



Keeping Those New Year's Resolutions!

By Betsy Bransky

Frequently, when we make a New Year's Resolution, we expect to accomplish the task sometime between the second week and the last week of January. If we haven't, well, then that's it! Maybe we'll try again next year. Here is an accumulation of tips on how to keep this year's resolutions from some of the experts and a few resources for more information.

Get clear about what it is that you want to accomplish and write it down.

Make a plan. Anything worth doing is worth taking the time to make a plan that will work for you. Setting short-term goals will help you see your success along the way. Include in your plan a new "good for you" behavior to replace the old behavior you are trying to change. Have fun!

Be realistic. The surest way to fall short of your resolution is to make it unattainable. Don't be a hero, strategize. If you need to make changes in your environment or your daily routine to help meet your needs let others know and ask for their support.

Allow yourself time. Some experts say it takes 18 months to truly modify behavior. Some others say it takes about 21 days for a new activity, such as exercising, to become a habit, and 6 months for it to become part of your personality. Either way, it is clear that you really need to give yourself the time to meet your goals.

Talk about it. Share your intention with people who will supportively hold you accountable to taking action.

Track your progress: Keep track of each small success you make toward reaching your larger goal. Short-term goals are easier to keep, and small

accomplishments will help keep you motivated.

Reward Yourself. This doesn't mean that if your resolution is to diet you can eat an entire box of chocolates. Instead, celebrate your success by treating yourself to something that you enjoy.

Don't Beat Yourself Up. Obsessing over the occasional slip won't help you achieve your goal. If you take a wrong turn, just turn around and get on the right road. Do the best you can each day, and take them one at a time.

Keep trying: If your resolution has totally run out of steam by mid-February, don't despair. Start over again!

There's no reason you can't make a "New Year's Resolution" any time of year.

*<http://healing.about.com/od/marciawieder/a/powerintention.htm>
<http://ibdcrohns.about.com/cs/mentalhealth/a/newyearresolve.htm>
Roberts, L. 2006. "Got some resolutions? Here's how to keep'em". *Maine Sunday Telegram*, December 31, 2006.*

New Year's Resolutions

R	Q	Q	A	C	H	I	E	V	E	ACCOMPLISH
V	Q	L	S	S	E	C	C	U	S	ACHIEVE
R	E	S	O	L	U	T	I	O	N	ATTAINABLE
B	C	S	Y	S	L	A	O	G	Q	CELEBRATE
E	L	B	A	N	I	A	T	T	A	GOALS
A	C	C	O	M	P	L	I	S	H	MOTIVATED
R	E	W	A	R	D	O	W	A	B	REALISTIC
M	O	T	I	V	A	T	E	D	O	RESOLUTION
E	T	A	R	B	E	L	E	C	H	REWARD
W	C	I	T	S	I	L	A	E	R	SUCCESS

