

Your journey towards achieving a balanced life

Last month we began our journey towards creating better balance by identifying and examining the different parts of our lives. This issue, *Life and Business Coach*, **Melanie Firth**, explains how a little soul searching can help keep you on track for a balanced life!

STAGE 2: PRIORITISE AND GOAL SETTING

Last issue you identified just how many parts you are trying to squeeze in to your life, which may have left you realising why you can sometimes feel overwhelmed and off-balance. Very often our lives become crowded; we over commit ourselves and prioritise the wrong things. Regularly we sacrifice the most important things and focus on aspects that have no bearing on our happiness or the future we are trying to carve for ourselves. So, how do you decide what's important and what's not?

Discovering what to prioritise

It's time to be honest with yourself about what works and doesn't work in your life. Sometimes it means having to let someone down or giving up a little of something we enjoy. A good way to discover what is important is to begin by answering these six soul

searching questions:

1. What do you want more of in your life?
2. What does an 'ideal future' look like for you?
3. Who in your life motivates and energises you?
4. What would you do now if you knew you couldn't fail?
5. What would make a real difference in your life right now?
6. What would happen if you made no changes and continued as you are?

By answering these questions truthfully, you should begin to see how your priorities may currently be misdirected and you can think about the changes you could make to put this right. You may discover that you have neglected a part of your life that is vital to the 'ideal future' you envisage. Jot down the key points that you discover and then note down some action points or possible solutions.

Using a prioritisation matrix

Now you have decided on the changes you would like to make, you can plot them on a prioritisation matrix, which helps you identify which changes to make first.

For example focus on those that will have the biggest impact and start to re-address the balance in your life now.

Goal setting

To reprioritise you need to actually make the changes you have identified. Setting SMART goals for yourself will help you focus on how to do this. SMART stands for Specific, Measured, Attainable, Relevant and Timed. Your goals should be based on the changes you want to make in your life, making them SMART is important. Goals should stretch you, but change isn't easy, so focus on the 'attainable' - don't set yourself up to fail before you have started. Specific goals, where results are easy to measure, can help keep you focused and motivated.

For example... "I must spend more time with my children" is pointless; this is a statement, not a goal. But consider changing this statement to "From next month, I will work from home on a Friday, so I can finish earlier and spend some quality time with my children". Now that's a SMART goal.

GROW your goals!

Reviewing your goals regularly is important too, particularly if you need more motivation. Start using the GROW model.

- G – What is the goal?
- R – Review your progress.
- O – What are your options?
- W – Decide on a way forward

Now you have identified your goals to help you achieve the changes you need to make, categorise them in to short, medium and long-term. Well done, now you have a plan!

Next Month Step 3: Organisation!

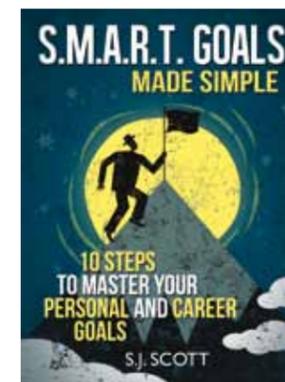
Melanie Firth is a leading Life and Business Coach, helping clients to overcome challenges and move forward in their lives. For more information see her website www.lifepracticebrighton.co.uk.



Soul-searching

Natural tools, tips and remedies to help you discover your desires!

S.M.A.R.T. GOALS MADE SIMPLE: 10 STEPS TO MASTER YOUR PERSONAL AND CAREER GOALS



Getting more from life doesn't mean following the latest diet craze or motivation program. True success happens when you take action on a daily basis. In other words, it's your habits that help you achieve goals and live the life you've always wanted. But do you often set goals that you never seem to reach? We're all filled with dreams and aspirations. Most long for fulfilling relationships. Some desire personal freedom. Others want fame and success. Some strive for profitable businesses. Wherever your ambitions may lie, goal setting can get you there. On the other hand, the wrong goal can leave you feeling frustrated and unmotivated. This book includes a 10 step plan for setting and achieving your goals.

■ S.M.A.R.T. Goals Made Simple by S.J.Scott costs £4.99 and is available from Amazon.

[soul'-search`ing] - A penetrating, deep and critical examination of one's motives, convictions, actions, beliefs, emotions and attitudes in an effort to determine one's true feelings and desires.

MAGNESIUM - NATURE'S ANSWER TO STRESS

During times when your work, social or family commitments seem to leave little room for relaxation, symptoms of stress such as anxiety, muscle pains, feeling



overwhelmed, lack of sleep and irritability can all become heightened. The mineral magnesium has a very soothing action on the nervous system, calming the mind and relaxing the body. Studies have also demonstrated the positive effects that magnesium supplementation can have on sleep. Top up your levels by serving up a portion of green leafy vegetables with each main meal and snacking on nuts and seeds. For additional nerve-calming support you can always opt for a magnesium supplement.

SHINE NEW LIGHT ON GOALS AND AMBITIONS



Pukka Illuminate is a concentrated blend of Brahmi, gotu kola and holy basil extracts gathered from fertile organic soils to boost mental clarity and memory. Brahmi means "Giving the awareness of Brahman also known as the Supreme Consciousness" and the Brahmi herb has been used for centuries to help ease tensions of the mind and aid concentration. It

also has documented anti-depressant properties. This blend is used in Ayurvedic medicine to boost mental focus, improve memory and strengthen connective and nervous tissue. This is perhaps a perfect supplement to be taken during times of exploring and reflecting on current life choices, before taking new strides towards a more fulfilling future.

■ Pukka Illuminate costs £14.95 for 30 caps and is available from www.pukkaherbs.com

BECOME A LITTLE MORE LAID BACK WITH DR. STUART'S TRANQUILLITY TEA!



Don't stress over the small stuff, make time in your schedule to sit back and relax with a nice cup of tea. But don't make it any old tea; make it a cup of tranquillity tea so you can really relax and contemplate your life goals and ambitions. This wonderful infusion of limeflower and hawthorne helps to deliver a wave of serenity in a day filled with deadlines and 'to do's'.

■ Dr. Stuart's Tranquillity Tea costs £2.29 for 15 bags.

