

“All we have to decide is what to do with the time that is given us”.
- JR. R. Tolkein

This is true for every day of our lives. Each day, when we open our eyes, we have to decide what we're going to do. What do we want to accomplish? Who do we want to help? Each day is a new opportunity to do something special....or not....it's our decision. Life can be pretty crazy and it's too easy to lose sight of what we want. As I was thinking about what to write this month, I realized that so many of us are caught up in doing things for everyone else, we don't take time to do anything for ourselves. So this month, I'm going to give you some ideas about how to get what YOU want out of life. Stop putting yourself last and make a plan for you. If you need some help, I'm just a phone call or email away.

Yours in health,



Susan Monaco, Certified Health Coach
Health and Wellness by Design
www.healthnwellnessbydesign.com
susan@healthnwellnessbydesign.com

How to Get What you Want out of Life



Years ago, I remember reading about Lou Holtz, the coach of Notre Dame's nationally ranked football team. He made a list of 107 things to do before he died. I never figured out why he picked the number 107, because many of us would be happy to do 5 or 10. But what struck me about his list was how it covered such a wide range of things.....from having dinner at the White House to skydiving.

Last I heard, he'd reached goal 91 of those 107: seeing all four of his children graduate from college. He told people to "set goals and follow through on them." Is that something you do on a daily basis? I'll bet the answer is no. Every of us have desires, dreams, wishes.....but how many of us have actual goals? Wanting to be thin or rich doesn't count as goals. Goals often begin as dreams, but goals are more specific and can only be realized through specific action. If you can't put it into words or measure it, it's probably not really a goal. In order to then reach a goal, there are a number of steps you have to take. I'm going to list several of them below.

Define it. Dave Thomas, the founder of Wendy's, is great example of this. He'd been orphaned at birth and from the time he was eight, he wanted to own a restaurant so he'd never be hungry. His home life was never stable and he wasn't a great student, but he always held onto that goal. At the age of 12, he got a job at the counter of a restaurant, then became a busboy and eventually a manager. He saved four failing restaurants and eventually became a big shot with a national chain. He finally put together enough money to open his own place, which he named after his daughter. It eventually grew to thousands of restaurants. While I'm not a fan of the Wendy's chain, I am a fan of the fact that Mr. Thomas didn't set out to own thousands of successful restaurants, he set out to just make one of them profitable. Look what he did!

Write it down. Figure out your goal and then put pen to paper. Most successful people will tell you that they put their goals in writing.

Map out a plan. Break your ultimate goal down into a number of smaller pieces. It becomes less intimidating that way. There is a technique known as backward planning. It's basically setting a goal and then working backwards by looking at the steps needed to achieve it.

Set a deadline. Zig Ziglar, motivational expert, says that "a goal is a dream with a deadline." He should know. He's super successful. Once you've set your goal, pick a date by which you want it to happen.

Make a commitment. If you do this, it will help you be more successful. Say your goal is to go on a Caribbean cruise. It's something you've never done but always wanted to do. One of the best things you can do is giving a travel agent a \$500 **non-refundable** deposit. You're now committed because you don't want to lose that deposit.

Don't be afraid to fail. You might have a big goal, but the way you get there is often with very small little steps. If you don't take the first one, you'll never get to the last. Baby steps can help calm the fear of failure because little steps are so much easier than big ones.

Be persistent. Whenever you set a goal, you'll inevitably be confronted with obstacles....some big, some small. But you must be willing to believe in yourself to overcome them. Don't ever give up.

Don't let your age stop you. Age should never stop you from achieving your goals. Ronald Reagan is a perfect example of this. He was almost 70 when he was overwhelmingly elected as President of the United States and almost 74 when he was reelected. Bernie Sanders is almost 75. Age shouldn't be a roadblock for anything you want to do.

Don't blame others. Have a plan B. When something bad happens, don't pout about it, figure out how you can make sure it doesn't happen again. Have a backup plan. Sometimes, fiascos are out of your control, so there's no point in being upset about them. Instead, stay calm so you have can good judgement to move forward.

Learn to laugh...especially at yourself. Successful people all seem to have a great sense of humor. When you find a way to laugh, even during bad times, it helps get rid of a lot of frustration and can make you feel a whole lot better. My friend Jodi always finds a way to make me laugh, even during trying times and I love her for that. It really does relieve a lot of pressure.

Don't try to please everyone. If you try this, you'll ultimately fail. You can't please all of the people all of the time. Remember that if some guy you're crazy about doesn't even know you're alive, it's his loss. Find someone instead who will appreciate you and everything about you.

Be gracious. Be sure to always thank, complement and praise other people. If you do, they'll want to do things for you. Gratitude makes people want to help you. If you make people feel good about themselves, they'll ultimately feel good about you.

Take good care of yourself. Exercise. Get plenty of sleep. Eat healthy foods. Spend some quiet time alone with yourself. Look in the mirror and tell your reflection that you're a good person who's worthy of love. It's easy to be critical of yourself, so if you catch yourself doing it, stop and say something positive. It will make a world of difference in your happiness.

Remind yourself that you're awesome, set some goals and have a wonderful month.