

Prepare for the New Year

Written by Timothy Houston
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It is hard to believe that in about a week, another new year will be upon us. Because the new years seem to be coming faster and faster, we must make time to process the previous year's activities and prepare for the New Year. Our success and failures will be governed by the actions we take today. In order to make the most of the upcoming year, here are 5 important things that you should do to prepare.

1. Update your resume. As more and more companies face their economic realities, many will be forced to make changes in their human resources. The better you are prepared for these unknown changes, the quicker you will be able to land back on your feet. Make sure your current resume includes your current job duties, volunteer experiences, and changes in your educational status.
2. Review your credit report. It is estimated that 1 out of every 2 credit reports have some sort of error, misleading or out-dated information. Reviewing your report on an annual basis allows you to keep these errors from negatively impacting your credit score. By monitoring my report and disputing errors, paying my bills on time, and paying down my credit card balance, I was able to increase my score by almost 100 points in less than a year. You can improve your score as well. You can get a truly free copy of your report from www.annualcreditreport.com.
3. Start exercising. Regular physical activity helps improve your overall health and fitness, and reduces your risk for many chronic diseases. Fitting regular exercise into your daily schedule may seem difficult at first, but the current physical activity guidelines for Americans are more flexible than ever, giving you the freedom to reach your physical activity goals through different types and amounts of activities each week. Make your physical health your priority.
4. Go to church. The true purpose of church is to help you find and fulfill your spiritual purpose. Spiritual wellness may not be something that you think much of, yet its impact on your life is unavoidable. Beyond church, there are many wellness behaviors that can also benefit your spiritual health. Such behaviors include feeling connected with others, feeling part of a community, volunteering, having an optimistic attitude, contributing to society, and self-love.
5. Develop / revisit your personal mission statement. A personal mission statement is an individual statement that outlines what you want to be (character), what you want to do (contributions and achievement), and the values or principles upon which being and doing are based. It becomes a personal constitution that can be turned to when making either major life-changing decisions or small daily decisions. Think of it as a roadmap that you can refer to for guidance as you journey through life.

Start preparing today. Everyday you are given an opportunity to be better. As you celebrate the New Year, direct action will be required to steer your life in the direction that is most meaningful to you. Your choices will be the key contributor to your life's success. Doing just one of these 5 things will make your life better. I hope and pray that you do them all. As we move into 2013, I look forward to continuing to share my hand and heart with you.

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positive life changes in families and communities. For questions, comments or more information, go to www.tlhouston.com .