



2014 NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS?

A fresh year means a fresh start. **ALEX JAMES** encourages us to make the most of the months to come

It's that time of year again, a time of reflection, anticipation of new beginnings, resolutions and good intentions Next year I'll most definitely achieve the goals I set last year.

I am reminded as I write of how as a child at the beginning of a new term, in my new uniform everything seemed fresh. My mind seemed fresh, on that first day of school after the long summer break there was for me a huge sense of new opportunity, and that seemed to trigger in me excitement and enthusiasm. With a new first page of a new book my writings were neater, my drawings more carefully produced and my relationship

with learning enhanced. By the following week however mistakes were made, homework went unfinished and the new book already dog-eared and ink stained had lost its place in my priority. This same pattern has followed me throughout my life A new car receives a wonderfully tidy upkeep, but somehow overnight it slips into a dumping ground for old crisp packets and coke cans. I buy new gym clothes and get a membership but quickly my attendance slips, missing first one or two classes and then suddenly realising I've not been for two weeks. Is there going to be a difference this year? Hopefully – I won't make



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those resolutions in the same way.

This month I thought it might be interesting to explore what it is that stifles that initial enthusiasm. Why do we tire of things that initially inspire us and that we approach with gusto? It's not just work, this applies to everything including our personal lives and private relationships.

Is it that they simply become familiar? Or do other aspects of life come in to play that prevent our good intentions? Over the past year I've written about balance, work and home life, making time for loved ones and making time to love oneself. Perhaps resolving not to make lists of unrealistic or idealistic changes but to recapture something of ourselves, that little spark of inspiration that makes us more enthusiastic, attentive, excited and keen to present the very best of

self on a constant or consistent level is the way forward. This year my resolve is not to lose weight or stop drinking or argue less, it's going to be more about getting in touch with what makes me tick. I'm not going to promise that I'll finish writing my new book or attend and complete courses or read more but I am going to focus on what makes life work for me. I'm going to try, on a daily basis, to find and engage with that sense of new beginnings. Maybe making a resolution for the whole year is a little ambitious for any of us? How about on waking each new morning resolving to do the best with whatever comes our way, remembering to take care of self. My father used to say 'wake up, be glad to see a new day, stretch, touch your toes, decide what you will eat, wear, where you go and realise that if you can do any of these without help you are

already in a fantastic place.'

Maybe you'll consider this offering and join me in making a resolution each new day to do the best with it and help those that we come into contact with in whatever way we are able.

May I take this opportunity to wish you all a very good new year filled with opportunities and positive outcomes



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