
The Examined Life -- Where Are You Headed? -- Edition 18, January, 2006

A free, electronic newsletter brought to you by:

Debra Exner, CPCC
Business & Personal Coach
Exner & Associates
Examine, Explore and Excel!
602-298-1129
<http://www.ExnerAssociates.com>

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Do you have goals?

Goals, Intentions, Resolutions, Visions. Planning and Being. What do all of these have in common? They make it possible for people to achieve, obtain, create and evolve into what they want in their lives.

The first time I remember writing clear and effective goals was in a parking lot. I arrived early for an orchestra rehearsal and I'd just listened to Denis Waitley's *The Psychology of Winning* and was inspired to action. I quickly wrote 50 goals as instructed and later prioritized them as short or long term, set time frames and selected a few to start working on.

I had remarkable results including starting my first business and doubling my income. In future years, I wondered why I didn't continue the process since I knew how well it worked. Interesting, isn't it?

Over time I incorporated a variety of tools and methods that work well for me. I continue to learn more about what motivates me and what gets in my way and make adjustments.

The start of the New Year is a great time to assess what is and isn't working in your life and to make plans for changes. Experiment to find the approaches that work best for you. Here are suggestions to get you started:

- Evaluate and appreciate who and where you are now and the things and people in your life.
- Get clear about what you want. Develop a vision of the end result and connect

- with it every day. Who are you becoming?
- Create a plan to get there. What will it take? What has worked for you in the past? What obstacles have you faced?
 - Recognize and deal with your fears. Don't let them stop you.
 - Assess your progress. Adjust your goals and methods. Don't give up. Add the forms of structure and accountability that work for you.
 - Celebrate your successes. They will fuel your future efforts.

What methods work best for you?

For support in setting and achieving your goals, join us for a free two-session Make 2006 Your Best Year Yet class by phone on Wednesdays 1/18 and 1/25 (5-6 pm MT, 7-8 ET) or Thursdays 1/19 and 1/26 (10:30-11:30 am MT, 12:30-1:30pm ET) or Tuesdays 1/31 and 2/7 (6-7 pm MT, 8-9 pm ET).

Where Are You Headed?

Grabbing my Yahoo directions, I set off for a party. New to the area, I expected a half-hour journey to the West Valley, about 30 miles away.

A keen directional sense isn't one of my strengths, but I made no navigation mistakes. I was surprised to arrive at a gated community. I only had the host's first name – John. When I pulled over and tried the host's phone number, all I got was voice mail.

Then a car pulled up to the gate and the driver punched in the gate code. I followed him in. Surely I'd be found out. I checked my rear view mirror for Security but nothing happened. Nothing. That included finding John's house.

The road was only a block long and the house numbers, almost impossible to read in the dark, were in the wrong range. I realized that the street I was on was called Drive and the address I wanted was on a Court. Yahoo Maps, unable to find the 2-year-old development, decided to send me someplace else that sounded similar!

First, I called my personal navigator, George, who is also my husband. He was the safest bet — he didn't laugh at me and he searched google and paper maps but without success. None of his maps included the street I was looking for.

My next choice was to look for a likely place for help – a house that obviously had a party going on. One of the guests said, "Get Paul. He's a realtor. He'll know where it is." Paul was with a group of five realtors and they launched into a lively debate about where this place could be. Directions and street names shot into the night, along with the information that I was looking for a cul de sac. I felt I was already mired in one. Paul must have seen the confusion in my eyes; he walked to my car and gave me new directions.

Back in the car on the phone with George and his maps, I tried to recall the turns and street names, turned a corner and found a very lit up house with lots of cars and the correct address.

Feeling exultant, I rang the doorbell a half-dozen times with no result. I was absolutely determined not to give up now that I was so close to my goal. As I raised

my hand to knock on the door, it opened to a bright, warm interior and happy people.

Everyone was welcoming and they swooped me in, gave me a glass of wine, introduced me to folks and I had a great time. My persistence paid off. One of the guests asked me what I do and then asked if I'd like to present workshops to realtors. Turns out she'd had a personal coach and got great value from it. I wondered if Paul and his group would be there.

What could have been a disappointing evening ended as a happy one. Answers come from trying things you haven't tried before, talking to people you don't know, adjusting when you're off course, not giving up when you feel frustrated, and asking for help. While I often suggest one of these to my clients, it took an evening of experiencing all of them to remind myself that being open to change can work wonders in your life!

Guess what George got me for Christmas? A GPS!

[A Global Positioning System (GPS) detects where you are and tells you how to get to other places. See <http://www.garmin.com/aboutGPS/> for details of how it works.]

Personal Update

In addition to finding my way around Phoenix, in the last couple of months I bought a wonderful new grand piano, a long time goal of mine. I am thrilled to be playing it!

November also brought my first attempt at novel writing. It was great fun and I will write more about that when we get close to next November – National Write a Novel month! Check out <http://nanowrimo.org> if you want a sneak preview.

We had some lovely celebrations with new and old friends and terrific family visits. Life is just about perfect!

Coming Events

Free Teleclass: Make 2006 Your Best Year Yet!

