

Taking Stock

First count up your 2015 successes, says
Jessica McGregor Johnson

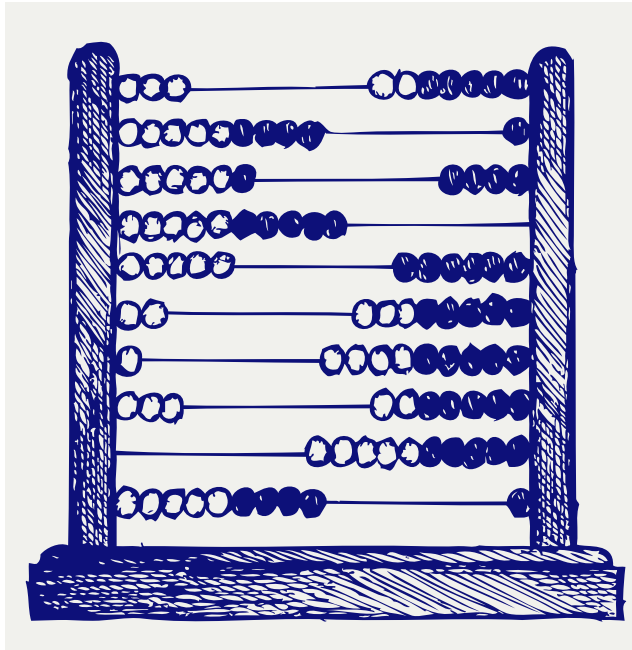
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At this time of year there is lots of talk about setting resolutions and goals to make this year the best one yet. However, even before you start to look forward you need to do a stock take. Any retail store manager knows that every now and again you need to see what exactly they have in stock. And the same is true for us. In all areas of life it is important to stop and check in and see where you are.

It may feel like last year went by in a flash – I know it did for me – but in fact a lot has happened in that time. The best way to get a stock take on what you have achieved this year is to go back through your diary. See all those connections you have made and the goals you reached. See where you stretched your comfort zone and it paid off. Take a piece of paper right now and write out all the things that you can celebrate about last year. Then take some time to celebrate the wins however you want!

This is an important step to do first because it is oh so easy to look back and see what didn't happen as we planned, or where something went wrong, and get stuck on the negative. However focusing just on this aspect of your year is not going to get you into a good space for this year.

So celebrate the wins and then, and only then, when you feel good about the things you did achieve, can you have a look at the things you thought you wanted to achieve and didn't. This is not to beat yourself up for not doing them, but rather so you can see if they are still relevant. Just how important are they or did the flow of 2015 just put them at the bottom of the list? Could they come off the list altogether? I often find that some things on my to-do list simply fall away after a while. They



were a nice idea at the time but obviously not strong enough to actually warrant my time. If you have some of those just delete them. If they ever reach a big enough significance again they will come back and, if not, then you have one less thing to give yourself a hard time over.

Now, with these two aspects of last year in mind, think about what you want to add in for the coming year. I suggest you get a big piece of paper:

- In the middle add a bubble – in this bubble write down four feelings that you want to predominantly feel this year. This is a great starting point because everything we do in life is about feeling a certain way – it comes down to wanting to feel happy, fulfilled, excited, calm, focused, successful (the list if endless).

- Then mind map lots of ideas that will give you these feelings – each idea with a line coming out from that bubble.

- Looking at those ideas, let other ideas grow from them – keep adding to your mind map until you run out.

Now what you have is definitely not a huge to-do list but rather something to come back to and pick ideas from when you feel you need some inspiration in 2016.

You can also create a *not-to-do* list. Have a think about it: what might be on your not-to-do list for 2016? What have been the things that you did last year that you really

could have done without? What are the things that wasted your time that you could stop doing? For example, I know for me I have far too much stuff coming in to my inbox and that wastes time. It might also be something more abstract like getting distracted or listening to the wrong person's advice. By creating a not-to-do list you will be getting more time in your day to do the things that are important for the coming year.

So with an inspirational mind map to guide you, and a not-to-do list to give you even more time, you will be in a pretty good shape to go for whatever you want this year.

Happy 2016!

about the author



Jessica offers Life Guidance & Mentoring to people who are at a crossroads in life. She typically finds that for many having reached the success they have worked towards for many years there is a sense of something missing, that this cannot be "it". She guides you to discover yourself anew, identify your true passions, and live them, whether it be in your work or personal life. She works internationally with people individually on the phone and Skype as well as offering her signature "Get Unstuck in Two Days" individual retreat in Spain voted one of the top ten retreats for real change by Queen of Retreats. She is the author of *The Right T-Shirt*, *Write Your Own Rules* and *Live the Life You Want* and you can read the first two chapters of the book and find her other free resources at www.jessicamcgregorjohnson.com. You can also follow her on Facebook at www.facebook.com/JessicaMcgregorJohnsonCoaching and Twitter @Jessicamcgj.

