

# HANG TEN

Why make a resolution for only one year when you can go all out? **BRE EATON** thinks about where she was a decade ago — and where she's going.

If there's anything we've learned from the first decade of the 21st century, it's to expect the unexpected — American airplanes hijacked and crashed into buildings; New Orleans swallowed by a hurricane. Both events seemed more like National Enquirer hyperbole than New York Times headlines. We're ending the decade like action movie heroes, one hand barely clinging to the ledge of the reality we once knew. "To Be Continued" leaves us asking, what will happen next?

Nobody knows for sure.

We may speculate about the end of the recession, our due date out of Iraq and Afghanistan, and whether Brangelina will adopt an entire country or split, but there is only one thing we can count on for certain: 2010 will end, just like every year prior.

Then follows another not-so-reliable tradition — New Year's resolutions. Less than half of resolution-makers continue pursuing their goals after the first six months, according to a 2002 study in the Journal of Clinical Psychology. A Department of Labor survey revealed that procrastinating, lack of discipline and not having a game plan were the top three reasons behind such high lack of follow-through. Others avoid the annual goal declaration altogether, figuring false commitment to self-transformation we are unwilling to actually put into motion on Jan. 1 makes us more vulnerable to failure than not making the goal in the first place.

Perhaps our real problem is that a year isn't enough time. Luckily, our current junction provides an extended goal-by-date — a new decade.

Think back 10 years ago to December 31, 1999. What did you truly hope to

accomplish over the 10 years that were to follow? Lose weight? Gossip less? Make more money? Retracing the defining moments of the last decade most likely includes events and people that affected your personal development more than the stubborn needle on the scale.

For me, 1999 marked the year I graduated high school. That night, despite sharing the center of attention with 300 fellow graduates, I felt like a star. We sat proudly in our cap and gowns, lined in perfect rows on the football field. Our parents applauded in the crowded stands, barely visible in the blinding lights. When it was finally time to move our tassels, in one last release of childish behavior, we launched our caps into the air. Sweet freedom. The world was at our fingertips.

At that point in my life, anything was possible. Yet, as the decade of my burgeoning adulthood began, I bet my New Year's resolution wasn't to end world hunger or even to successfully complete my first year of college. More likely, I stereotypically aimed to lose the freshman 15. Ten years later, I have lost a few of the pounds I gained from late-night burrito runs, but I'm happier about accomplishing other goals. Like graduating with both my literature and Mrs. degrees, surviving five years teaching high school English (even loving it), and putting my husband through law school. In hindsight, I'm proud I didn't live up to the unimpressive goals I made each New Year's Eve because I might have limited myself.

Though we are currently struggling to pull ourselves over the ledge of what Time magazine recently labeled the

"Decade from Hell," we haven't given up. We can't predict the future, but we do know how all action films end — we will survive. In doing so, why not heed the Noughties' teachings and make what seemed an "unreality" a reality. Barack Obama's election as the first African-American president illuminates that what was unfathomable even 10 years ago isn't limited to the delusional plans of terrorists. The new-reality can be progress — individual or societal — beyond the scope of what we previously believed possible. Come 2019, despite valiant efforts toward self-sacrifice, we may not have world peace and you may not have won Miss Congeniality. But, if we aim beyond the template of previous unsuccessful resolutions, we may at least create a momentum in the right direction.

So, go ahead. Declare a New Decade Resolution that will make you proud to look back over the next 10 years. Dream big ... you've got 3,652 days to make it happen.

*Bre aims to learn from failure rather than limiting her life by fearing it. Her New Decade Mantra is "why not?" (motivation to at least try everything she previously pushed off as "someday I would like to..."), just like finally e-mailing Janine to write for Mercury!*



**HOLIDAY/NEW YEAR'S SPECIAL**  
**RECEIVE TWO MONTHS FREE**  
with 1 yr. lease.  
Call for Details 401-847-6200

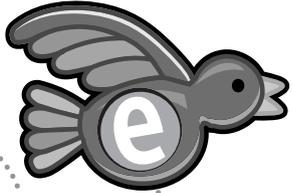
**HEAT & HOT WATER INCLUDED**  
**NEWLY RENOVATED • NO APPLICATION FEE**

- 1-2-3-4 bedrooms
- 24 hr. maintenance
- New Kitchens
- Remodeled baths
- Close to public transportation
- Heat/hot water included
- Close to shopping
- On-site management
- Spacious floor plans
- Ample parking
- Cable TV hookups
- Laundry facilities
- Near schools, hospitals
- A/C units built in

**ROLLING GREEN**  
The Simon Companies  
195 Admiral Kalbfus Rd. Newport, RI 02840

**The SIMON Companies**  
LEASING OFFICE NOW OPEN:  
MON., WED., FRI., 8AM-4:30 PM  
TUE., & THURS., 8AM-6PM SAT., & SUN., 10AM-4PM

**Follow mercury on twitter.**



**Do you twitter?  
mercury does.**

**If you have a twitter  
account, follow us  
@newportmercury**