

Ready to Write Your Life's Next Chapter?



By Gayle Crist,
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It's a brand new year! We've assessed the ups and downs, achievements and missed opportunities, successes and mistakes of the last year. So now we should be ready to embark on a new

adventure with a clean slate and a fresh attitude as we continue on our life's journey. Right?

Well, maybe.

For many, the beginning of a new year—instead of feeling like a fresh start—can seem like the continuation of a book they didn't enjoy reading. That's because they're not seeing it as a chance to write a new chapter that leads to a different and better ending. They don't fully understand the power they have to redefine their priorities, re-envision the outcome, and thus realize their dreams.

The reasons for this could be:

- The old stories they've been telling themselves for decades are too deeply entrenched in their psyche, preventing them from moving forward
- The self-esteem and determination needed to let go of those stories and transform them into new ones aren't strong enough
- They don't have the support they need along the road toward changing themselves/their situation and/or trying new strategies

If any of these reasons sound familiar to you (or to a loved one or cherished friend), 2024 may be the time to take action to address them.

Let's talk first about **old stories**. Though you may be unaware, you might have preconceived notions about yourself or interpretations of past events that are inaccurate at best or destructive at worst. Examples could be:

- I'm not important (In my childhood, Mom paid more attention to my younger siblings)
- I'm a victim (In the past, people abused me, and I never healed from that)
- I can't trust anybody (Years ago, I was betrayed by someone close to me and now have trouble trusting others)

Gayle Crist, M.S., is a life coach based in Ambler. She helps people create healthier, happier lives; find more life balance; navigate life transitions such as separation/divorce; start a business; get organized to complete an important project; write/edit their first book, or follow through on other life goals. Gayle is also a writer, editor, and proofreader and the author of *How I Met My Second Husband Online at Age 50*. Information about her life coaching services is at www.healthylifeplanning.com. Contact Gayle at 267-245-3023 or coach@healthylifeplanning.com.

Seeking counseling to confront, move past, and rewrite these old stories is crucial before you can proactively start your next chapter.

And how about **self-esteem and determination**? Are yours strong enough to enable you to release old stories holding you back, so you can feel motivated to forge onward toward your goals? If not, counseling to rebuild self-esteem is priority #1. A trained psychologist will work with you to uncover whatever damaged your self-esteem and provide guidance, tools, and support as you begin to accept and love yourself again.

Strengthening your determination is also vital. After your self-esteem begins healing, a life coach can help you take the next steps as you begin to feel more worthy, so you can believe in yourself, commit to your goals, and then follow through consistently. All of this helps embolden you on the path to success.

The **support** you need so you can change your attitude and behavior and then feel ready to try new strategies/approaches is a coach's specialty. A life coach is a natural motivator whose positive attitude can inspire you when you need a boost. He/she sees the best in you, reminds you of your past successes, and encourages you to keep going and/or try again when you get discouraged or off track.

Can you imagine how many more successes you'd have with that kind of cheerleading?

When I was providing dating coaching services, women clients would often come to me with stories of how the way they were mistreated by

their husband before their divorce did a number on their self-esteem...leaving them feeling weak, inferior, stupid, etc. Not a good way to be when you need strength and confidence to retake control and redesign your life as a single person—or put yourself out there in the dating world. I helped them see they were more than capable of starting over and creating a happier, healthier new life on their own—and of attracting a new man who would love them as they were.

Now, as a life coach, I often see women who are at a transition point, wanting to make progress on a long-held goal but either afraid or unsure of how to proceed. Often, they're allowing their old "stories" to hinder them from believing they can accomplish it. Or they're too scattered or overwhelmed to organize their thoughts well enough to plan the necessary action steps to reach the goal.

So they call me:

- I help them reconnect with their excitement/passion as they envision achieving the goal. This ignites the important positive energy they'll need to start and continue working toward it.
- We brainstorm about the baby steps needed to reach the goal, and I provide a game plan and timetable for starting and finishing each step.
- I hold them accountable for completing each step and offer extra encouragement as needed.

If you're ready to write your life's next chapter, let's talk. I'd love to partner with you to make 2024 your best year ever!

HEALTHY LIFE PLANNING

Need Support for a Personal
or Professional Goal?

A Life Coach can help!

- Brainstorming help as you plan the steps to your goal
- Moral support as you take each step
- Cheerleading to stay positive & focused along the way

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