

Take actio for a new New Year

By Cathy Goodwin

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Stuck? Wondering what to do? Don't get caught in the self-analysis trap: months, days and even years of "thinking."

I've met dozens of people who think "business plan" begins with an armchair, a self-help book and a beer.

Action creates energy. Have you ever spent a whole day driving? Lying on the couch with a book and a heavy-duty remote control? At the end of the day you're exhausted.

Action fuels thought. You can sit on a couch all day with the self-help book, but how will you complete the exercises? The world looks different as you sit in your living room. When you get off the couch and face the outside world, your answers will change.

Action is a test of your readiness to change. Are you thinking of hiring a career consultant? Before you pick up the phone, take some small action on your own. Get a list of articles from the library or web. Make some phone calls. Are you moving? That's a good sign.

Want to change? Do something different. In a tape version of her recent book, *Thunder and Lightning*, Natalie Goldberg advises writers to overcome blocks by changing small elements of their lives. Take a different route when you walk home, she suggests; if you normally drive with your left hand on the steering wheel, try the right.

Some ideas:

Do something alone that you normally do with others: shopping, traveling, eating in a restaurant.

Do something with others that you normally do alone.

If you have a routine for evenings or weekends, find new activities.

In his book, *How People Change*, Allen Wheelis pointed out that changing yourself is pretty simple. If you want to stop being a thief, don't steal. If you want to be a writer, write. Sounds simple -- but it works.

Can't get moving?

If you are really, really unhappy, but you can't get yourself to take even one action step to change your situation, consider some form of psychotherapy. Sometimes you are at a point in your life when it's time to do nothing, but inability to act can signal serious problems, such as clinical depression.

Do you want to talk about which action to take?

Do you want someone to share your thoughts as you try out different actions? Moving -- but you're not sure in which direction you want to end up? These questions suggest you can get help from a career or life coach.

Maybe you believe in New Year's Resolutions, or maybe you like to take life as it comes. Regardless, I can promise your 2002 will bring exciting new changes and directions...if you jump off that couch and begin taking action.

This article is based on my ebook 9 Magic Keys to Career Freedom

<http://www.movinglady.com/freedombook.html>

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For her free Career Freedom ezine, email subscribe@movinglady.com.

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