

Make Your New Year's Resolutions Stick!

The New Year is a time to reflect on the past and start thinking about the future. It is the time of year when many of us start thinking of changes we want to make in our life. A New Year's resolution is something that many of us make, but most of us find hard to stick with throughout the year. We all want to make a change, but we just have a hard time making it happen. You need to identify and learn how to overcome your barriers to change. Here are some common ones:

» TIME:

Often, we fear that making a change in our lives will require more time than we can afford. But large changes can be accomplished in small steps. Even 10-15 minutes per day could eventually lead you to your lifetime resolution. Most time-related barriers can be overcome with planning and organization.

» PREVIOUS FAILURE:

If you've tried to change before and haven't had success, it can shake your confidence. Don't allow past failures or relapses to stop you from moving forward! Many people make several attempts before successfully making a change. Try to learn from your past experiences.

» NEGATIVE THINKING:

Negative thoughts can be a huge roadblock for many people. Look for ways to exchange negative thoughts for positive ones. One way to do this is by visualizing success. Imagine that you've already changed your behavior and you're reaping the benefits; you'll get there soon!

» LACK OF SUPPORT:

If you dive into your change without talking to anyone, you may miss out on a valuable resource. Let your family, friends and coworkers know that their support is appreciated and needed. No one can make the change for you, but encouragement from others can help you stay with it.

Take the time to recognize, accept and then address each of your potential barriers so that you can create strategies to overcome them. Once you've done that, you're ready to go!

QuickTakes

Making It Stick



Old habits die hard. When it comes to an exercise resolution, skipping one workout can easily lead to a relapse. Here are some tips to help you stay active over time:

• Rely on Others:

Bring in the outside world of friends, classes, gyms and even professional trainers to get you started and keep you going.

• Take a Class:

For those who prefer the gym, taking classes is a great way to get support.

• Remember Why You Started:

Motivation can come from a variety of sources. Keep a constant reminder of why you started to help keep you focused and motivated.

• Be flexible:

For many, writing your workout time down in your calendar will help you stick to it. However, you need to be flexible when times get busy. Figure out clever ways to squeeze your workout in during these busy times. Try to do mini-workouts to keep you committed.

Five Weight Loss Resolutions That Work

What's the secret? Ask the real experts - people who are "masters" of their former weight problems and have successfully maintained weight loss. Based on their experiences, here are resolutions that may help lead you to long-term success:

1). I'll start by setting a realistic goal. People who have lost weight and kept it off aren't necessarily "thin." Many have accepted they'll be somewhat heavier than their "dream" weights. Indeed, it's easier to maintain weight loss at a "comfortable" body weight — one at which you feel positive about your appearance, but don't feel like you're starving yourself.

To remain encouraged when the scale seems to be stuck, track benefits other than "pounds lost," such as sleeping more soundly, generally feeling better about yourself and having more energy or easing weight-related medical problems, like high blood pressure.

2). I'll keep track of what I eat, at least from time to time. Even though the weight-loss masters slimmed down years ago, three out of four say they still keep track of what they eat in some fashion. While some keep written food diaries of everything they eat, others keep tabs mentally. Some find it particularly helpful to write down what they eat when they're having trouble.

3). I'll pay attention to fat and calories. Few weight-loss masters count fat grams. However, low-fat eating concepts

do guide them. Nine of 10 weight-loss masters indicated they make an effort to eat low-fat foods. The mainstays of their diets are fruits, vegetables and whole-grains.

They also pay attention to calories, having learned that a low-fat label is not a license to overindulge. They watch portion sizes - even of low-fat foods - and remain fully aware of calories.

4). I'll be consistent about exercise. There's no question that exercise is part of the equation for most people who lose weight and keep it off. One study of participants in the National Weight Control Registry revealed that weight-loss masters burned off an average of 400 calories a day by exercising.

What's striking about people committed to exercise is their consistency. No matter what, they fit it into their schedules. It becomes akin to putting on a seat belt or brushing your teeth — it's a habit, and it doesn't feel right when you skip it.

5). I'll give myself permission to be human. When the weight-loss masters describe their eating habits, they frequently say something like this: "If I want something, I have it." They don't deny themselves their favorite foods, but they do watch portions. They also take steps to make sure they don't go overboard. Most have decided to keep highly tempting foods out of their homes or out of sight. Instead, they might save a favorite dessert for a restaurant meal, where the portion size is controlled. If the masters slip and eat in a way they hadn't intended, **they don't let a lapse become a relapse!**

Baked Apples

Makes: 4 servings | 45 minutes

If you like, serve the warm apples with a small scoop of low-fat frozen vanilla yogurt or ice cream, or serve them chilled on their own.

Ingredients:

- 4 large Honeycrisp, Fuji or Golden Delicious apples
- 1/4 cup (2 fl oz/60 ml) apple cider or apple juice
- 2 tablespoons brown sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/4 teaspoon ground ginger
- 1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract



Preparation:

1. Preheat oven to 350° F
2. Core apples, leaving bottoms intact. Remove a strip of apple peel from around the top to prevent skins from bursting. Place in a baking dish.
3. In a small bowl, combine brown sugar, cinnamon, ginger and vanilla. Pour over and around the apples.
4. Cover and bake until the apples are soft but still hold their shape, about 30-40 minutes. Serve warm, spooning the warm sauce over them.

Nutritional Information (per serving):

131 Calories; 0.5g Fat; 0.1g Saturated fat; 0.3g Protein; 30g Carbohydrate; 3.7g Fiber; 10mg Sodium