

Three Steps to a Great New Year

A Self-Guided Coaching Exercise
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Step 1: Take Stock of 2012: Loved It / Loathed It

1. Loved It

What were the best moments of 2012 for me? When did I feel I was at my best? What made me feel happy and fulfilled? In what moments was I [aligned with my core values](#) and playing to my [strengths](#)? What am I grateful for in the past year? What experiences, projects, commitments, trips, relationships, and / or activities were enjoyable, energizing, life-giving?

Jot down as many ideas as come to mind, either in the form of a bulleted list, a mind-map, a drawing – however you feel most comfortable.

2. **Loathed It**

What were the worst moments or seasons of 2012? When were you the least happy? What were the experiences, projects, commitments, trips, relationships, and / or activities that drained your energy, triggered your stress response, and / or drove you crazy?

Again, jot down as many ideas as come to mind, in whatever format (e.g., bulleted list, a mind-map, etc.) you prefer.

Step 2 : Get Clear

Read through your answers for questions 1 & 2, noting anything surprising, any patterns or themes. Next, in each of the 20 spaces below, complete the sentence “I want _____”. Don’t edit, don’t say “That will never happen”, just write whatever comes to mind, in a stream-of-consciousness way.

I want...

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

9.

10.

11.

12.

13.

14.

15.

Step 3 : Act

Part A: Design Actions

Look back on your “I want” list in Step 2. Choose **one item** that you’d like to work on in 2013. It’s better to choose one goal and focus on it, rather than having a laundry list of resolutions that we have no chance of keeping.

What are some actions you could take to bring that one item closer to reality? Brainstorm some actions here:

Part B: Commit

From your list in Part A, choose one action that you commit to taking in the next week. Write it below.

Hint: If you can't identify any you could do in the next week, you may need to break down your actions into smaller, discrete tasks that will take no more than 30 minutes. Then choose an action from that list.

Part C: Build in Accountability

Choose someone whom you will ask to hold you accountable for taking this action. Let him/her know that you will contact them (via email, SMS, phone, carrier pigeon) within 1 week to let them know you have completed your action.

Why build in accountability?

Research has shown that people who write down their goals, share this information with a friend, and send weekly updates to that friend are on average 33% more successful in accomplishing their stated goals than those who merely come up with goals.

Write the name of your "accountability partner" here: _____

Write the date on which you'll contact him/her with an update on your action: _____

Part D: Lather, Rinse, Repeat

At the end of the week, after you have completed your action and reported to your accountability partner, go back to your list of actions and choose a new one you'll commit to for the coming week. (Or, as appropriate, brainstorm and refine further actions.) Keep doing this every week and you'll be on your way to achieving your goal.

I would love to hear how this process works for you. Feel free to drop me an email at shana@developmentcrossroads.com. Here's wishing you an amazing 2013!