

RELATING
NEW YEAR, NEW YOU!



BRAND *new* DAY

Stuck in a rut? Here's how to climb out, one baby step at a time
By Michele Sponagle

IT HAPPENS TO ALL OF US FROM TIME TO TIME:

an almost paralyzing feeling of not being able to move from where we are in our lives. Despite knowing that your job is on a fast track to nowheresville or that long-term contentment with your boyfriend is as likely as a Reese and Ryan reconciliation, we almost grow roots in those not-so-happy spots. If you know you should move on but can't seem to, then, frankly, my dear, you might be stuck.

And falling into a deep rut on the road of life isn't difficult. "Some people just go through the motions of day-to-day life and don't pay attention to what's going on," explains Kyla Yaskowich, a registered psychologist with Conscious Living, her private practice in Calgary. For others, it's the fear factor that keeps them stuck. It may be fear of the unknown, change, success or failure that's behind an inability to move out of less-than-ideal situations. We're asleep at the wheel and don't realize we're just spinning our wheels.

Some of us keep doing unhealthy things or stay in a bad situation because there's a reward attached as well. Smoking is a classic example. It's a fact that it can barbecue your lungs and cause other serious health problems, but the payoff for continuing to smoke might be the feeling of lessening anxiety or that you fit in with the rest of your smoker friends. Similarly, women may stay in an unhappy relationship because they don't want to give up the reward of believing they are kind and loving. After all, as such twisted logic goes, only the insensitive abandon relationships.

The truth is, though, staying stuck can be exhausting; it takes as much energy to tread water as it does to swim forward. Doing nothing is as much a ▶▶

RELATING NEW YEAR, NEW YOU!

conscious decision as choosing to act. "It's a passive choice," Yaskowich points out, "but it's still a choice." For those who fear change, embracing the status quo is also a belief that, if things stay the same, then they can predict what the future holds. And, hey, if predicting the future is a real talent of yours, you might consider checking the employment ads for a position with the

use, overeating, Internet addiction or excessive shopping. In turn, a poor emotional state of mind can make you sick, constantly chipping away at your immunity system like a woodpecker, and potentially contributing to heart and other health problems. Your spiritual well-being is kind of like the oil for your emotional health. Take that away and you may feel you lack a sense of

tion is a biggie, ranking right up there with, "Why did Sienna take Jude back?" There's no quick McAnswer, so invest the time to think it over.

Yaskowich offers suggestions for clearing away the mental fog that can shroud the answers you're seeking: try journaling your emotions, then watch for trends in your thinking that appear in your writing. Or seek out quiet soli-

IT TAKES AS MUCH ENERGY TO TREAD

Psychic Power Network.

And what's so bad about lingering, anyway? According to Yaskowich, it can take a toll on you emotionally, physically and spiritually. Being stuck can make you feel overwhelmed, anxious, tense, helpless, hopeless and even depressed. To soothe the uneasiness, you may turn to some unhealthy distractions: obsessive-compulsive behaviours in the form of gambling, drinking, drug

meaning in your life. Passion fizzles and joy packs up and leaves town.

Getting unstuck starts with increased awareness, says Yaskowich. That could be as simple as asking yourself, "What's keeping me from moving ahead?" The followup question should be, "What do I want out of life?" It's hard to know, however, in which direction to step if you don't know where you're headed. And the "What do you want?" ques-


tude in a natural setting, such as a park or a garden, and engage in a bit of meditation. Exercise is also handy for blasting away stress and clearing the mind. Enlist friends and family for support. Talk to them about your goals for the future. Verbalizing those thoughts helps you get in touch with what you have simmering beneath the surface. By staying mum, you'll stay put in your rut and continue to sleepwalk through life.

Canon

Genuine Ink and Paper +

Print vivid, long-lasting photos with Canon Genuine Ink and Paper.

With Canon's ChromaLife 100 system, you get amazing quality photos and long-lasting prints. With an improved resistance to fading, your photos can be enjoyed in albums or frames for many years to come.

