

Ashla's Knightly News

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January 2011

Making New Year Resolutions That Stick!

By Master Thompson

Once again the start of a new year is upon us and the time old tradition of making resolutions for self improvement and long-term betterment is in full swing. However, the thought of partaking in the customary ritual may have you feeling discouraged because...well, let's face it; keeping New Year resolutions is difficult to do.

Why is it so difficult to make New Year Resolutions that stick?

[Neuroplasticity](#). Before we make personal commitments that have everything to do with how we think, we should first understand the brain forms habits and this is where neuroplasticity comes in.

Neuroplasticity is essentially how the brain rewires itself based on one's experiences. In other words the thinking patterns we form that evolve into physical practices we become beholden to over time such as traditions, customs and habits

Continued below on page 2

HAPPENING ON FORUM

- Topic** [Religion and Alien Theory](#)
- Topic** [What is a good man?](#)
- Topic** [Moral or Immoral Government](#)
- Blog** [Stormy's Journal - Reflection](#)
- Blog** [Master Edge – Transparency, Accountability & Responsibility!](#)

It Takes 21 Days To Break A Bad Habit

To begin with, choose one unhealthy habit you wish to eliminate or change. Or, choose a healthy habit you want to adopt as part of your behavior. If it is a habit to eliminate, you may wish to go "cold turkey" or have a gradual tapering off. Caution: If it is a drug or chemical habit you are planning on eliminating, be sure to obtain an expert's opinion as to whether you need to taper off usage as opposed to quitting cold turkey.

Now that you have decided which unhealthy habit to eliminate, or new habit to adopt, decide on the date you will begin your behavior change. Give this date a good deal of thought and then write it down. For example, "On February 15, 2001, I will become a non-smoker."

In order to ensure behavior change, experts agree that it takes a minimum of 21 days to change a behavior. Again, look at the date you are planning on changing your habit. Count ahead 21 days and mark that date down. Now, make a commitment that you will follow your plan for 21 days.



Continued below on page 2 to the right

Continued from page 1, then over to the top right

are established due to the observations, perceptions, and interactions we experience through out our life time. Yes I know, it does sound a bit complicated but believe it or not, this is actually good news. You see, it was long believed that our thinking patterns were hard-wired into our brains. Researchers in the field of neuroscience have determined that this is not the case and on average (*more or less*), it takes 21 days to rewire the brain and change the way we think. Case studies show that this can be accomplished by employing the same method(s) the brain uses to create the bad habits and practices that we are trying to break. It is now possible to discontinue, reverse or augment our thinking patterns and thus, change how we physically respond to our environment and interact with others in a short time.

Okay, think of the brain as a sophisticated bio-computer. It stores and processes data collected from what we see, hear, taste, touch and smell. This data along with corresponding stimuli produced by the action and reaction interactions with our environments, objects and other living things is then sorted, categorized and made readily available for subconscious and/or autonomic reference and/or application should we encounter similar experiences in the future. Encounter enough situations that seem similar, these patterns of thinking become actions and over time, habits.

It's as simple as the old adage about the small child whose parent repeatedly tells them not to touch the hot burner or they'll get burned. At the first opportunity when the parent's back is turned, the child tests warning and environment and goes straight for the hot burner. It's a fact that we learn the hardest lessons when we get hurt. The child discovered two things:

- (1) Mom or dad weren't lying.
- (2) The stove when it's on is nothing to play with.

Recognizing that there are things that need to be changed with regards to how you think and act and then making this a commitment to do so is commendable. Physically embarking on the task of making these changes is laudable, but sticking with it until the changes are realized is admirable.

Sustaining Motivation

The following are some suggestions to follow each day in order to sustain motivation and determination:

1. Review your list of reasons for quitting or changing.
2. Create mental pictures of yourself as having already succeeded with your habit change.
3. Make affirmations, positive self-statements about your habit change. For example, "I am filled with so much health and vitality now that I exercise four times a week."
4. Reward yourself. Make up a list of self-rewards. Reward yourself verbally.
5. Remember to take one day at a time. If you do backslide, don't label yourself as having failed. Get out your list or reasons for quitting or changing and begin again.

Fatigue, boredom, depression, stress can all make it difficult to stick with your program. But having a relapse isn't as important as how you deal with the relapse. If you are so devastated by failure that you call your good intentions into question, this will make habit change harder for you. But, if you allow for an occasional relapse and treat it as nothing more than a slight misstep that teaches you something, then you're on the right track.

Follow the suggestions in this article, adopt the more helpful attitude of evaluating your progress and accepting relapses, and you will find yourself reaching many of your goals. You will have achieved true behavior change. – [21 Days](#) ♦

What's Happening With The Community?

High Council News

There are no updates to report at this time.

