

balancing skills

Kate Gare and Diana Penny of Treat Balham advise on managing your life positively

We are all guilty of making resolutions only to break them within a few days. Following these simple ideas will enable you to make 2009 your most successful year yet.

How balanced is your life?

A balanced life allows you to be free to grasp opportunities as they arise. Unfortunately many people falter at this first step by not knowing where their life is out of balance.

A great starting point is to create your own personal wheel of life. Draw a circle and divide it into eight segments. Allocate the eight most important aspects of your life, one per segment. These can be anything from relationships to career, family and friends to health or fun. Label the centre of the circle '0' and the outer edge of the circle '10'. Next, thinking about how satisfied you are with the first area, give it a score out of 10 (0 being not satisfied and 10 being completely satisfied) and make a mark on the circle to reflect the score. Do this for each area.

Usually people find the results immediately illuminating. If the scores are all between seven and ten, fantastic, what would you like to work on to make them even better? If, like most people, you have some high and some low scores, the low scoring areas are the ones to focus on. Frequently changing one aspect of your life can impact positively on other areas - so think creatively!

Decide on your goals for 2009

Goals need to be clearly defined, feasible, motivating and important to you. When they meet these criteria, you are well on your way to achieving them. An example of a 'woolly' goal is 'I am going to lose weight'. Instead ask yourself 'When by?' 'How much?' 'How will I know I've got there?'

A better version would be 'On 1st March 2009 I weigh 10st 5lbs and I fit into my blue trousers.' Visualise this. People who achieve their goals tend to imagine themselves achieving them many times. The more clearly you can see yourself succeeding, the more likely it is to happen.

Remember if you make your goals too big, then they will be difficult to achieve, and you may get disheartened, so it is good to create smaller 'journey' goals to achieve along the way.

Can you make the changes?

People can make amazing changes to things in their own control, but very few people can single-handedly change the world.

Many people make the mistake of focusing on what they can't change; this can

lead to them becoming overwhelmed, depressed or simply giving up. An obvious example is the current economic climate. You cannot personally fix the global economy, but you can make sure that you are prepared for what happens. If money scores low for you on the wheel, focus on ways to spend less and save more.

Be nice to yourself

There is a fine balance between challenging yourself and being a perfectionist. Make sure that you can tell the difference, don't be your worst critic - be your best friend instead. Start and continue the New Year by recognising what is great about you. This will put you in a positive state of mind, ready to achieve your goals.

Keep going

There may come a time when your energies flag and you are in danger of abandoning the whole idea. Here are a few ways to keep going.

- Clean out a messy drawer. Clutter clogs up your life: make room for new things.
- Go for a walk. Fresh air clears your head and allows you to be objective about where you are.
- Do something nice for someone else, something that they weren't expecting. Observe their reaction and notice any unexpected benefits coming your way.
- Take stock. Make a list of all the things you have done and achieved towards your goal. You may be surprised at how much is there and be sure to congratulate yourself.
- Talk to Kate or Diana at Treat Balham about how they can help you reach your goals.

Have a happy, positive New Year!

To pick up your free Wheel of Life template please visit or call TreatBalham on 020 673 2163, have a look at their website www.treat-balham.co.uk or pop in to Hildreth Street Mews, Balham

Kate and Diana are offering Time & Leisure readers the exclusive opportunity to make a block booking of four sessions for the price of three, for all clients booking their first appointments with them in January.

