



Forget New Year's Resolutions, why not try a Personal Stock Take?

At this time of year, many of us are setting goals, planning changes and anticipating the New Year with energy and enthusiasm. Whilst New Year's Resolutions are a great idea, they are often limited to one area or aspect of our life and as our busy routines resume we can stray from our goals.

Thinking more holistically and exploring the full range of our current commitments can give us valuable insight into the areas of our life we are happy with and the areas that may need our attention. As a first step, it can be useful to remind ourselves of what's important to us. For some it will be career and financial pursuits, for others it may be health and wellbeing or perhaps family and relationships.

Regardless of where your priorities lay, it's the perfect time for a 'Personal Stock Take'. Start by making a list of the key areas in your life, limiting your list to a maximum of 10. Here are some ideas:

Family, Health, Work, Study or School, Mental/Emotional Wellbeing, Friendships and Social Life, Money and Finances, Fun and Relaxation, Community.

Can you think of any others?

Once complete, look at your list and on a scale of 1-10, rate each item in terms of **how important** this is to you (1 = not important at all and 10 = extremely important). Repeat the rating exercise, but this time answer in terms of **how satisfied** you are right now in that particular area of your life. Here's an example of how this might look:

	Level of Importance	Level of Satisfaction
• Family Relationships	9/10	8/10
• Physical Health	9/10	4/10
• Work, Study or School	7/10	7/10
• Mental/Emotional Wellbeing	9/10	7/10
• Friendships/Social Life	8/10	8/10
• Money/Finances	6/10	8/10
• Fun and Relaxation	8/10	3/10
• Volunteering/Community	7/10	7/10

Are you surprised by your answers? Can you see any discrepancies or gaps where you may need to focus your attention? In the example above, the two items that stand out are Physical Health and Fun/Relaxation. Both of these are ranked high in terms of importance but low in current level of satisfaction giving valuable insight into where more time and energy needs to be spent.

The final part of the exercise is to list **3 strengths or qualities** that you already possess that could help you make any necessary changes in those areas that need your attention. You haven't come this far without developing self-awareness and helpful living skills. What do you know about yourself; your values, beliefs, skills and resources that can help you make changes? Now draw on these qualities to move you in your preferred direction. Perhaps share your ideas with a trusted friend or family member. Invite them to do the list too and together you can check in this time next year and see what has changed. Good luck!

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