

Make Your New Year's HEALTH RESOLUTION LAST

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Have you thought about your New Year's Resolutions for 2017? Are they the same ones you made last year? Lose weight. Exercise More. Eat Healthier. If you are like many of us, these three are at the top of our list and may have been for several years. The fact is, four out of five people who make these New Year's resolutions will eventually break them before the end of January!

So here's an approach that has a far greater chance of success. First think about the reason you want to reach a specific health goal. Wanting to avoid diabetes, heart disease, cancer or Alzheimer's are admirable goals, but let's be honest, you do not really believe these bad things will ever happen to you. So ask yourself, "Why am I really making this resolution? Is it because I want to wear a certain little dress, have more energy, walk my daughter down the aisle at her wedding, hold my grandbabies, climb to a mountain top, swim with dolphins?" Figure out your "why" then capture how that looks in your mind. Write it down on paper and place it on your refrigerator. Share your resolutions with your loved ones. Motivation comes from within the person, telling someone else makes it a commitment, writing it down will remind you daily and this is how you will reach your goal.

Here are some baby steps you can take to a healthier lifestyle.

Make just ONE resolution and understand your "why". You will have success if you concentrate and put your energy into just one resolution. More than three resolutions and your chances of success in any of them is greatly reduced. This year set yourself up for success and focus on one resolution. At the end of this year then you can celebrate without regret knowing that you have successfully improved your life circumstance.

Start your day with steel cut oatmeal topped with flaxseeds and fruit. Focus on making this one easy healthy meal and let it become a new habit. You do not need to overhaul your entire daily menu at once! If you make one good choice to start the day then the rest of the day it is easier to make healthier choices. This breakfast choice will keep you full until lunch and will help your body run efficiently.

Always start your lunch and dinner with a soup or salad. Americans today eat mostly "fake food" and we are suffering from malnutrition. The highly processed food industry has taken out all the good stuff needed by our bodies and replaced it with potentially harmful substances causing us distress. We need the micronutrients and phytochemicals from plants to avoid dietary deficiencies and over sufficiencies. Food is fuel and we all must choose wisely for our bodies to run well.

Make over one meal each week. Once oatmeal has become routine for breakfast then improve the health content of one more meal each week until you have 3 weeks of healthier options. Focusing on one meal at a time is easier than trying to overhaul all of your daily eating habits at once. It is important to cut down on animal protein if you truly want to avoid heart disease and cancer so try to plan for a "Meatless Monday".

Buy a monitor. People who track their food intake and activity will be more accountable by wearing a monitor. We all play mind games. For instance, we overestimate the amount of exercise we do and we underestimate the amount of calories we eat. The math is not always easy calculating calories in and those calories we burn, but you have to track this to the best of your ability if you want to reach your goals. Just wearing a monitor will remind you to make better choices in all parts of your life.

Try new things. We can get stuck with all things in life. Buy and experiment with unfamiliar fruits and vegetables. Take a new exercise class or participate in a new activity. Meet new people who are trying to do what you are doing. Challenge yourself!

Play with the kids in your life. It means more exercise for all. Combine this with trying new things. You do not have to be an expert on all things; let these children teach you something new! Play tag, jump rope, dance, learn different sports or just go for a walk or run together. Even active video games can be beneficial.

Make time for rest. Rest, relaxation and sleep are all components of a healthy lifestyle. Plan to get at least 7 hours of good sleep per night. It takes time for your body to rest and repair.

Be a role model. Children do as we do and not as we say. Role model these baby steps so the children in your life will grow up not having to make this same resolution. Because of you, they will be in the habit of living a healthy lifestyle.



Wishing you health, happiness and hope for a better life in 2017!

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