

A NEW YEAR

is a chance for a new beginning.

By Suzanne Takowsky

With a new year comes the opportunity for a new beginning. And with new beginnings there is hope for what is ahead—as well as the chance to reflect on what has already been. Personally, when a new year rolls around I have decided not to make a list of resolutions—why bother? My life changes so dramatically from day to day, the biggest resolution I can think of is to roll with the punches and not stress myself with a list to follow that never happens.

I am a planner, an organizer, a delegator, a scheduler who hopes for what could be, but is learning fast to accept what is. It's not easy, but it comes with my job of being an editor of a magazine. This strategy is a killer to follow—especially for a AAA personality control freak like myself. To do your best is a terrific plan to have, but then, what if unforeseen circumstances put a dent in your best and your best turns out to be—well, not good enough?

Plan B is the mojo that turns dreams into reality. Dedication, determination, not to stop, quit, get side tracked or give up until you get what you want requires a Plan B. There will be 100 blocks along the way, and just when you think you've got it made, bang a 2x4 falls out of the sky and knocks you for a loop.

What to do when your best laid plan goes up in smoke? There are only two ways I have found to handle this situation more or less referred to as LIFE.

A. Go into a frenzy and blame everyone around you, making their life as miserable as yours seems to be.

B. Accept, regroup fast and go to Plan B. And, believe me, if there is one thing I've learned in the publishing business you must always have a Plan B, because 99% of the time, you are going to need it!

In my book, what separates women from girls and men from boys is not the price of their toys, it's having a Plan B. We all want to achieve success, but certainly none of us are aware, when we start out, what it takes to get it.

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That's where Plan B comes in handy. Plan B allows you to stay on your path moving forward while you regroup. Without a Plan B you are quite simply—screwed.

Not a day goes by that Plan B doesn't save my butt. Many times my back is against the wall with wolves breathing down my neck. I've learned the invaluable feat of shifting into survival mode and turning a possible defeat into a challenge and ultimately a win simply by pulling an unexpected Plan B out of my beaded bag of tricks.

The best plan for a prosperous new year is that it may be filled with a multitude of Plan Bs. ●

The ALLURE of a woman in BLACK

By Suzanne Takowsky

Sure bohemian is an adorable look and is in every store window in town. But before you attempt to boost your wardrobe with high-voltage color and up-to-the-minute chic, ask yourself one question: Does this object of desire belong in my closet or my daughters?

The key word is age-appropriate. What looked great on us when we were 20, doesn't necessarily work when we reach our 40s and 50s, regardless how good of shape we are in. A tight-fitting mini in a bold color, with cut-out plastic inserts may be what's happening on the runway in Paris, but in the real world trendy clothes can make any wearer who's not 17-years old and stick thin look designer pathetic and feverishly frantic to recapture lost youth.

Wanting to look sexy, feel desirable and keep up

with fashion trends is not a crime. Many women make poor choices when it comes to choosing their clothes because they just don't know what looks the best on them—at their age. They end up paying high prices for designer clothes that look better on the rack than off. If you aren't sure what clothes to buy, what colors to choose, or what look suits your body style, but you want to look trendy and feel sexy, choose black and you will never go wrong.

Black has the allure of desire within the confines of sophistication. The color black alludes to sensuality, mystique and carries ravenous attraction—especially to the opposite sex. Black is the color-appropriate choice for seduction and the ultimate sign of unapproachable confidence. Black represents independence and inherent freedom to be a leader, rather a follower.

Coco Chanel was one of the first to recognize the power of black and bring it to our attention. She re-vamped the art of sophistication by bringing forth simple, sleek clothes that were bathed in the elegance of the most subdued color known—black. Through the years, women who set the standard for style and the stage for seduction have all turned to the signature little black dress to get their point across.

Never underestimate the eternal sexiness and magnetic appeal of a simple black dress. Its mystique is timeless and the mood it creates transcends nouveau-chic. The dramatic effect of a black dress is undeniable and the attention it demands is unmistakable. Every woman should—on many occasions in her life feel the power that wearing such an object of desire creates. ●

