

LifeMap^(sm)

January 9, 2006
from Dr. Paul Powers

Welcome to the inaugural issue of **LifeMap**.

LifeMap is a navigational tool to help you on your path towards personal and professional success. Our belief is that you can achieve a more rewarding career, a more productive organization and a more enjoyable and abundant life.

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This Week's Message: Blue Sky Thinking

Around this time of year many of us get caught up in coming up with New Year's Resolutions. Sometimes they can be fun ("I really enjoy the movies so I should go more often") and sometimes they can be motivational ("This year I'll lose that 10, 15, or 20 extra pounds.") But often they can be sources of disappointment, discouragement, or self-punishment when – after a few weeks or a month or two – the desired results haven't been achieved.

There are a number of reasons why New Year's Resolutions fail. Among them are:

- trying to accomplish something difficult solely on your own,
- not knowing how to break large goals into more easily achievable, incremental steps, • not building rewards into the process,
- and the one I want to focus on here – making a resolution that is not essential to achieve one of your major life goals.

So rather than focusing on resolutions or discreet tasks at which you may have tried and failed before, I would rather have you start the year by doing some of what I call Blue Sky Thinking.

What is your "big idea" for 2006? What would make 2006 a significant improvement over your life in past years? What major life goals have you put on hold? What dimension of your life (e.g. career, family, health, spiritual, social connections, financial, etc.) jumps out at you as detracting from the overall quality of your life? In moments of reflection what is it that you know you should be doing to achieve the success you deserve?

Don't burden yourself with tactics and resolutions just yet. We'll have time all year long to work on them. And it's only natural that there will be clouds and obstacles in our way as we go along. But for right now let's do some unimpeded, big picture, Blue Sky Thinking. Don't wait for your life to happen – start now to make it happen. Ask yourself the big questions first:

- What is my life is supposed to look like?
- What have I overlooked or neglected that is important to who am I as a person?
- What is it that I am meant to do?
- What would make 2006 a year that will stand out in my memory forever?

Paths Forward

• Try silence.

To hear your inner voice you need to tune out the noise from the rest of your life. Think of it as annoying static interfering with a life saving radio transmission. Find a special place and go there for a walk. Meditate. Find a special place where you can sit alone in peace and quiet. Turn off the music in the car. Sit by yourself for some quiet time in a church you may frequently pass by.

• Buddy up.

Who knows you well? Who knows you best? Who cares about you the most? Who will be honest (supportively, not brutally) with you? Have this person or these people help you do some Blue Sky Thinking. And you can return the favor.

• When do your best thoughts come to you?

When you're exercising? If so, carry a small pad and pen with you to jot them down (or keep it track or poolside.) How about as you drift off to sleep or right when you wake up from a dream? Have a notebook ready and waiting on your nightstand. In the shower? (Don't laugh. This is true for many folks.) Leave a pad and pen somewhere close by.

• Be patient.

Answers (good answers anyway) to the big questions in life usually don't come quickly, easily, in complete sentences, or fully-structured thoughts. Capture the data as it comes – in dribs and drabs – in a notebook or

journal. Over time you will be able to weave these scraps of ideas, dreams, hopes and goals together into a rich, strong life tapestry.

And have a healthy, safe and happy New Year!

dr. Paul

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- Have an issue or question you'd like Dr. Paul to address in a future edition? Click here.
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