

## Something New

The first month of 2019 is almost over. That was fast! For many years now, instead of writing a list of worthy resolutions or even one big one, I try to come up with a word, or a quote or something that will inform my year to come. Resolutions have never worked for me and years and years ago, I threw them to the side. Too much like “rules.” I have a cautious relationship with rules. I’m not quite the rebel I used to be, but don’t lay a bunch of rules on me.

I try to be mindful about what I want for myself in the year to come, to review the year that just went by, to be thoughtful and conscientious, to possibly influence the way the year goes, or at least starts out. To exert a bit of control, as if that is possible - but as far as actual resolutions, I cannot seem to get any satisfaction from doing such an exercise.

Setting goals have never been a reality to me. I never understood goals, couldn’t understand how they worked. Just because you said you wanted to do something or have things a certain way (In the next year I will become rich! This will be the year I get a new car! etc, etc.) didn’t mean it was going to happen, in my experience. I had a passive understanding of the concept of goals. Goals were not something impressed upon me as I grew up by my parents, nor in school, unless I just wasn’t paying attention.

Goals seemed more to belong to that nebulous, hazy, wishful-thinking and “what I really need is a magic wand to wave over my life” world. I was always hoping for that elusive wand. Life and circumstances seemed to have a life of their own. Just hang on for the ride was all I knew how to do.

During my foray into the “new age” era, when that was a really big thing, and it all sounded so good and completely reasonable and doable to me, I read about setting intentions and “putting it out there to the universe”, affirmations, and other stuff that has faded from my memory. I earnestly believed and diligently practiced all those things; I even bought magic crystals

They were supposed to attract and imbue you with the qualities you desired, but lacked, I think. I tried writing down what I wanted, but it seemed more like I was writing to Santa Claus and somehow Santa had it in his mind that I was on the naughty list and didn't deserve any of those good things I wanted for myself. I failed at "new ageism." For shame. "Goals", in my understanding of them, just always seemed like they were out of my reach.

I have come a long way since those days, in my understanding of goals, what they are and what you do to reach them, but I still don't write down a list of resolutions.

This year, I thought I'd try something new. No special word, or motto or whatever. Not even a semi-intention about what I'd like for the next year. It feels kind of cavalier in a way, like I'm abandoning all hope and I'm just going to throw myself to the mercy of whichever way the wind is blowing. La di da! But I have a feeling it might turn out to be the best thing I could ever do.

I decided I would jump on board with our church effort to read the bible in a year. We've done it every year for quite a few years – well, I should say they, whoever they are, have done it, not me. I tried it once many years ago, and I just couldn't get into it. I didn't like the structure of it. It seemed too confining the way it was set up and I felt like my wings were being clipped. Kind of like when I tried to teach one of my cats to walk on a leash. He froze and then just fell over onto the floor – unable to move. Didn't get very far before I completely abandoned the idea. I froze, and then just fell over, unable to move on with the program. *I'll read what I want to read when I want to read it.* Yep, that sounds like me. Or to sound more spiritual - *I'll read wherever the spirit takes me.*

Two passages jumped out at me early on in my reading: Deuteronomy 8:3 - "...real life comes by feeding on every word of the Lord."

Psalms 5:8 – "Lead me in the right path, O lord, or my enemies will conquer me." (my enemies being fear, worries, anxieties, insecurities, shame, unwillingness, my self...)

These two scriptures will be the lens I will be looking through as I proceed through this endeavor; they will be my com-

And yes, for those of you who are also doing this, I know you are sharp enough to point out that we don't get to the book of Deuteronomy for a while, soooo..... ? That reference came from a footnote I looked up in one of the first few days of reading. And if I needed a final confirmation on committing to do this, that was it.

Because I want real life. Maybe it's my age. Maybe it's growth, or a combination of both, but it's finally more real to me than not, that this isn't our real life here in this life we're living. As big, gorgeous, wonderful, beautiful, adventurous and exciting as life can be in this world, it is just as much the opposite – narrow and confining, hard, cruel, ugly, unfair, dark and overrun with evil and corruption. Not what it was meant to be as designed by our creator. I want the real life that comes from living in the presence of God forever, starting now.

I have a feeling doing this, feeding on every word of the Lord, will have more of an impact on me in this upcoming year than any resolution, affirmation, or special word ever would.

*I'll let you know next year. It will be here before we know it.*

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