

Welcome to 2020. I know it's traditional to do so, but I don't usually make New Year resolutions as they inevitably fall by the wayside. Well, this year is going to be different as I have taken a very big and empowering decision; I am reducing my working hours to three days a week with the aim of achieving a better (or different) work:life balance. It's a big decision because biomedical science is an amazing career choice and at times it has felt more of a hobby than a job, but I want some more "me" time.

One of the factors that has reinforced my decision has been a little bit of research I did on the traits and characteristics that define the different generations. Millennials and their successors, Generation Z, have seen their baby boomer and Generation X parents flogging themselves to death and they want something different. I don't think that's wrong, in fact I think it is probably a healthier approach to life. A key definer that separates the older generations from the younger is that the former are more motivated by material acquisitions while the latter seek fulfilment more through experiences. In reality, I don't think it matters how fulfilment is achieved, the greater tragedy would be to live unfulfilled.

At the time of writing this article, the news is filled with the dreadful reports of the volcanic eruption on New Zealand's White Island. People have died and others

VALUING EXPERIENCES



Sarah May, IBMS Deputy Chief Executive, makes a big, empowering decision for the new year

have life changing injuries. The term "life changing injuries" is a fairly recently used phrase to describe severe injuries and I think it serves to put something in to context. Severity is relative whereas "life-changing" gives a glimmer of insight in to the reality of a very different life after a catastrophic event.

As healthcare professionals, we deal with life changing results every day of our working lives and I have never met a biomedical scientist who is not acutely aware of that fact. We know that although we may seldom see the patient, we are always sensitive to the reality that could change for an individual, for better or worse, dependent upon a result. We live daily with the knowledge of diseases and because we understand the processes

involved in disease progression, or resolution, we have great insight into life-changing or life-enhancing possibilities and an empathy with those who may be affected by change.

This almost brings me back to where I started. I think that in our high pressured society we sometimes need to put a little control back in our lives, so my 2020 resolution: think more like a Millennial, value experiences and take back control.

Sarah May
Deputy Chief Executive



Institute of Biomedical Science is the professional body for the biomedical science profession.

INSTITUTE OF BIOMEDICAL SCIENCE
12 Coldbath Square
London, EC1R 5HL
United Kingdom
+44 (0)20 7713 0214
+44 (0)20 7837 9658
Email: mail@ibms.org
Web: www.ibms.org

PRESIDENT
Allan Wilson CSci FIBMS

CHIEF EXECUTIVE
Jill Rodney

DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE
Sarah May CSci FIBMS

EXECUTIVE HEAD OF EDUCATION
Alan Wainwright CSci FIBMS

EXECUTIVE HEAD OF MARKETING AND MEMBERSHIP
Lynda Rigby

EDUCATION AND TRAINING
education@ibms.org

EXAMINATIONS
examinations@ibms.org

MEMBERSHIP
mc@ibms.org

CHARTERED SCIENTIST
chartered@ibms.org

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