



Cairn

The way to your future

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Welcome to all new subscribers since last month.

It's been cold, wet and muddy out there but I've been out running again and now following my training schedule for the half-marathon that I'm entering in February. I do wish this wind would stop, it's been blowing force 6-8 (or so it seems) for several weeks now, which isn't helping my garden fences or assisting my running. It's OK in one direction but hard work running back into the wind all the time – I daresay it's getting me fitter but it will be good when it stops.

I'm running in aid of Cancer Research and if you'd like to sponsor me – feel free to do so. I've set up a special page so that you can sponsor me relatively painlessly online and also, if you're a UK taxpayer, reclaim the tax at no added cost to you. <http://www.justgiving.com/clarehalfmarathon>

This week started out with my laptop basically appearing to go on strike and refusing to do much more than a slow crawl. It went off into a little hive of it's own activity and refused to acknowledge my persuasions to get it to respond. Fortunately after a frustrating couple of days – and after running a virus scan just to make sure there's nothing untoward going on, it now appears to be OK. Perhaps it's just winding itself down for the holiday season early – I certainly feel that I am.

Thank you all for your responses to the survey from last month. There were a few key themes that came up for people, mainly around money, improving your health, growing your business and having more time for yourself.

Well, another year almost gone and I have to admit that this year hasn't been easy. It wasn't a good start and much of the year has been challenging but as the saying goes "what doesn't kill you makes you stronger". While things don't always go according to plan or quite as you hoped, it's good to take time out every now and then, take a step back and re-assess. How has your year been? Did you achieve everything you wanted? What worked, what didn't and what lessons did you learn?

If you haven't done a [Life Wheel](#) recently – perhaps now is a good time to complete one, to see where you might like to focus over the next twelve months and what you want to achieve.

Enjoy the rest of this issue.

- Goal Setting for 2007
- Recommended Reading
- Website of the Month
- Monthly Quote

Goal Setting - What do you want to do in 2007?

As we go into the holiday period, now is a good time to think about your goals for the next year. First take a look at what you've achieved this year. What did you learn, what were the highs and lows?

Then think about what you would like to achieve next year? Do you have one BIG goal that you would like to achieve, or perhaps three or four goals that you would like to complete next year – and no, I don't mean those New Year 'resolutions' which rapidly fade from view by about the middle of February.

I mean some specific goals that you really want to achieve next year and to which you're going to make a commitment to yourself and preferably someone else that you're going to do them. Perhaps you do want to give up smoking, lose weight or get fit – that's fine but give it some purpose and put a plan in place so that you can actually achieve it.

Here are a few key steps to enable you to turn your goals into reality.

- What is your big goal or dream? Whether it's a small hill or high mountain - what do you want to change in your life? Where do you want to be – physically, mentally or emotionally by the end of the coming year? Write your goals down and pin them up where you'll see them every day.
- Think about what will it look and feel like to have achieved your goal. Why do you want it – what will it mean to you? How much do you really want it and what impact will it have on your life? This step is important, as if you have a solid underlying reason for doing something and can see the benefits of doing it, you're more likely to achieve it.
- To make more sense of your goals, make them S.M.A.R.T. goals. If you haven't seen this acronym before – it means specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound.
 - Specific – don't set a goal to 'lose weight' – set a goal to lose 10lbs or if you want to get fit – set a goal to walk or run a certain distance without getting out of breath or complete a sponsored walk or run a 10k.
 - Measurable – give your goal a series of targets that you can measure as you go – 10lbs so you can check off each pound on a weekly basis, or if you want to save or earn a specific amount of money or rate your goal on a scale of 1-10.
 - Achievable – don't decide to climb Everest if it's so way beyond your skills and ability that you're just setting yourself up for failure. Think about the time, resources and skills available. Stretch yourself but be realistic otherwise you won't commit to it.
 - Relevant/Realistic – make sure your goals fits with your bigger vision for your life or business. Don't make them so easy that it isn't a challenge but not so difficult that you'll never achieve them either.
 - Time-bound – set a date for when you plan to achieve this goal. This stops it drifting off into something indefinite and gives you a target to aim for.
- It also helps if you make yourself accountable to someone. If you tell someone else about your goal not only will this keep you motivated but they can help to keep you on track. This could be your partner, friend, colleague, a mentor or a coach.
- Now break up your big goal into smaller, more achievable steps. What information or skills do you need? Perhaps there are some additional training courses you need to book yourself onto. Who could you talk to, what do you need to know first?
- What do you need to do within the next 6-12 months towards your goal? Put a plan in place with smaller goals, actions and stepping stones along the way to help you achieve it.
 - What do you need to do this month?
 - What can you do this week?
 - What can you do today?

Now that you've set your goals, go do it!

Recommended Reading: Your Best Year Yet! – Jinny Ditzler

As we're talking goals, I picked this book up earlier this year and while I can hardly say this has been my 'best year' it has given me a way to focus on what's important and it's been great fun tracking my progress.

<http://www.amazon.co.uk/exec/obidos/ASIN/0007223226/clareevans-21>

Useful Website: <http://www.meethalfway.com/>

You want to meet a friend or business colleague and need some ideas for where to meet that's about halfway for the two of you ... try this site. Currently only available in the UK but coming soon to Europe and the US.

This Month's quote:

"A goal without a plan is just a wish." [Antoine de Saint-Exupery]

Well, that's it for 2006. I hope you've had a good year and I wish you and your family a very Happy Christmas and here's to a successful 2007.

Clare

P.S. If you were forwarded this issue of the newsletter you can register to receive your own copy each month by sending a blank email to claresnews@aweber.com.

Take this five minute [online quiz](#) and receive a free Goals Report to get you started in 2007.



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