



From classical failure to rock chick

An Amusing Musing, By Kate Hull Rodgers

I have made the best New Year's Resolutions ever. I have resolved **NEVER** to make another New Year's resolution. **Never, ever, ever and a day.**

This is radical for a girl hooked on self improvement. It has been a step change process. Last year I resolved not to resolve something I had resolved before. So for the first time in 27 years, yes 27 years, I did not resolve to master the classical guitar.

This resolution was actually an obsession. It was born of some advice I received from an influential consultant. My high school principal. At a parent-teacher meeting, not dissimilar to a quarterly appraisal, he began by citing my accomplishments. They were many. I was a scholastic over achiever. Then he moved on to the changes that "had to be made." The principal, (**read chief executive**), spoke not to me, but to my parents (**read on-line managers**). "Things come too easily for Kate. An unchallenged child is an unfulfilled adult." He told my parent to "push her to do something she isn't good at."

Advice is worth what you pay for it. The principal's was free, it was worth nothing. But still I set out to do something I wasn't good at. As a stress management consultant I often see this played out in the workplace.

"Why are you stressed?"

"I'm not properly equipped for this job."

"Then why are you doing it?"

"My manager thought it would stretch me."

Yea, probably to the breaking point. This isn't challenging ourselves, this is setting ourselves up for failure.

I spent 27 years trying to learn classical guitar. I haven't got a musical bone in my body. I sounded like a metronome in a submarine. It never made me happy. So last year I resolved to work to my strengths, not highlight weakness. I quit. I began advising clients "If at first you don't succeed, try something else." It sounded good, but felt like something my principal would have espoused. There was more to this lesson than just admitting failure.

The next chapter came this Christmas when my big present turned out to be, an *electric guitar and amp*. I looked at my husband in dismay, and dare I say, anger. "*Bill, you know I don't want to play the guitar!!!! I've tried so many times.*"

"Exactly."

"Exactly what!?"

He smiled a cryptic smile. Only a man who can play nine instruments by ear can smile like that.

He winked at me and said "*Stop trying.*"

So I've turned the amp up to a Spinal Tap 11 and rather than mastering music, I'm making noise. It's a lot of fun.

New Year's Resolutions by their very nature deem that we want to be something or someone else. If you must make them, flip the idea on its head. Resolve to **KEEP** doing the good stuff, rather than **START** doing the challenges. Embrace the person you already are. This year I'm advising clients If at First You Don't Succeed, Try it Different.

If you can't master classical, become a rock chick. **Make the dream fit you.**



Classic Girl



Rock chick

Have a prosperous and rocking 2007

Laugh on
Kate