, create a habit of mind that consistently focuses your energy and intention on being at your very best in the here and now, so that your future results look after themselves.

In summary, Derek suggests setting new "daily standards" in each one of the following seven key areas of life: Personal health and fitness; the environment you live and work in; your relationships; your family; your mind and emotions; your career or job and finally; how you balance and manage your time. His recommended process for re-setting (he calls it "re-framing") each daily standard is as follows:

1. Review the standards that you have adopted as habits in each key area of your

life and identify the source of those standards.

2. Think about the likely consequences of maintaining those standards and think about whether they are serving and honouring (or hurting and dishonouring) you and others.

3. Let go of any standards that don't serve and honour you and others, by identifying and adopting new and inspiring standards (that do serve and honour you and others) to replace them.

4. Create and reinforce the habit of reflecting upon and recommitting to each of these new standards every day.

5. Allow your daily standards to expand, grow and evolve as you do.

If you want to find out more, Derek wrote a great little book, "The 10-Second Philosophy" which goes into more detail. I'm sure it is available on Amazon and other online book stores if you do a search (alternatively email me and I'll get a copy for you). Anyway, the point is, in thinking about my own goal-setting experiences, I realised that the achievement of my New Year's resolution was only partially based on setting the goal itself, and that - more importantly - my success was actually achieved through the conscious commitment that I made to myself on a regular basis each day throughout those whole three weeks (a bit like recovering alcoholics do as part of the Alcoholics Anonymous approach apparently!) - I will not drink any alcohol, just for now, just for today...

What new standards and daily commitments could you adopt?

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