

New Year–New You
By Bradley L. Kenny, Esq.

This is a revision of a column that I wrote three years ago. I want to say as a side note that I really hope that 2023 will be a better year than 2022. We are still in mourning as we lost Eddie Kenny who was not only my brother, but also a great friend and employee of the firm. Although he was not a lawyer, Eddie could fix almost anything. He had the innate ability of figuring how things should work and how things should be repaired. He was 59 years old, and he left us far too early.

I want to thank you on behalf of the firm for allowing us the opportunity to serve you. The fact that we have helped well over 100,000 clients is a testament to the commitment we have to be your attorneys for life. I will not write about insurance, although with every new year, it is another opportunity to make sure that you're adequately covered. Visit your agent or go online to make sure that you are paying for what you need. Financial planners state that you always should look at your 401k contributions or IRA contributions and reallocate at the beginning of the year. You want to make sure that your risk tolerance is in line with your comfort level. You do not want your portfolio to get out of alignment with your goals.

We are a law firm which thrives on participation. We do not advertise so we cannot stay in business to help others without word-of-mouth referrals. Please tell your friends and family about us if they need legal representation. If they do, please have them call us. If we cannot help them in a specialized area, we are more than happy to find someone whom we know. As it's a new year, I believe some thoughts about change would be welcomed.

As Hara Marano states, "the new year always brings with it a tradition of new possibilities." A new year allows for a renewal. And, when we think of possibilities, we put ourselves right in the middle of the picture. We begin to dream of new possible selves.

For some of us, we roll that dreamy film in our heads just because it's the beginning of a new year, but we aren't serious about making changes. The cultural atmosphere simply prescribes such fantasies at that time of year, but they don't resonate with any impulse deep within. We make some half-hearted resolution, and it evaporates after a week or two.

For the select few, the intentions to enact change are driven more from within, and we use the season of new beginnings as the gatepost to which we hitch our good intentions. Should these falter, we walk away a bit damaged. The experience registers on us, chips away at our sense of self and makes us feel less successful. We think we aren't very good. It leads us to discount our ability to change in the future.

It's not that change is impossible, it's that it isn't likely to last unless our resolutions are fortified with lesson plans for implementation. We have to detail exactly how we are going to achieve things. We have to make our intentions manageable by detailing the specific steps that will carry us to our goal.

First, says Timothy A. Pychyl, Ph.D., associate professor of psychology at Carleton University in Ottawa, you have to choose personal projects that have meaning for you. They have to embody your values, resonate with your identity, hold some enjoyment for you. Then you have to focus on making the change manageable. Say your resolution is to start running. You have to get specific about exactly what you are going to do, where you are going to do it and at what time.

"As runners always point out, the biggest thing about running is just to get outside," says Dr. Pychyl. Once you get out the door, you are more likely to go for that run. The first step is always the hardest, but once you push past that step, you are ready to go forward.

Making change manageable means that you have to structure your personal environment to

facilitate your goal. So, you set up your surroundings to get you out the door to run first thing in the morning. The night before, you lay out your running clothes right next to your bed, so that they are as easy to reach for as your toothbrush. They become your cue to go downstairs and get out the door. Small changes will make big impacts.

Just some thoughts about how to make this a wonderful year to become a new you. If you have any thoughts about our law firm, please contact me directly. I hope that you have a wonderful new year with peace and prosperity.

As a law firm, we value your confidence in us, and we pledge to be here for you in every possible way. Also, we greatly appreciate your referrals as we continue to grow in our community.