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## Turning Point

Transforming problems into opportunities.

by Aldo Civico, Ph.D.

### How to Turn Resolutions into Results

5 Steps for a Successful New Year

Published on January 5, 2015 by Aldo Civico, Ph.D. in Turning Point

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"So, did you make any New Year's resolutions?" Laura asked on New Year's Eve, as we were getting the Champagne out of the refrigerator. We all have dedicated some time wondering about what we would like to see happening in our life this year. The list might include the weight we want to lose, the more time we want to share with friends and family, the steps we will take in our career, etc. Chances are, the list looks pretty much like the one we wrote last year around this same time.

**How can we turn resolutions into results, allowing our lives to make a leap forward?** At the dawn of the new year, let me suggest 5 helpful, easy and fun steps you can follow to get a successful life in 2015. I have adapted them from the Appreciate Inquiry methodology designed in the 1980s by David L. Cooperrider and Diana Whitney. I have successfully used this framework in facilitating strategic planning, brainstorming, and conflict resolution for organizations and community, as well in leadership coaching for executives and artists. This method gave me also some of the very best results in my own personal and professional life, and I have used these steps to plan my year.

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**First Step: Define.** Reflect on what you would like to accomplish in 2015. Take a notepad and make a list. Write down everything that occurs to you, even the most unlikely ideas that spring up into your mind. Looking at the list you generated, see what the common theme is and write it down as if it were the title of a book or of a movie. Here are some examples: "2015: *The Year in Which I Got Clarity of Life-Purpose*," "2015: *The Year I Found Love*," "2015: *The Year I Doubled My Salary*," etc. What title will you give to your year? If you want, you can share your title with me, by writing me an email [here](#).

**Second Step: Discover.** This step helps you to focus on what has been working already in your life. Focusing on the positive, will energize you and motivate you to expand what has been working already in your life. This is the "positive principle" that is used also in sport and performance psychology to motivate athletes and artists to achieve peak performance. Reflect about a successful moment in your life. What made it possible? What motivated you? What gave you passion? What did you accomplish? What were you proud of? What were people saying about you and about what you did? Remember that moment. Feel it. Celebrate it. Now think about other positive experiences in your life? What do these experiences have in common? As you are remembering past successes, what can you infer about what gives you energy and vitality? Write your observations down and ask yourself: how can I apply what I have discovered about my peak moments in the past, to what I want to accomplish in 2015?



**Aldo Civico, Ph.D.**, is an anthropologist and a conflict resolution expert. He is an anthropology professor at Rutgers University and the founder of The International Institute for Peace. [more...](#)

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**Third Step: Dream.** This is a powerful step. It will increase your awareness and your self-confidence. In sport it is used to help athletes to get top results. To dream is to imagine. To imagine is to see and to feel your goal as already achieved by creating a vivid image of your achieved result in your mind. And to see is to believe. If you create a positive, powerful and palpable image of your result, your subconscious mind will lead you to its manifestation. Now focus on the theme you chose for this year and allow your mind to dream, without wondering about the obstacles and the efforts that it takes to fulfill it. Imagine your dream as already manifested by the end of the year. How will you feel on December 31, 2015? What happened during this year that allowed your dream to be fulfilled? What have you accomplished? Be like a child who believes that everything is possible. What is 2015 calling for you to be? What is the inspiration for your life in 2014?

**Fourth Step: Design.** After you became aware of what made you powerful in the past and after you created a positive and powerful image of your desired 2015, now you can design the choices and the actions that during the upcoming weeks and months will turn your dream in the results you want to experience. What are your priorities? What would make your dream to come true? What small actions would you like to turn into new habits? What actions do you need to take in order to incorporate elements of your dream into your life? A suggestion: in order to get to your 2015 goals, identify the results you need to produce at every quarter.

**Fifth Step: Destiny.** Now is the time to move on. Reflect for a moment about how you are already living your dream. Consider what you would like to do more of in 2015 to come closer to your dream. What commitments are you ready to make? What motivates you now? What's your very next step? As Tony Robbins says, destiny is the result of our decisions.





Someone once said that the best way to predict the future is to create it. My wish for you at the dawn of this new year is to be the creator of your own destiny for 2015 and the years to come. Happy new year!

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