Member News

- Ashla Knights is happy to welcome Baral Forbre, our first member of the Church of Jediism into our ranks. You may or may not know [The Church of Jediism](#), but it's based in the United Kingdom and has gotten some interesting press in recently.
- There is a very interesting discussion taking place between Prometheus, Volund, Memnoich, Mindas, and Stormy in the forum thread titled: "[Is there evidence of cloning in the bible?](#)"
- Prometheus shares with the community [a near death experience](#).
- Master Thompson (*with the help of a kick in pants from Santanaoko*) elaborated on his post titled: "[God - Sith Lord & His Apprentice - Jesus Christ?](#)"
- The Knights of Awakening website owned by Master Bane will be down for renovations and please note that this will be theirs and our last blog talk radio programming month. **See Important Note.**
- Ashla Knights Blog Talk Radio – December 2010 went extremely well. We were all too happy to host two of our usual panel guests Khaos and Setanaoko, but we were also happy to welcome Charles and Prometheus to the show as well. The topics were interesting, discussions were lively, and the overall atmosphere was fun. I'm also happy to report an exciting amount of feedback from our facebook friends list. It turns out many people turned in to listen to the show. To see a list of the topics and to hear the show, [click here](#).

Community & Site News

All site platforms and solutions are optimal; there are no issues or problems to report. Due to the Holiday Season site statistics are a bit lower.

Site statistics for December 2010

- Unique Visitors: 2,078
- Number of Visits: 5,291
- Pages: 62,759
- Hits: 172,177
- Bandwidth: 862.85MB
- Peek Times (EST): 7am, 10am, 1pm – 2pm, 5pm – 9pm

Events & Happenings - January 2011

- Knights of Awakening Blog Talk Radio is scheduled every Friday this month at 7pm Pacific Time and 10pm Eastern Time. [Click here for more information](#).
- Stop Modern Slavery monthly meet up is scheduled for the 24-Jan-11. [Click here for more information](#).
- Ashla Knights Blog Talk Radio is tentatively scheduled for 29-Jan-11. [Click here for more information](#).
- **Important Note:** Again, due to changes in the blog talk radio platform, this will be the last month for both Ashla Knights and Knights of Awakening blog talk programming. We are currently looking at other options and we will keep you updated with any news and/or decisions on a new blog talk radio platform.

You Can Find Ashla Knights On

- [Facebook](#)
- [Myspace](#)
- [Youtube](#)
- [Twitter](#)
- [LinkedIn](#)
- [Yahoo Groups](#)

Walking An Unnamed Path

An excerpt from Master Kate Soulstar's recent journal...

My title talks of walking an unnamed path. This is something with which I've struggled since Ashla came back online. I have been a member of this community, when it taught "the Jedi way." That "title" was one that made sense to me, and was something I tried to live by, embody, and integrate into my identity. But there were some very real problems with doing that. First, there's no getting around that fictionally-based "Jedi Code." Lots of great ideas in it and sounds really good, and yes it can work, but only with an asterisk after each line, which gets qualified and amplified in all kinds of different ways by each person who claims that path. To follow those words literally creates a bit of a dehumanized monster of sorts, at first in the practitioner. Then it becomes more and more clear that it **just doesn't work** unless you want to give up being fully human. Then those same words, that same Code, becomes more of a stumbling block, if not to the practitioner themselves from within. Thus it becomes one that others use to say

"look at how much you fall short". What's been proven to me over and over and over again ad nauseum is that the term "Jedi" is a trap. I have yet to meet anyone, anywhere who lives up to the word, the title, even in the fiction be it movies or novels. And those around who continue to claim that word and title to describe themselves and their path have, for the most part, given me ample reason through what they have said and done to shy away from its use. I don't want to be associated with some of them. There are a very, very few who strive to live up to the name and ideal, but get besmirched by those others, who seem to have some of the loudest voices online. I know very well that I fall well short of the ideal, certainly the one I hold within me and have had my share of fingers pointed at me for that failure.

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I've certainly done my share of besmirching the name by what I've said and done at times too. There's still yet another reason why the word "Jedi" no longer serves. ■ [To read Master Soulstar's blog in full, click here.](#)

SOME QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER...

Q: Has the spiritual, philosophical, religious or academic path you adhere to served you well in all areas of your life?

Q: Have tenets of your path been an inconvenience to others? Have there been circumstances where you have had to make adjustments to your path to accommodate situations?

Q: Do you feel your path reconciles all of your concerns and provides answers to all of your questions?

Q: What is the greatest advantage your path has afforded you, and what is the biggest disadvantage?

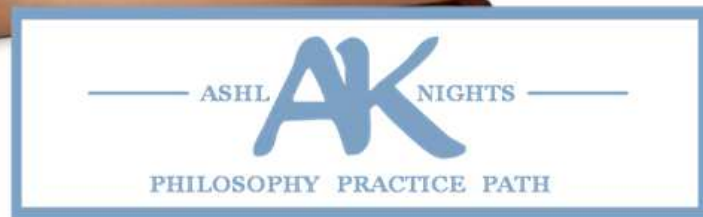
Q: Is your path on that is absolute, or is one that is flexible?

Q: Is the path you follow one of your choosing? Do you feel beholden to it because of cultural tradition and/or familial pressure?

Q: Who many times have you considered exploring new paths? What's been stopping you?



**MIND
BODY
SPIRIT**



Ashla's Knightly News 5
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