



## MILESTONES & MEMORABLE MOMENTS

This is an annual process I started over 8 years ago, by which I would wrap up the passing year before going on to design my coming year. Since then, I've offered this exercise to subscribers and friends at the end of each year so that you too can bask in some self-appreciation before taking on what's next in the coming 12 months.



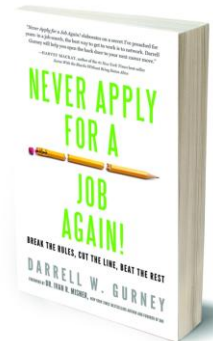
I once heard sung the popular Beatle's tune, "All You Need is Love", with the word "Self" added in: "All You Need is Self Love." Besides air and water and food and friends, that's probably true! Often we are so rushing forward—in our relationships, in our jobs, in our searches for right career, in the busy-ness of life—that we don't take the time to truly acknowledge our forward progress.

Yet, just like the child who is always reminded of his or her faults but rarely hears of their greatness, we may lose our zest and drive to achieve more and make a bigger difference if we don't take stock of our greatness.

At this time in December, everyone gets on the bandwagon of designing goals for the coming year. But I believe that taking on more challenges without acknowledging and appreciating from whence we have come lacks the HUGE spark of energy that we can get from that kind of self-inventory.

Therefore, I invite you to go against the grain here and let yourself wallow a bit in your forward movement over the last year. I believe that, if you get present to the incredible strides you have made over the last 12 months—even if right now you're saying to yourself, "Right! I got nowhere last year!" or "Sure, but I don't have the time for this"—you will empower yourself with a jet propulsion of self-appreciation that will rocket your goals for 2012 to levels they wouldn't achieve otherwise. Are you willing?

In my upcoming book *Never Apply for a Job Again: Break the Rules, Cut the Line, Beat the Rest* (in bookstores Jan, 2012, click to get a peak inside), I suggest that a "rule" we want to start breaking is the one that says "Don't toot your own horn." Look, if *you don't* toot your own horn, nobody else will! It's critical that others are aware of your awesomeness, yet the first step is for YOU to become aware of that awesomeness. Fortunately, for those of you who are still a bit reticent to promote your greatness unabashedly to others, this exercise only requires that you be willing to do so with yourself. So, come on...go there with me!



This process has two main steps. First, is the **Accomplishments Inventory (Step 1)**...which you want to stew on for a good week, or at least a few hours. Set aside time to relax with yourself and mentally walk forward through the past year. I find it helpful to pull out my PDA and, starting in January, scroll through the entire

year, day by day, to remind myself of where I was and what I was doing at these points in time. If you're like me, you have long forgotten what you were engaged in last January...if not even last week! As I said, if you can give yourself some quality time over several days to engage in this first part—maybe an hour or so a day for 4-5 days—it will be very uplifting and revitalizing to actually see what DID get accomplished.

As you walk through the year, write down on a pad of paper, or in a word document, everything that you notice as a significant event or major shift from your life prior to this past year (e.g., began public speaking, sang before 500 people, completed my attachment to the past by selling my house, took regular time for self care, helped my son achieve Eagle, etc.). I call this your “Acknowledgements & Accomplishments” list. Allow yourself to err on the side of writing down too much (my 2003 list had 64 items, and subsequent years have gone way over 100) and give specific, measurable results when you can.



An important point: be generous as you allow yourself to acknowledge *anything* and *everything*. Act like the doting aunt or grandmother who couldn't stop talking about how great you were to all the relatives. Don't buy into the idea that you're wasting time: there could be nothing further from the truth! You may be, for the first time, actually dropping the wall of tough standards that you live within to truly begin seeing how incredible you truly are!

Milk this first process for all it's worth. Then, for the next step, complete the following:

### **Accomplishments Recognition Summary (Step 2)**

Accomplishments from this year that please you the most:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

What elements did you have in place so that you could accomplish these things?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Obstacles/fears you overcame/challenges you faced this year:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

What motivated you to break through them?

**Who celebrated with you?**

**Business situations that changed/improved this year:**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

**What made the difference?**

**Ways that you surprised yourself or others this year:**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

**Who knew?**

**Mistakes that you tried out this year that you do NOT want to repeat:**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

**Who will hold you accountable?**

**What was disappointing to you this year?**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

**What can you do to avoid repeating similar disappointments?**

**Who knew the depth of your disappointment?**

**Who or what stretched you the most this year?**

**Who or what brought you the most delight/laughter/love this year?**

**For what, are you most truly thankful?**