



## *Health & Fitness* Weekly Wellness Message

It's that time of year again when people tend to overindulge in eating, drinking, spending money and neglecting exercise. Rather than moderate these behaviors, we promise ourselves that after the holiday season is over, we will definitely take control. Once the New Year rolls around and we examine our behavior, we resolve to do something better or different next year. By February, this resolve has become nothing more than a dim memory.

Starting an exercise program, wanting to eat better, reducing consumption of alcohol, drugs, caffeine, and quitting smoking are all reasonable goals. So how can a person find success with them? What can we do to increase the likelihood that our desire for change will translate into permanent positive change? The following tips from PsychCentral.com can help you make solid resolutions that can lead to a greater chance of success in the upcoming year:

### **1. Be realistic in your goals.**

Choose one goal, and then break it down into smaller, more manageable bits. For example, if you want to save \$1,000, think about it in terms of saving \$20 per paycheck. That makes your goal less intimidating. Every time you save some money, praise yourself. Rewarding yourself for every positive step will help you have the confidence you need to hang in there.

### **2. Start with a plan and stick to it**

Studies show that people who make impulsive resolutions are less likely to stick to them. Think about what is most important to you and create strategies to deal with the problems and setbacks that will come up as you move towards your goal. Tracking your progress will help as well; the more you monitor and praise yourself, the more likely you are to succeed.

### **3. Team up with a friend or loved one**

Be a Wingman! Make a list of your goals and share them with a friend or loved one. You are now accountable to two people: yourself and the other person. You will also get a sense of satisfaction from helping your friend accomplish his or her goals, too. Such an informal pact can help hold your feet to the fire when you feel discouraged or want to give up — they can offer you some encouragement and support (and you can do likewise).

#### **4. Look at the bright side and allow yourself mistakes**

Focusing on the positive side of things will give you more energy and enthusiasm to pursue your goals. People who believe that they can succeed are more likely to do so. For example, praise yourself for losing five pounds, but don't punish yourself for gaining one back. You will reach your goal more easily if you accentuate the positive. Don't beat yourself up if you don't accomplish the small goals you set for yourself, or if one day you "fall off the wagon" or mess up. Remind yourself that every day is a new day and an opportunity to try again.

#### **5. Think of resolutions as opportunities to try new things**

Resolutions are a time of the year not only to try and "fix" the problems in your life, but also to try out a new way of being, a new activity or hobby, or a new attitude. Resolutions should not seem like punishments; if you try to make them fun, you will be more likely to stick with them. If your goal is to be healthier, try going for a 10-minute walk before work and enjoying your neighborhood. Think of January first as a chance to adopt a healthier lifestyle, not as the start of a period of denial.

#### **6. Try, try again**

If you don't succeed at first, don't be discouraged. Not many people are able to reach their goals on the first try. It's also a good time to re-examine your goals to make sure they were obtainable in the first place. Don't give up - try again! There's no shame in not succeeding on our first try and although it may be a little discouraging, it doesn't have to be an excuse to stop.

Upcoming noteworthy events:

Portion off the Pounds (POP) – 10 week program  
Tuesday, January 10<sup>th</sup> or Thursday, January 12<sup>th</sup>  
Building 59, room 107

To register, email Nancy Gouveia at:

[Nancy.Gouveia@ndu.edu](mailto:Nancy.Gouveia@ndu.edu)

*Please specify which class you would prefer –  
Tuesday or Thursday*

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