

## **The Alchemy of Change**

*Change: Awareness, Knowledge, Action*

*Alchemy: Seemingly magical transformation of a base metal to gold*

As the New Year dawns our thoughts turn toward evaluation of our lives and what sort of changes we would like to implement in the coming year. In spite of our desire to effectively create change however, we are all aware of how often our New Year's resolutions fall short of our original intent. We can even become so frustrated by our past history in this regard that we become discouraged and stop trying to create meaningful improvements in our lives.

So what can we do? Are there approaches that can help us follow through and successfully make change happen? Are there ways that help maximize our chances to manifest our goals? YES!

To begin with we need to be aware that the simple desire to change and our initial attempt fueled by willpower is usually not enough. Willpower can work for some of the people some of the time, but it tends to not work for most of the people most of the time!

The following ideas can help once you have defined your goal and committed to developing an action plan to move toward it.

*1. Self awareness leads to more effective transformation of our wishes into reality.*

Self knowledge regarding behavior, needs and attitudes can add tremendous power to fuel the success of your goals. Behaviors that we have difficulty changing are often rooted in unconscious needs. It is usually not the need itself that is the problem, but the way that we seek to fill it. Developing conscious, positive alternatives can make elimination of unwanted habits easier and more effective. This awareness combined with appropriate techniques, methods, and skill building are the main ingredients for successful achievement of our intentions.

*2. Employ methods that facilitate the dissolution of obstacles.*

Identify and release personal myths. Alchemy occurs as the obstacles our desired changes are eliminated. Our progress becomes smoother, more effortless. The outer world does not have our answers. We need to look within to see where we have created beliefs, developed 'story lines' or conditioned responses that are no longer useful. When we grasp what we need to know from deep within, let go of the past, and stand firmly in the present, we can more consciously create desired outcomes with clarity and purpose.

*3. Be willingly to develop new attitudes.*

Create happy biochemistry! It has been shown that through our thoughts we can create healthier, happier feelings that result in positive physical changes within our bodies. When we feel lighter and brighter it is easier to move through challenges and have the energy required to achieve our objectives. So, purposely bringing more humor and laughter into our lives can help our efforts toward change.

In addition to laughter, gratitude is an emotion that has been linked to healthy, positive internal states. A useful daily exercise is to list five things you are grateful for at the end of each day. This also helps to shift our perspective from focusing too much or long on what is not going well in our lives. The latter usually only has the effect of de-energizing us!

*4. Live NOW!*

Fear is a future concept. A lot of what we fear never materializes. Even if it were to, we need our energy and resources to be strong and effective when facing challenges. Worry, fear and anxiety only deplete us rather than make us strong. Learn techniques to eliminate useless anxieties from your life.

*5. Do what you love as much as possible.*

Happiness does not emerge out of what we despise. Joy has never been found in misery! Health, success, and longevity are created moment to moment doing what we love. Obviously there are always things that are difficult or distasteful in our lives. However, we can consciously take charge and look at where we can eliminate or minimize those situations. For those that we cannot change we can develop ways to bring a different mindset to the circumstances.

*6. Reward yourself for small steps on the way to your goal.*

Don't wait for the final outcome in order to experience pleasure. This helps to motivate and inspire you to continue on your journey.