 **ChromaLife 100**
Quality Photos that Last a Lifetime[†]



[†]Quality Photos that Last a Lifetime claim based on accelerated testing by Canon in dark storage under controlled temperature, humidity and gas conditions, simulating storage in an album with plastic sleeves. Canon cannot guarantee the longevity of prints; results may vary depending on printed image, drying time, display/storage conditions and environmental factors. Viewscreen and printed output images are simulated. All products are sold separately unless otherwise indicated. Availability and specifications are subject to change without notice. Canon is a registered trade-mark of Canon Inc. Canon image*ANYWARE*, ChromaLife and PIXMA are trade-marks of Canon Inc. © 2006 Canon Canada Inc.

Another strategy? Try excising the distractions that serve as detours to dealing with the important things in your life. Nix the workaholic schedule, mindless eating, overloaded day planner and television. Not to get all Dr. Phil here, but these are avoidance mechanisms your mind is using to keep you anesthetized—thus, they prevent you from seeing your core issues.

his last gulps of air, he wondered, "What if I never get to do all the things I've been planning to do?" Keoghan realized, "if it's hard to say goodbye to the life you've lived, it's even harder to say goodbye to a life you have yet to live." The experience gave Keoghan a sense of urgency, a hunger for life. Upon getting rescued, he began compiling a list of things to do before he died.

"You can write down your goals for a day, a week, a month or a year. By putting them in writing, you program yourself in a certain way." While Keoghan's list includes items such as "climb Mount Everest," goals on that level are not essential for everyone; they just need to be important to you and help you define where to direct your energy.

If you're stuck in a crappy job, your goal

WATER AS IT DOES TO SWIM FORWARD

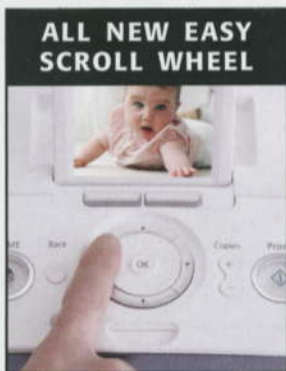
Ridding your brain of these mental decoys helps you get closer to the "What do I want?" answers. And it's crucial to find them. For Phil Keoghan, host of *The Amazing Race* and author of *No Opportunity Wasted: 8 Ways to Create a List for the Life You Want*, it took a near-death experience to get his answer. At the age of 19, he almost drowned while diving in the wreckage of a sunken ship. As he took what he thought would be

His idea is to put pen to paper and make a list for life so you can focus on creating those moments and making them real. He maintains the point is to get people beyond excuses—such as family pressures, having no time or money.

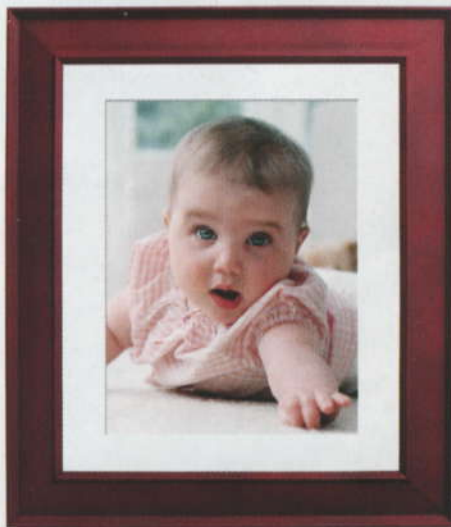
You don't need anything as dramatic as a near-death experience to find out what you want, but Keoghan is really on to something when he talks about making a list. Yaskowich is a believer, too:

for the week might be, simply, to circle job ads that look good in the Classifieds section of the newspaper. If you've been putting off doing your taxes forever, hauling the box of receipts from the basement can be a goal. The idea is that whatever it is you need to do to start making changes, the first steps should be attainable, simple and not require a lot of time. Even one baby step counts as a move forward, so don't put it off any longer. ■

PIXMA Print Technology = Amazing Quality Photos



PIXMA mini 260



NEW! CLI-36 INK

4x6 Photo Printing Made Easy!

The Easy-Scroll Wheel developed by Canon makes the functions of the mini260 a dream to use! Simply run your finger around the wheel, select a menu then press OK. Create photos with up to 9600dpi resolution.



Canon

image*ANYWARE*

See Canon's full line-up of Photo Printers, Genuine Papers and Inks at:
www.canon.ca/digitalphotography