

A new you in the New Year

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Now that December holidays have sadly come to an end, we start to reminisce about our fun in the sun and all the good food we have eaten. Some of us then start to wonder about what New Year's resolutions we will have this year. One survey showed that about 45% of a population may make them but only 8% will actually achieve them. A lot of people end up even forgetting what they were in the first place.

Eating healthier, getting more fit and losing weight often feature in the list of popular resolutions, showing the intentions of a healthier lifestyle are there but how can we improve our chances of success?

1. Less is more

Look at setting only one or two resolutions. This way you can focus more of your attention at achieving those goals instead of spreading yourself thin by trying to change every aspect of your life. You have greater success rates by channelling your focus.

2. Take small steps

Break up your main resolution into smaller goals, this way when you reach your smaller goal you get a sense of accomplishment and it boosts you to keep going. For example if you want to eat healthier than a smaller goal is to eat 5 servings of fruit and vegetables a day. But that is a jump from your current one serving of veggies at dinner so start by saying you will take one fruit to work every day. Once you are in a routine of doing that then add another serving.

3. Details are key

When you are setting your smaller goals the more detailed they are the easier it is for you to plan what to do next and change. Saying I want to lose weight compared to I want to start cooking at least four home cooked meals using fresh ingredients a week, sounds a lot more doable. Be specific and have a real think about how you are going to actually achieve your goals.

4. Make them measurable

If your goals are measurable it means in the end you are able to say if was reached or not. Setting a goal like I want to exercise more is not as easily measurable as saying I want to run once a week for 3kms and go to gym twice a week. Think about how you want to measure your success or not.

5. Take your time

Give your goals a timeframe. This gives you a point to work towards which will motivate you. For example I would like to not be adding any more sugar to my coffee by the end of March.

6. Put it on paper

Writing your goals down makes them more concrete and real. It helps to post them up somewhere where you can easily remind yourself like on a mirror or work notice board. It can also help plan your smaller goals with their time frames to keep track of things.

7. Sharing is caring

Tell your family and friends about what you want to achieve. They can be a support by encouraging you, giving you advice and keeping you accountable to your goals. It helps so your loved ones don't

put you in environments that will challenge you as they are unaware of your goals. It's a great motivator too as you don't want to disappoint them in failing.

8. Reap the rewards

Try think of small rewards you can give yourself after you have achieved one of your smaller goals. This helps you keep motivated and shows you that you are making progress. Make rewards that also won't defeat the purpose of the goal like having a chocolate for eating more fruit. Rather treat yourself to a manicure, rent your favourite DVD or visit your favourite park.

9. Mistakes happen

Keep positive by reminding yourself of the small goals you have achieved, if you have made a mistake then don't be too harsh on yourself and throw in the towel giving up everything. We aren't perfect. There may be slip ups but keep motivating yourself to get up and try again. On a regular occasion also remind yourself what the benefits are when you achieve your goals to keep you going.

There are many ways to try get us to reach our New Year's resolutions. By following these 9 tips we can hopefully get closer to meeting our goals with less struggles and more perseverance. 2016 is around the corner so start pondering about what your resolutions will be.

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