

New Year's Resolution Success



A University of Scranton study suggests that only 8% of people achieve their New Year's goals. How can you make 2017 a success?

- Set the behavior based goals
- Track yourself on a daily/weekly basis
- Reward yourself for sticking with it
- Forgive yourself if you're not perfect

SET BEHAVIOR GOALS

"I am going to get in shape this year" is too vague. *"I will lose 20 pounds by spring break"* is specific; however it doesn't spell out what you're going to do to lose weight. You need to change your resolution into behavior goals which define your actions every day, such as:

- I will exercise for 30 minutes three times per week.
- I will eat more slowly.
- I will drink a glass of water with every meal.
- I will pay attention to portion sizes.
- I will eat protein at every meal.

Notice most of the behaviors above are about improving eating habits NOT about exercise. Most experts agree that weight loss success is 70%-80% eating right and only 20%-30% exercise so it makes sense that 4 out of 5 of your daily behaviors should focus on food. Choose one or two of these behaviors to start and then add on because trying to change too many things all at once is a recipe for failure.

KEEPING TRACK

Behavior goals give you something to do (and track) each day. Because we eat throughout the day try tracking each meal by answering YES or NO to the following: Did I eat slowly? Did I drink a glass of water? Did I limit my portion sizes? Did I eat protein? It's important to record this all through the day because it's hard to recall later. Keep a small notebook or use your Smartphone if that makes it simpler.

Tracking exercise is easier. Place a calendar in a prominent location such as your refrigerator. Each day you workout draw a star (or give yourself a sticker) on the calendar. Each day you do not workout draw a big red "X" on the day. That way you have a visual. More than two red X's in a row and you will know you better get a moving!

REWARD YOURSELF

Setting a time frame will help you know when to reward yourself. Think of something you've wanted to do preferable that does NOT involve splurging on foods you know are NOT going to help you move toward your goals. When you reach your one week, four week, or eight week behavior goal do something nice for you!

FORGIVE YOURSELF

Give yourself a break, nobody's perfect. What would you say to a friend if they told you they had a weak moment? Focus on how you can do better tomorrow. What can you do to set yourself up to succeed at the next meal?

Make your resolution to stick with it through March 31. Once you pass that three month milestone the odds will be in your favor to succeed in 2017! Do you have a health and fitness question? Email me at

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