

Dr. James Blake sets a one-year personal standard for goal review in retirement

Dr. James Blake, a retired emergency medicine physician in Richmond, Kentucky, is formalizing a daily goal-review practice into a one-year personal standard, with a plan for how he will track it.

Richmond, Kentucky Sep 16, 2026 (Issuewire.com) - Dr. James Blake spent his career making decisions inside a time limit. Emergency medicine does not leave room for a plan that sits untouched for a week. Every shift asked him to check what he knew, what had changed, and what needed to happen next.

That habit did not stay behind at the hospital. Blake has continued a daily reevaluation of his goals since retiring, and he is now setting it as a formal standard for the coming year rather than an informal habit he keeps to himself.

"A goal you set once and never revisit is just a wish," Blake said. "I wanted a standard I could actually measure myself against, not just a nice idea."

The standard, in plain terms

Blake's commitment has three parts, each one drawn from how he worked in the ER:

Daily check. Every morning, he reviews his current goals against where he actually is. This is short by design, a few minutes, not a planning session.

Weekly redirect. Once a week, he looks at whether a goal needs to change course. In medicine, a treatment plan that stops working gets replaced quickly. Blake applies the same logic to personal goals.

Monthly accounting. Once a month, he asks whether a goal was met, dropped, or still in progress, and writes down why.

"None of this is complicated," Blake said. "The value is in doing it every day, not in making it elaborate."

Why he is making it public

Blake could have kept this practice private. He is naming it now because he believes the daily part is the piece most people skip.

"People set goals in January and check them in December," he said. "By then you've lost eleven months of information about what was actually working."

He points to his background as an Olympic cyclist as the origin of the approach. Endurance training does not reward a rider who only checks their progress at the finish line. It rewards constant small corrections, made while the race is still happening.

"Cycling taught me to adjust in real time," Blake said. "Medicine confirmed it. You don't wait for the end of the shift to notice a problem."

What changes and what doesn't

Blake is clear that the standard is about the process, not a fixed outcome. He is not pledging to hit a specific number of goals or complete a set list of projects this year. He is committing to the review itself, on the schedule he has laid out.

"Success, to me, is pursuing a goal in a positive way until it's done," he said. "That's a moving target some days. The daily check is what keeps me honest about where the target actually is."

He also credits his faith as part of how he approaches the practice. For Blake, a daily reevaluation is not just a productivity habit. It is a discipline tied to a broader sense of purpose.

"I don't separate the daily review from the rest of how I try to live," Blake said. "It's the same discipline, applied every day."

Holding himself to it

Blake plans to track the standard for a full year, using the same daily, weekly, and monthly structure. He is not announcing an app or a formal published log. The commitment is behavioral: keep the review going, every day, for a year, and adjust the goals themselves as needed along the way.

"Perseverance isn't one big effort," he said. "It's a small effort, repeated, on a day you didn't feel like doing it."

Black belt training in martial arts has reinforced the same lesson for Blake in a different form. Progress there comes in small, repeated increments, tested constantly, rather than in a single leap.

"You don't get a black belt by deciding once that you're disciplined," Blake said. "You get it by showing up to practice the discipline again the next day."

To read more, visit the website [here](#).

About Dr. James Blake

Dr. James Blake is a retired physician who practiced emergency medicine and lives in Richmond, Kentucky. He served as a physician for the U.S. boxing program and is a former Olympic cyclist. He holds a black belt in martial arts and continues to write and speak about discipline, faith, and goal-setting.

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