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## Goals with Soul

What might be the things you would like to be different this year in your life or work? Have you set any goals around them? And how confident might you be about achieving these goals?

A client asked me the other day about goal-setting. They listed an impressive array of aspirations for the New Year, all highly laudable, and they asked what I thought. Well, the list was like any list you or I would write. A weight target, a work objective, a family aspiration, etc, etc.

On closer inspection, I reflected on how some were about achieving a specific outcome at the end. Like the weight goal. Very straight forward, because he knew what to do about it and was very confident that he would achieve it. He had already shed a stone in the last year and so I didn't doubt that he would succeed in it. He obviously wanted the outcome very much, knew what to do, was already on the way to achieving it and feeling good about his progress so far. No problem. His work objective was akin to this, again pretty straightforward.

Then there was a very different type of goal - "to be loved and respected by my family". This is quite a different animal. Two main aspects immediately sprang to mind. What did he mean by "loved and respected" - how would he know he was? People have varying ways in which they might wish to be loved or respected. Do his family know his?

But more fundamentally, was this something he could control? No, not control. One cannot demand love or respect, they are bestowed. But influence, yes. And how? Through his own behaviour and attitude. So the question became more one of how might he need to "be" around his family in order to engender love and respect. What would that look like? How might that be different from how he is with them at the moment. And what goals could he put around that? Quite a different way of looking at it.

Which brought us on to a broader concept of goals - if we go beyond "doing" and "having" goals, we come to more fundamental "being" goals. These are about how do you want to "be" if you are to be your best you? Things like...

If I mess up with someone, am I big enough to choose to do what it takes to clean it up? Do I have the humility to make deposits back into the relationship's "emotional bank account" to make up for the withdrawal? If I get into a dispute or misunderstanding, do I choose an attitude of respect and kindness (even when I don't feel like it), enabling me to do the best I can to preserve dignity all round?

And when irritated or disappointed by the people in my world, do I have the courage to see how they may be my mirror - or do I succumb to the temptation to be their judge?

These "being" goals are about making choices about our attitudes - and about taking responsibility for living our values, like those of courage and humility, above.

So - what might be your "being" goals for this year - and in what arenas of your life would you like to fully live them?

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Written by Siobhan Soraghan, the Leaders' Coach and founder of Active Insight.

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