

Mission Message #10 GOAL SETTING

Dear Elder/Sister xxxx

Here is our monthly message to help you start out your new year:

In 1953 they did a study of the graduating class at Yale University. As a part of the study they took a survey and asked them if they kept goals. Only 3% of the graduating class had written down goals. In 1973 the researchers at Yale looked up the surviving members of the 1953 graduation class. Of those still living the 3% that had written down goals were worth more money than all the rest of the class put together.

I don't think that just applies to money. I think it applies to every part of our life, especially emotionally and spiritually. When we set a goal and write it down, and read it every day, we almost always accomplish it. It brings us a feeling of joy and self-worth to have accomplished a goal. Goals are not New Year's Resolutions. They are a life changing pipeline to a happier life.

If we don't set goals and don't write them down we accomplish that goal too. That results in a feeling of frustration of discouragement from not progressing in our lives year after year.

If you have been feeling like your life is not going anywhere lately, maybe GOAL ACHIEVING (notice I did not say Goal Setting) would be worth trying. If you feel like you are just spinning your wheels physically, emotionally, spiritually or not making progress towards a meaningful life, try setting and achieving some goals. Write them down, simple ones. Ones that would help you be what you want to be when you accomplished them.

Jim Rhon said something that I love. He said, "Set goals that will make you stretch, not for what you will get when you reach it, but for what it will make of you to achieve them."

In relation to our goals making us into something, we need to also consider our priorities. Jim Hansburger often talks about the importance of priorities in our life. Here are the 5 priorities he suggests we use in our goal setting and achieving, and in this order:

Faith
Family
Friends
Fitness
Finances

Another thing that is important in goal setting and achieving is being willing to go beyond our comfort zone. Most of us like to stay in our comfort zone and just do what is easiest to do day after day. Zig Ziglar said, "If you keep on doing what you have been doing, you are going to keep on getting what you have been getting". So if we want to grow we have to look change square in the face.

Here are some things to think about in relation to personal growth:

Why are little children always trying new things but adults seldom do?

Have you ever tried to eat with the other hand? Why?

Why do you always put the same shoe on first?

Why do you start combing your hair in the same place first every time?

Why do men almost always start shaving in the same place first every time?

Why do you drive to work the exact same way every day when there are several ways to get there?

When was the last time you read a book cover to cover (many people never do after graduating from school)?

When was the last time you just went somewhere new?

Why do you NEVER eat your dessert first? Will it actually spoil your dinner if you eat the same amount of food in the end anyway?

Why do most people avoid doing cross word puzzles?

Have you ever tried to turn the TV off for one week? Why it is that almost no one can do that?

How hard would it be for you to go without your smart phone for 24 hours?

Most people don't do any of those things because it hurts to think. It is easier to get in a routine and stay there day after day after day. If you are going to improve you have to change. If you are going to change you have to grow. If you are going to grow you have to learn how to exercise your mind again. You are going to have to overcome the inclination to stay the same because it hurts to think. Here is an exercise that will actually help you feel what it feels like when it hurts to think:

A PRACTICAL EXERCISE:

Try looking at some object in the room and for 30 seconds just describe it out loud. Describe **OUT LOUD** the object's color, all possible uses, its position on the wall, whatever you can think to say. It is very important that you do this exercise by **TALKING OUT LOUD** as you describe the object in detail for 30 seconds. If you run out of things to say about it then start over and repeat what you have already said.

DON'T KEEP READING... STOP RIGHT NOW AND DO THE EXERCISE NOW!!!!

See what I mean? Just thinking about doing that exercise hurts doesn't it. Most of us, when we read that, said subconsciously in our mind, "That is too hard and I don't want to do it", and just kept on reading instead because it is mentally easier. When I have shared this exercise with other people in my goal achieving seminars, most of the time they told me later that did not actually stop and do it. They just kept on reading and did not even try it. Is that what you did? Is it because the exercise is too hard to do? NO!!!! It is because it hurts to think. This forces you to think about something. It is like mental gymnastics. So you see know you know it actually does hurt to think just like physical jogging hurts at first..... this exercise will help you experience what it actually feels like when it hurts to think.

Little children are not afraid to try. They don't get tired physically so they do this and do that. They are learning constantly. They learn and learn and learn. For them it does not hurt to think BECAUSE THEY ARE IN MENTAL SHAPE. That is my whole point here. We not only get out of shape physically. We get out of shape mentally. We become mentally lazy. We avoid doing anything that is different or requires us to think beyond the normal thought pattern. Why is that a problem? Well because it also causes us to STOP LEARNING. We stop being childlike when we start avoiding the pain of thinking. Being out of shape mentally hurts just like being out of shape physically does.

Here is another suggestion to help you get back into mental shape?

Spend some time with a child this week. If you don't have a little child at your house you live in then go visit an investigator who does. Get yourself in a situation where you can watch them play. Watch them pretend and live out fantasies and dreams. Read them a story and observe how they actually live inside the story while you are reading it to them. Go for a walk with them and watch the incessant curiosity about everything they encounter. THEN TRY TO LEARN TO BE LIKE THEM IN YOUR LEARNING SKILLS. Get back into MENTAL SHAPE. Start doing things that are mentally hard every day and you will find that it will become easier and easier.

**"That which we persist in doing becomes easier for us to do;
not that the nature of the thing itself is changed,
but that our power to do is increased."
Ralph Waldo Emerson**

Here is my challenge for you for the coming year. Take a 3 X 5 card and write down some simple goal that you want to achieve in 2016. Write it down on the card in terms that as you read it you are seeing it as it is already something you have accomplished. For example you might write, "I get up at 6:00 a.m. every morning and study for 30 minutes before I start my day". That might be a very simple goal but a very hard one to accomplish for most people. But I promise you that if you will write down a simple goal like that on a card and then read it every morning when you first get up and every night just before you go to bed within a month it will become a habit not a goal.

After Andrew Carnegie died, they found a little card in his desk that they learned he had read every day since he was a teenager. It simply said, "I am going to spend the first half of my life earning money, then I am going to spend the last half of my life giving it all away". And that is exactly what he did. It is a very small world. That little saying he wrote on that card and read every day changed my life. In the last half of his life as one of the richest men in the world, he built 1000's of little libraries in small towns all across America and filled them with books. One of those Carnegie Libraries was built in Smithfield, Utah near where I grew up. Our community was way too small to ever afford to build a library. Because of that library I learned to love books and studying. To this day I still love to go in a library and just feel the feeling. My main hobby in life to this day is writing research papers on various subjects. I have over 100 of them. I heard Margaret Mead say something profound when I was in college. She said, "There are only two things that are important for you to learn here at this University. The first is to learn how to learn. The second is to realize that you are going to have to get a new college education every four years". That truly has been prophetic in my life. The books I saved on my book shelf from high school are mostly obsolete. Over the course of my life, I have learned that one of the key powers to success is acquiring knowledge and that has mostly come to me through reading books. I owe much of my success to Andrew Carnegie and his kindness to our community.

This coming year is going to be the best year of our lives, because we are going to make it so.

Our faith and prayers are with you always...

Brother and Sister Vail

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