

Renew your resolutions

It's not too late to act on plans for a better life

Now that all the sass and fanfare of the New Year has sizzled, some of you may find yourselves struggling to stay on track with your New Year's resolutions. Worse yet, some of you may have already given up.

Changing habits and working toward new goals can be a challenge, and it's quite common to lose motivation shortly after you have begun. But you can easily get back on track and move through these obstacles.

Here are some simple tips to follow that have proven successful in helping others renew their resolve and bring them success:

■ **Take a break.** Often times, we can become frustrated when we are working toward a change, and we slip up. Don't let that stop you. Forget about it and get back on track. All too often, when we get to this point we have already laid some great groundwork and success is right around the corner. You may be feeling stressed, so maybe you need to take time off for a day or two. It's amazing how a short break can leave you feeling renewed and ready to take on even more. So forgive yourself, get some rest and get back on track and ready to hit the ground running.

■ **Create a vision and a higher purpose.** It's important to revisit the reason you wanted to achieve your goal in the first place. Take a moment to reflect and envision what you want. Think about your higher purpose for this change. In my experience and training as a life coach, I have found the most successful path to achieving a goal is to focus on the positive outcome rather than focusing on all of the negatives associated

GUEST COMMENTARY



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ABOUT THIS FEATURE

Living & Being's Guest Commentary is a spot for medical, health and personal care professionals to address various aspects of wellness. For information, please e-mail lblawaty@poughkeepsiejournal.com

with getting to the goal. Remind yourself what your original intention was, envision it already happening and then get connected to how it will actually feel when you achieve this goal and how it can benefit yourself and others.

■ **Consider how others will benefit.** For instance, if you want to quit smoking, think about how much healthier you will be, how much longer you will live and therefore how much more time you will be able to spend with your children and experience the joy of watching them grow up, graduate college and get married. Creating this vision and intention helps get your mind and body moving in that direction again. It's amazing what can happen when we have a vision

and higher purpose.

■ **Review your strategies.** Often times, we set ourselves up for failure because our goals were unrealistic, we didn't anticipate obstacles and most likely didn't have strategies in place.

For example, with weight loss, maybe one strategy you had was to go to the gym five times a week but you're lucky if you made it twice the whole month. What were your obstacles for getting to the gym? Did you have other obligations that got in the way? Can you set up a system so you have some help with those obligations? Maybe you should consider only going three times a week for now and build up to the five times a week. Whatever it is, look at what you can do differently and create a more realistic plan. Don't be too hard on yourself, we all are presented with obstacles. You can still create strategies that can help you get back on track.

■ **Focus on having a positive attitude.** Don't doubt or second-guess yourself. Remember, if you think you can't, you won't, but if you think you can, you will. Start using positive affirmations on a regular basis; they will become imprinted into your subconscious mind. Using these affirmations regularly will help you shift your thought process and keep you feeling positive. I have a client who has been very successful with her goals and she has been using the following affirmation: I am doing it!

So this year choose to be successful. If you need to, take a break. Envision what you want, feel it, see it helping yourself and others. Implement strategies that assure your success and get you back on track. Acknowledge that you can do this, be positive. Make your belief in yourself much stronger than your doubt; create that intention and know you are doing it. ♦

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