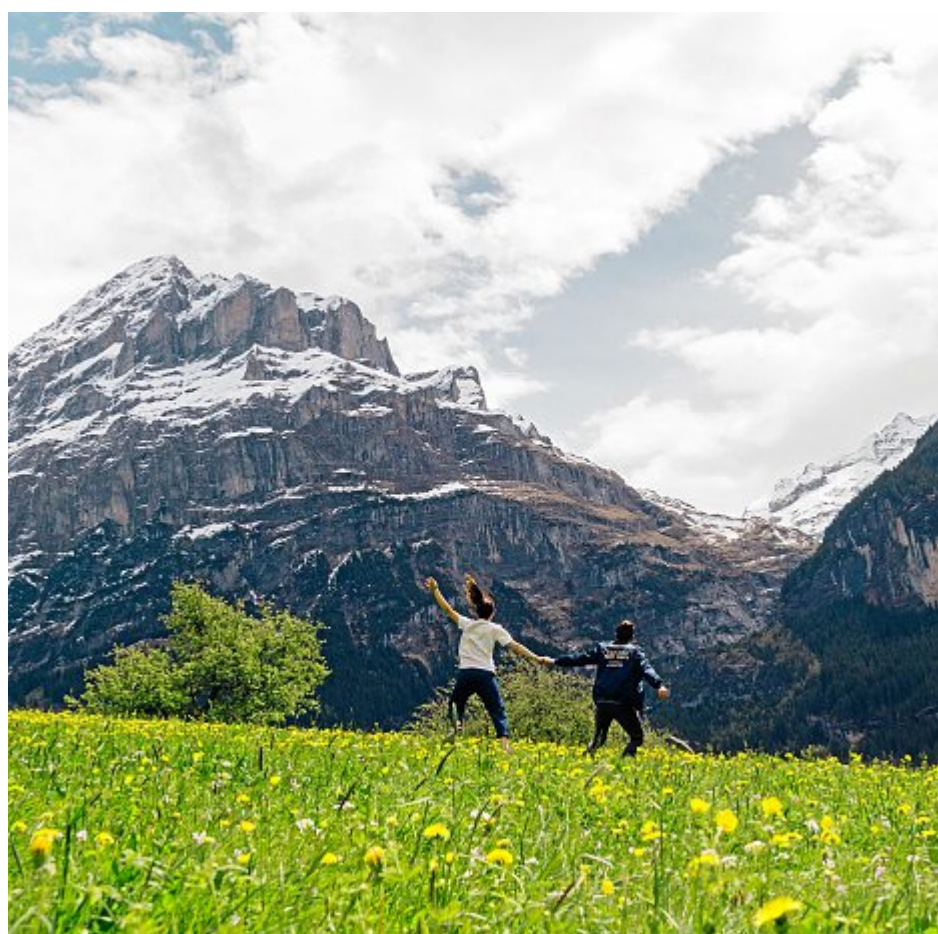


# ESPOUSE A NEW YOU

BECOME A BETTER PERSON WITH THE HELP OF YOUR BETTER HALF

WORDS: JOANNE WILSON



**E**VER heard the best self-improvement program you'll ever have is to be in a relationship?

We all know you don't enter into a romance expecting to change someone. I'm sure, however, you'll notice some behaviour modification feedback no sooner the 'I love yous' are exchanged. Here's the reality, lovers. Your spouse is going to be your mirror for communicating wonderful hints to

correct, reform, polish, enhance, sharpen up, progress, shape up and probably step up!

Speaking of step-ups, let's use this situation to ensure you are each other's best self-improvement gurus for a new year new you with my nine simple steps. People who share their goals with a supportive friend report a significantly higher level of success than those who only thought about them.

First up, head to the beach for a walk together and draw a line in our beautiful Sunshine Coast sand. The definition of insanity is failing and trying the same thing

over and over, expecting a different result.

■ New Year, New You 101 is consistent sleep: collaborate on how you're going to get your respective required sleep as a vital ingredient for mental and physical resilience. During sleep, your brain is performing all sorts of tricky feats for a wonderfully new you each morning, so give it time.

■ Look before you leap and consider past information in your future decisions. Have a chat about what you've both tried to achieve and why it didn't work.

■ Don't shoot down your ideas in the

planning stage without hearing them out with respect and kindness. No rolling of the eyes, huffing and grunting during the collaboration phase. Let everyone explain their desires. If something doesn't mutually work, talk it through or maybe place them low on the agenda for now.

■ K.I.S.S.: Have a smooch and a cuddle at this point but I mean keep it specific and straightforward. Goals need to be actionable and stated in the positive, versus 'I won't X anymore'.

■ Visualise how those carefully selected new goals will look, feel and smell when you've followed through. Talk them through in as vivid detail as possible so your brain can conceptualise it.

■ Handwrite them. This externalises your ideas and uses thousands of movements, creating heavier mental lifting for new neural pathways in your brain.

■ Keep your goals highlighted in neon lights if possible around your pad where the other will notice. Reading them on the back of the loo keeps them at the forefront of your awareness and helps spur you to action.

■ Importantly, realise that neurons that fire together wire together. Repetitive and consistent positive thoughts that lead to new behaviours and habits require at least 30 days. Be patient and supportive if either of you feel disheartened two weeks down the track.

■ If you've both set out to achieve some very cool stuff to look and feel incredulous, mutual encouragement, support, and celebration is key to both reaching targets and growing stronger together.

Use the awesome advantage of your united force for a new year new you with unwavering tenacity.

*Joanne is a neuro-psychotherapist and relationship specialist at The Confidante Counselling. Read more of Joanne's advice on page 21. Email [jo@theconfidantecounselling.com](mailto:jo@theconfidantecounselling.com) or visit [www.theconfidantecounselling.com](http://www.theconfidantecounselling.com).*

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