

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Time for a Reset

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I am a goal setter. I once wrote down 100 goals ... making the list took me several weeks and some were as simple as “Change hairdressers” to the ultimate stretch goal “learn to play the piano.”

As a goal setter, I never pass up an opportunity to make a New Year’s resolution. I think about it several weeks before New Year’s Day, but sometimes don’t settle on something until a couple of weeks after the year has begun.

My process isn’t methodical, but it is intentional. It mainly consists of grabbing a few moments, either when I’m avoiding doing something I should be doing or trying to quiet my brain before I go to sleep. Both scenarios find me daydreaming, thinking about what isn’t working for me, like feeling rushed, or unfocused, or undisciplined. Invariably, inspiration strikes, and a way forward arises.

January is a good time to think about resets. Bar requirements for CLE and pro bono work begin again. Billable-hour requirements begin again. You get a clean sheet to perform toward the year’s review. New year; new metrics. If you struggled with any of these tasks the

prior year, give some thought to how to change that result in the ensuing year. Each of these requirements generate data that you can analyze to see where you had gaps and why you had gaps. If you don’t know where the gaps are, you can’t begin to fill them. Data drives action, but if you need help, the State Bar of Nevada has several practice management resources that can help. Look at Clio, a cloud-based, legal practice management, client intake, and legal CRM software; or LawPay, credit card processing for attorneys; or Fastcase, online legal research that is free to Nevada bar members; or consider applying to be in the Incubator Program and get office space and mentorship all in one. Use these benefits.

Harder to analyze are the areas that don’t easily generate data: Relationships with your family, friends, and colleagues. Feelings of inadequacy, loneliness, or despair. If you need help identifying those gaps or why you had those gaps, ask your mentor, partner, spouse, family member, or friend.

Remember the Nevada Lawyer Assistance Program, which provides three free confidential therapy sessions for support when dealing with difficult situations.

Consider making a list. For Harry Potter fans, making a list is similar to using a pensieve. There is a scene in the “Goblet of Fire” where Albus Dumbledore uses a wand to take silver strands from his head (thoughts) and puts them in a silver bowl (a pensieve) and then mixes them up. In that way, he can look at his thoughts in a different way. Although I don’t have a magic wand, I never made a list that didn’t help me analyze something more clearly and ultimately feel better.

Finally, take a walk, take deep breaths, and take time to focus on what you want to reset. One year, when I frequently found myself rushing home, tossing my things on the counter and immediately starting to cook dinner, without taking time to say “hello” or “how is everyone” to my family, my New Year’s resolution was to be more present. Figuring out how to measure that goal took a while, but I ultimately settled on taking off my shoes every night as soon as I walked in the house from work as a concrete way to remind me to slow down and be present with my family. The intentional act of stopping to take off my shoes acted as a reset.

Resets don’t come automatically. If, however, you intentionally decide to reset some part of your life this January, I think you may find life a little bit lighter and brighter ... even if all you did was kick off your shoes when you walked in the door.

Happy New Year.