Choose from three sessions

Dates: Wednesdays 1/18 and 1/25

Time: 5-6 pm AZ Time/MT, 4-5 pm PT, 7-8 pm ET

or

Dates: Thursdays 1/19 and 1/26

Time: 10:30-11:30 am AZ Time/MT, 9:30-10:30 am PT, 12:30-1:30 pm ET

or

Dates: Tuesdays 1/31 and 2/7

Time: 6-7 pm AZ Time/MT, 5-6 pm PT, 8-9 pm ET

Join me for this free two-session teleclass and discover the keys to setting and achieving the goals you really want in 2006. You will:

- Identify the goals you really want (and are most likely to achieve!)
- Create your own personalized 3-Step Success Strategy
- Get into action and create huge momentum to keep on going

- Learn 4 easy ways to overcome any obstacle that arises
- And much more!

Feel the Fear and Do It Anyway Book Discussion

Dates: Mondays January 23, 30, February 6 and 13

Time: 7-8 pm AZ Time/MT, 6-7 pm PT, 9-10 pm ET

Group Size: 8-10 people

Fee: \$75; Early Bird price \$50 if registered by 1/13 (Book available from amazon.com for @ \$10)

This classic book by Susan Jeffers has helped millions. The first time I wrote about it in this newsletter, I heard from quite a few of you who got a lot of benefit from it. The section on making decisions alone is worth the read.

Learn to:

- Outtalk the negative "Chatterbox" in your brain
- Risk a little every day to expand your "comfort zone"
- Use visualization techniques to accomplish your goals
- Turn every decision into a "No-Lose" situation
- Find support from others and ways to deal with those who resist your changes
- Develop patience and trust in your ongoing development

We'll read three chapters prior to each call (including the first call). Each week we will have a one-hour group discussion (via phone conference) about that section. You'll be encouraged to consider how you can apply the information to your own situation.

The Pathfinder: How to Choose or Change Your Career for a Lifetime of Satisfaction and Success Book Discussion

Dates: Wednesdays February 15, 22, March 7 and 14, 2006

Time: 5-6 pm AZ Time/MT, 4-5 pm PT, 7-8 pm ET

Group Size: 8-10 people

Fee: \$75; Early Bird price \$50 if registered by 1/23 (Book available from amazon.com for @\$10)

Back by popular demand, *The Pathfinder*, by Nicholas Lore, has three sections:

- Living the Life You Love
- How to Get There from Here
- Designing your Future Career

In our introductory call we will discuss goals and some reading shortcuts and strategies. Then, we will read one section between each call. On the calls we will have a one-hour group discussion (via phone conference) about that section. Not only will this group get you reading, but you will also be encouraged to do as many of the exercises in the book as possible!

Participants of previous Pathfinder groups said:

"I have been holding myself back from changing careers for many years and this book has shown me that making commitments to myself - in all areas of my life - is critical to achieving my dream job." TD, Delaware

"This class helped to propel me forward into decision-making - not only for my life work, but many other aspects of my life." FC, New York

"The book Pathfinder by Nicholas Lore includes all the tools for discovering and creating a career you will love. The trick is putting in the time and effort necessary to take full advantage of them. The book discussion group led by Debra Exner provided me with a fun, highly motivating way to make sure I did just that. The regularly scheduled conference calls made the difference between just reading the book and really applying it in my life. If you are resigned about the difference that a book can actually make in your life, give this discussion group a try. It really works!" KD, Delaware

"This was an absolutely wonderful session! The book was fabulous! It was great to be able to discuss in a group and hear other perspectives. And Debbie was a wonderful facilitator - with a great ability to motivate, listen, and respect everyone!" KM, Maryland

"Thank you for your direction and encouragement. Pathfinders helped me confirm my thoughts about whom I wanted to work with and what I wanted to do." BB, Delaware

NEW! Group Coaching based on *Now What? 90 Days to a New Life Direction*

Dates & Time: TBD; 8 group calls plus 2 individual coaching calls

Introductory Rate: \$200/month for 3 months, book and workbook included; Bring a Friend Price \$150/month each

Maximum: 8 participants

This program can help you get clear about what's next in your life, especially if you are:

- Re-entering the work world or seeking more satisfying work
- Considering your options after a major life transition
- Looking for fulfillment and meaning
- Wanting to discover what's next for you

The work between calls involves reading a chapter or two from the Now What book and completing exercises designed to uncover limiting beliefs, wisdom from your past and direction for your future. The individual coaching calls will help you to personalize the information and create your action plan.

Print and take the Now What Quiz at exnerassociates.com to see which sections of this book/program can help you.

Check the website for more events.

Go to <http://exnerassociates.com/events.htm> to register via a faxed form or call 602-298-1129

Many of my clients come to me because they want to increase their satisfaction with their work – they want to transition to a different career, their job has ended and they need to find new work, they want to start their own business, they want their current business to stop running their entire lives or they may be in a life transition that has them thinking about what's next (i.e., the kids have grown, they want to partially retire, etc).

If you are ready to make changes in your business and personal life or know someone who is, I'm looking for you. I work primarily with people in career transition and with self-directed individuals and business owners who want to maximize their effectiveness and satisfaction at work while maintaining a healthy life/work balance. Curious? Email me at DEXner@ExnerAssociates.com or call 602-298-1129 to schedule a complimentary 45-minute coaching session.

If you are enjoying this newsletter, please forward it to your friends and colleagues! Or direct them to the subscription form and past issues at exnerassociates.com

Thanks,

Debra Exner, CPOCC
Business & Personal Coach
Exner & Associates
Examine, Explore and Excel!
DEXner@ExnerAssociates.com
<http://www.ExnerAssociates.com>
phone# 602-298-1129

I would rather regret the things that I have done than the things that I have not.
— Lucille Ball