Prior Year Review

New Year's Resolutions promise to make you better, year after year. It's supposed to work life this: Make a resolution, stick to it and watch your skills improve and your happiness soar. For the 10% or less of us that are disciplined enough to actually do that in real life, making New Year's Resolutions is great. However, most New Year's Resolutions are forgotten before the end of January. There must be a better way!

The Prior Year Review highlights what did and didn't work for you **in real life**. The purpose is to find your "Leverage Points" and "Balloon Poppers" so that you can bring more Leverage Points into your life and remove as many Balloon Poppers as possible. It's almost impossible to keep track of these in real time. The Prior Year Review is a process designed to help you move the dial for the coming year. And you can do it ANY time during the year.

Set aside anywhere from 30 minutes to 2 hours to go through this. You can do it in multiple sessions. At the end, you will have a better idea of what really works for YOU in real life and a plan to get more Leverage Points and fewer Balloon Poppers in the coming year. Just that change alone can make a huge difference in your life.

Here's how to do it:

1. Grab a notepad and create two columns: POSITIVE and NEGATIVE.
2. Go through your calendar from the last year, looking at every week.
3. For each week, jot down on the pad any **people** or **activities** or **commitments** that triggered peak positive or negative emotions for that month. Put them in their respective columns.
4. Once you've gone through the past year, look at your notepad list and ask, "What 20% of each column produced the most reliable or powerful peaks?" (These are your Leverage Points)
5. Based on the answers, take three steps.
    1. First, put your "positive" leaders (your Leverage Points) and schedule more of them in the new year. Get them on the calendar now! Book things with friends and prepay for activities/events/commitments that you know work for you. It's not real until it's in the calendar. That's step one.

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2. Second, take your "negative" leaders (your Balloon Poppers), put "NOT-TO-DO LIST" at the top, and put them somewhere you can see them each morning for the first few weeks of 2019. These are the people, activities and commitments you **know** make you miserable, so don't put them on your calendar out of obligation, guilt, FOMO, or other nonsense.

3. Third, make a list of the habits and practices that set the conditions for the Leverage Points to really work. Then decide to do more of those regularly - but commit to do LESS than you think you can. That way, you are more likely to keep doing it. (Examples include exercise, journaling, meditation, hourly deep breaths, stretching, prioritizing sleep etc.)