

## **New Year Resolutions'**

At the beginning of the New Year, people often make resolutions about changing certain aspects of their life. A number of authors have recently written books about changing some aspect of their lives over an entire year. In "The Year of Living Biblically", the author, a totally assimilated Jew lived his life for one year according to the tenets of the Old Testament. In "The Happiness Project", the author spent the entire year discovering and creating ways to live a happier life.

I like the concept of making a commitment for one year. It gives me an opportunity to grow into the changes I want to make. I will be engaging in my own project entitled, "The Year of Saying Yes". The purpose of this project will be for one year to say yes to those things that in the past I neglected, ignored or said no to. I started by identifying 2 areas I want to say yes to over the next year.

### **Say Yes to Order**

I used to think that my house (or at least parts of it) was fairly clutter free and neat. Then one day I decided to do an experiment. I walked into my home imagining I was entering it for the first time. With my new set of eyes I went from room to room assessing clutter. I checked the cabinets, the closets and desktops. It quickly became clear to me that work needed to be done to de clutter our home. This would mean saying yes to letting go of old clothing, vinyl records and bills yellowed with age. My wife and I would also need to change our patterns about throwing out things. In the past, on garbage collection day we would feverishly run out to rescue some item which our partner had thrown out. Didn't they realize that we couldn't exist without that stained and tattered sweatshirt, or wobbly half broken lamp?

### **The Law of Conscious Return**

Once the clutter began to disappear, we would need to say yes to return every item to its place. For example, our kitchen table was a magnet which attracted all sorts of homeless items. How did hangars, mail, books, ipods, motorcycle helmets, vitamins and assorted other items end up there? Each of these items had a home. Yet, like lemmings going to the sea, they had ended up on our table. Breaking this pattern would involve a type of mindfulness meditation. No, I'm not talking about focusing on our breath. That would actually have been easy because I would know for that short set time to focus on the breath. Rather, whenever during the day we held something in our hand, we would need to focus on returning it to its place once we were finished with it. I've identified this process as "the law of conscious return". Looked at from this perspective, I no longer had to go on spiritual retreats to practice mindfulness. Every day in my own home I have repeated opportunities to practice the law of conscious return.

## Say Yes to Service

Another area that I wanted to include in my year of saying yes was that of service. In searching sources on service I came upon the following quote by Bill Wilson, the founder of Alcoholics Anonymous. He suggested that every day we review our actions before we went to bed. Part of that review includes the following statement:

**“Were we thinking of ourselves most of the time? Or were we thinking about what we could do for others, of what we could pack into the stream of life.”**

These are sobering words. (No pun intended). When I measured my behavior against Wilson’s yardstick of service I came up short on most days. The truth is that it was more often about me than about helping others.

The reality is that I have many daily opportunities to help others. Whether it was picking up something in the store for someone, visiting a sick friend or calling someone who was feeling a little blue; I often dodged the opportunity. I was either too busy or too stressed or in too much judgment to extend an offering hand. I could hear myself saying for example, “No, I’m not going to pick up something in Costco’s for her because it will take up too much of my time”. The fact that the person didn’t have a car or that it would actually take me only 2 additional minutes to get the item wasn’t considered. It was just NO; I’m not going to do that. If I do that for her, then the quality of my life would somehow be diminished. After reflection, I’ve come to the conclusion, that failing to do service on a daily basis is what causes me diminishment in my life. So, as best as I can where I said no before to service I will now say yes. Even after I’ve already said no, I will pause, reconsider my decision and hopefully have my no converted to yes.

As a certified life coach, I am available to help you with changes you might want to make in the New Year. Check out my website [www.raisetheparks.com](http://www.raisetheparks.com) to learn more. You will also find additional articles to help in your personal transformation as well as upcoming events. Please feel free to share this newsletter with others. You can place someone’s name on our e-mail list by sending their address to [moshek@aol.com](mailto:moshek@aol.com) Once we receive it we will make sure they receive all of our future mailings. Feel free to e-mail me via the contact button on my webpage with any comments or questions.

Yours in peace,  
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