
Life Lessons Learned Along the Way: Resolutions and Goals

By Harvey R. Heller

I have used this space to tell stories about who I am and to introduce you to our group. My stories aren't usually about me, but about people and events that have had a profound impact on me.

The new year arrives with fanfare and invariably a few resolutions. At our local gym, the regulars watch the annual uptick in attendance that follows New Year's Eve every year. We sometimes bet on how long the surge will last (always less than 2 weeks before the level of attendance gets back to normal and the supply of towels returns!).

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This past year end we were in Disney World with our grandchildren. The crowds were large everywhere we went. At nearly every dining venue, one could hear someone mention their coming resolution to eat healthy or diet after the new year, myself included. While there, I discovered that in Disney World, the very best Rice Krispies Treats are made and sold. I could not get enough of them. There were the chocolate coated individual bars, the 8 pack of plain racquetball sized "bites" (a personal favorite) and the 12-14 inch cake size shaped like Mickey's head, to name a few. They were indescribably delicious! Do not miss this treat if you ever get down there. I rationalized that since I was literally walking miles each day, these were an appropriate reward. I would simply shed whatever weight gain resulted after the new year.

Now that I am back and facing reality, I know that it will take me at least a good month to get back to the weight I was carrying before the holidays. Every year, I allow myself some level of year end binge eating, promising myself to get back on

my Weight Watcher program after the new year. And, every year, while it takes me a bit longer to shed those extra pounds, I start January 2 and ultimately succeed. This year was no exception. It is a personal commitment that I follow through on. I am very disciplined. It is a resolution that has become a habit; part of me. I always **follow through** on it.

Akin to resolutions, but often confused, are goals. While a resolution is often defined as a state of mind, a goal is defined as something one wishes to achieve. Some goals are harder to achieve than others. Achieving a goal may involve circumstances beyond our control, making the goal more difficult to achieve. My weight is a personal issue that I alone can control through my own determination. My goals require a number of factors that I may not be in total control of. That said, I do not give up on them. Like weight control, once we set a goal, any goal, we must create a plan to achieve it, and **follow through** with the plan. It's the "**follow through**" that requires resolve.

Pretty simple stuff, but easier said than done. As litigators, we evaluate a case, develop a plan, execute the plan and reevaluate along the way to assure that we are on course. This simple formula should be a template for all of us who wish to grow and achieve. Planning and follow through likewise helps prevent waste and achieve efficiency. It helps us to focus, maintain our confidence and work toward a desired result. Yet, the best plans fail when one lacks the ability to **follow through**.

For me, following through with a plan, and revising as required helps me to sharply focus. I am far from perfect, but as I steer through a year, while I can do well enough on auto pilot, that will not get us or our clients to the best and most efficient result. Periodically taking the time to set goals, following up on them, and revising as necessary is a perfect way to organize and achieve. Again, the goal can easily be set; the resolve to **follow through** is the real challenge.

Good luck to all of us in 2018 as we set our goals, resolve to achieve them and most importantly, develop the habit of **FOLLOWING THROUGH!**

