

What's Your Mindset Newsletter

from **Helena Radeson - Your Partner to GET YOU WHERE YOU WANT!**



Follow your northern stars!

Or: How mapping what's most important will set you up for following through next year and beyond

What is it that they say in the airplane safety demonstrations? Brace brace right? Well, please do, because I'm going to have to shock you right now. You ready? Here we go:

We have just entered the last forward-looking month of the year. November.

I say that because we all know what the last calendar month is like... December is for closing things right? Closing the books for the year, last-minute attacking those professional and personal goals and promises you set up for this year... ticking of the holiday shopping lists... Closing closing closing... Isn't it just very much 2023 in a way?

With that in mind, November is the ideal month to set yourself up for next year! What's your 2024 going to be like? Did you already start thinking? Do you already know what it looks like? Are you hiding behind what needs to be done this year? Can't be bothered? Procrastinating, postponing, denying and all the other standing still verbs? It's all good, we all know what they feel like. This is your wake-up call.

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No matter where you are in the process, let me share with you an exercise I often use with clients. I call it the Northern Stars exercise and it's a mind mapping based exercise to get you focused on what's important. The idea is to identify your northern stars so you can let them guide you through your coming endeavours.

We touched on the theme in the [September newsletter on Priorities](#) in written form as well as in the [5-minute focus video](#) format of it, and although it could be used anytime, and for any time horizon, starting to plan for a new year is the perfect timing to give it an own standing.

The beauty of the method is that it doesn't stop at defining what's important but takes it further and maps the road to reaching what's important by defining the main steps to get there. Nowhere to hide.

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steps to get there.”

The idea is that you set up your main goals. These are your non-negotiable goals that must happen because they are really really important to you, they are what matters the most and what you are willing to sacrifice other things for, they are your personal ‘Why’. The activities related form the roadmap, the different roads of getting there, the things you can do to move forward, the ‘What’. The activities lead to the main goals. A way of seeing it is that the main goals, the Northern Stars, are your life goals and the roadmap, the activities, is what needs to happen in 2024 to get closer to your Northern Stars.

Main Goals

1. xxx

2. xxx

3. xxx

Activities that will lead to goal 1

1.1 xxx

1.2 xxx

1.3 xxx

Activities that will lead to goal 2

2.1 xxx

2.2 xxx

2.3 xxx

Activities that will lead to goal 3

3.1 xxx

3.2 xxx

3.3 xxx

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Pro tips:

Don't think too hard the first time, just jot down whatever comes up for you for the main goals.

Make it up as if it's easy and let your intuition steer you towards the type of mix between the life areas work, family and self.

If nothing comes up, take a walk and let movement jolt your trapped creativity.

After the first intuitive round, let it sink in and round back again, put your heart at the steering wheel now and read what you have written down: does it feel right, is your heart with you?

And then, let your brain go in and perform a reality check plus set the activities that will lead you to your goals.

Let the process be straightforward and quick at first. You can deep dive later, now you are looking to create connections on the map: which activities relate to your main goal?

For example, if one of your main goals is to lead a healthy lifestyle, what are the type of activities that would take you in that direction? Exercise more, less, differently? Eat differently? Sleep differently? Figure out what healthy means to you.

Another example is if another of your main goals is to write a book; which activities will take you there? Writing consistently? Finding a subject to write about? Brainstorm our way through it and choose the roads that resonate the most and align the best with your values.

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Now ask yourself these questions:

‘What resources do I need to make each activity point happen?’

‘Which of these resources do I already have access to, which do I need to get, and do I know where to get them?’

‘What may be holding me back from starting each activity point?’

‘How much time do I need for each activity?’

‘When will I do it?’

These questions will lead you to the third step which aims to simplify further and to create accountability. Key is to tie your activities down in time, what do you do the first week, the second week, the week after? Use clear, realistic deadlines that can be changed as circumstances change. Jot the steps down under your set of activities. The more you break it down, the clearer you will know what to do and which tempo you need to pursue.

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Et voilà, you’ve got yourself a mind map showing you the way to reach you Northern Stars.

How to use it? When moving through what your 2024 has to offer, put the Northern Stars goggles on: does this fit into my goals? Yes! => Go for it. Does it not fit in, does it not serve my Northern Stars? Then no => don't give it your attention!

This can be difficult, implementation and accountability are common hurdles, and it needs gut, practise, and stubbornness to overcome. It can be difficult, but it's also what's going to save you when unimportant things, other people's agendas, etc is going on around you. You can then allow yourself to see that this isn't serving you, and not be an active part. And if it's something you have to do anyway, you will know to put as little energy into it as possible. Let your Northern Stars guide you in your choices as well as in your perceptions!

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You can do the Northern Stars exercise on your own or with professional guidance. The latter allows for a deeper dive, for the creation of clearer links between the goals and activities and offers help with accountability. Reach out for a tailor made offer, first consultations are always free and you won't be getting a bill till you're content with where you are.

In either case, remember that a map is a moving thing, don't let having a plan stop you in a dead-end track, stay open to adjusting the plan as needed, course correct, add a twist when necessary or even when possible. A growth mindset is constantly changing.

May your Northern Stars guide you towards your light!

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