As we enter the beginning of a new decade, we are sure some of you will be thinking about resolutions for the year(s) ahead, Five Year Plans, Ten Year Plans... the sky's the limit! As fun as it is to plan our future adventures, setting goals can be overwhelming. So how do we choose our goals, and how can we start working towards them in 2020?

A good place to start is reflecting on the past...



It's good to reflect...

So how was your 2019 - what went well? Were your goals achieved and were the expectations met? If not, why not, and are you ok with it?

Reflection is a powerful tool allowing you to know yourself better, put things into perspective and give you direction (1). Asking yourself questions like 'what went well?', 'what didn't go so well?' and **what can be learned from it**, are useful ways that can help you plan for the future and provide **focus**.

What makes a good goal?

We may often want to achieve things, but actually taking action to do it is a whole different story... So it's all the more important that we set ourselves **realistic** and **achievable** goals. Your goals may be **simple**, such as drinking more water (something we can all agree is absolutely vital, and yet how many of us would do well to try for this goal in 2020..?!). But in amongst that list, some have to be **inspiring** too - otherwise why bother keeping ourselves motivated?

Ask yourself: What would improve your life? Where do you want to be by the end of the year/ decade? What's on your 'Bucket List'?

You might want to:

- go on an adventure
- see a famous landmark
- pick up a new hobby
- say 'yes' to more opportunities
- learn a new language
- be more creative
- visit a different culture
- become more sustainable
- feel better by exercising more

Did you know that you are 42% more likely to achieve your goals if you write them down (2)?



Goal: visit more castles

Once you've got your big wish list in hand, working towards those goals can be achieved by **breaking them down into smaller steps**.

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For example, if you aim to visit a new country and have an experience of a lifetime (such as coming to a Reach Cambridge Program!), then breaking down the steps of how to get there is a good place to begin. A good place to start would be to grab your diary and make sure you are aware of any important **deadlines** for applying. From there, you can work backwards and give yourself plenty of time for each step on the path to your desired destination.

For more practical advice on achieving your Resolutions (all year around!)... Click here!

Keep the end in sight

Another important part of keeping ourselves motivated is **remembering why we really want to do it.** This applies when we're studying for exams just as it applies in wider life! With anything that takes motivation and determination, there will be moments when we question why we're bothering. *Is it really worth all this fuss?*

In those moments, we need a way of quickly and powerfully reminding ourselves of our aims. This might be in the form of a **vision board,** a series of well-placed **sticky notes with motivational quotes on them,** or a **photo of a time you succeeded even though it was long.** You could even write a **letter to your Future Self** to motivate you when times get tough or boring... or a **letter FROM your Future Self**, thanking *Present* You for sticking with it! The options are endless...



Reach for your goals

Whatever your goals and dreams, we wish you a very Happy New Year and a wonderful decade ahead!

Is your resolution to learn a new skill? Check out our taster courses here!

(1) https://www.nexusinnovations.com/the-power-of-reflection/

(2)

https://www.inc.com/peter-economy/this-is-way-you-need-to-write-down-your-goals-for-faster-success.html