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# THE BROKEN RECORD'S GUIDE TO 2018 - PART 1

RESOLUTIONS DON'T HAVE TO BE HUGE. FOLLOW THIS COLUMN OVER THE NEXT FEW WEEKS TO LEARN HOW SMALL ACTIONS CAN EFFECT POSITIVE, LASTING CHANGE

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SO YOU achieved none of your previous new year resolutions and you stubbornly don't do them any more?

You're thinking, "It's the last week of December 2017, too early for contemplating resolutions anyway. I have no time."

I know.

Have I got a new first resolution for you – read this article!

See how easy this is?

You just set a goal and you're already well on your way to completing it.

Every journey in life starts with a single step.

Call me a cotton-headed ninny muggin but I'm a huge fan of resolutions. I couldn't live without my goals and strategies. They help me flourish, know my boundaries and make me feel safe. I'm super imperfect but it sure helps me improve on that.

Therefore – welcome to my four-part series that will support you being one step ahead in preparing for next year.

If you're old enough to know what a record is, it will avoid you getting stuck in the same old tune of a broken one. Wait for it, there's more – a bonus feature of goal-setting for couples. Even if resolutions aren't your thing, I know you'll still find some helpful tips for a sensational year ahead.

This year may have been fabulously awesome or such an epic fail you're glad it's nearly over. Some may have lost someone dear, grappled with their sexuality, struggled with illness or injury or unable to recover from financial distress. Whatever your dilemma, who can you model past or present to ensure your talents are set to their

optimum use? Whose legacy do you dream of honouring to continue? Who can you be grateful for to support you in making it happen?

Take steps today to make dreams happen, summon great velocity for motivating yourself and encourage others to do the same.

How?

You'll scan this next paragraph out of habit and what do you know – you've already mastered the first step of understanding how you can make your goals work.

You can break down habits into three parts:

1. the cue
2. the action
3. the reward.

This cycle plays a critical role in how we spend our time and invest our energy.

Our brains would be unable to effectively operate if they had to analyse every decision we made, every minute of every day. This is what we've come to recognise as the power of our unconscious brain activity in our daily routine.

For example, for those who drove to the beach, work or wherever today, looking back on your trip you'll remember the moments you may have been stopped at a traffic light or communicated with hand gestures in an effort to make a memorable connection with your fellow human being in the car that cut you off. You probably won't remember the five left turns, 30 seconds at the red light and the fact your fuel tank's indicator was sitting at two-fifths full after reaching your parking spot.

These routine habits are taken care of by your unconscious. Wouldn't it be great if we could use that power to make positive differences in your life?

Here's the great news. Your unconscious habits are reprogrammable.

All you need to do is K.I.S.S. your challenges away. That is, Keep it Simple and Straightforward.

We're not talking about a rebound relationship or buying a new sports car to take your mind off what you can't do. While fun, and sometimes not necessarily a bad thing, we're looking for a more permanent solution that will set up a pattern of success for your future.

If you're on holidays, it's time to step back from the anticipated daily doldrums of 2018 and make a list of things you love about your life and things you'd like to make even better. Now you've got a starting point.

Pick the easiest opportunity for improvement and decide on one thing you can use to improve this area of your life.

For example, if you want to improve your chances of waking up without a hangover, maybe relegate your bar-hopping adventures to a certain night each weekend or with a slightly earlier finish than last year? Make it a new tradition to reward yourself for your hard work during your working week or work swing by visiting your favourite restaurant, cafe or bar on a special night to celebrate a milestone.

If you want to improve your financial picture, look at your discretionary purchases and commit to spend less in one area each week. For example, maybe you commit to

taking a packed lunch to work starting just once.

These simple, attainable goals allow us to begin habits that will really affect change in our lives. Baby steps first.

So why live like a "broken record"? How many times will you need to repeat your mistakes with the same results and fail with epic proportions on what you set out to achieve? Draw the line in our beautiful Sunshine Coast sand, folks, and find your own path to change by starting now.

Watch this space for part two next year, where I delve into understanding your brain to make it work to your advantage.

In the meantime, do what you do best this New Year's Eve. My humongous thanks for the honour of reading my weekly relationships column in the *Life&Style* magazine this year. I've appreciated your feedback and comments.

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## YOUR SAY

I love hearing from you with your feedback and ideas so please email me at jo@theconfidantecounselling.com with any relationship topics that would most interest you in 2018.