

[IMAGE]

Start the New Year Right

By Editorial Staff

Last issue, we talked about New Year's resolutions – particularly some of the ones that don't show up on very many annual lists, even though they definitely should be on *everyone's* list. As we begin 2019, let's take things a step further. Don't consider these resolutions so much as small, easy-to-incorporate steps you can take toward a better you this year and every year. They're not New Year's resolutions; they're *life resolutions*.

1. *Make a connection* (you never thought you'd make or thought you'd given up on). It could be romantic, but that's just the tip of the iceberg. Think reaching out to a long-lost friend; striking up a conversation with a co-worker you've never spoken to except as it pertains to work; or making amends with a family member who deserves to be in your life (and you in theirs), but isn't.
2. *Tell someone you're sorry* (and mean it, and understand why you were wrong in the first place). Has someone hurt you, but you're unwilling or unable to forgive them? Who's it ultimately hurting more – you or them? What about the flip side: Have you hurt someone, but are so embarrassed or ashamed that you've never apologized – even when the infraction was something so minor, so easy to remedy that you can't believe it? It happens, but there's no better time than now to fix it.
3. 2019 - Copyright â Stock Photo / Register Mark *Introduce yourself to the forgotten you* (or the pushed-aside you, or the afraid-to-explore you, or told-you're-not you). The older we get, the more we realize what could have been, or might have been, or should have been ... if only we'd been strong enough. Guess what? You *are* strong enough! Life is a journey, but if you let the wind blow you in whatever direction it chooses, you'll regret where you end up eventually.
4. *Start a bucket list* (no matter how old) and cross at least one item off this year. The bucket list isn't just for old people; in fact, the younger you make yours, the more time and opportunity you'll have to complete it. Put whatever you want on your list as long as you honestly think it can be achieved. In fact, add a few items you don't think have any chance of happening. It's always OK to dream.
5. *Do something you've wished you'd do* (but always let fear or acceptance get in the way). This could include an item on the aforementioned bucket list, but on a certain level, it's more simple than that. Sure, if you've never sky dived because you were afraid to, it should be on your bucket list and fits the

bill here. But we're also talking about going beyond your own perceived limitations. It could mean changing careers because you've discovered that what you want and need is different than you thought; or moving to another state when you thought you'd always stay *right here*, wherever your "right here" is in this vast world.

6. *Give someone your undivided attention* (even when you're in the exact opposite mood). Everything thinks they're a great listener; a substantially lower percentage actually pull it off. That's because listening is *not* about keeping quiet for a few seconds while the other party speaks, but all the while thinking about the story *you're* about to share. True listening is about *hearing* what the other person is saying and trying to *understand* what they're feeling. In fact, sometimes you might not even need to say a word.

So, what's the moral of this story? It's never too late for a new beginning. A better you starts now.

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