

Resolution Solutions:

Tips to Help you Keep Your Declarations

Most Americans (88 percent according to a recent study) set at least one New Year's resolution and most are related to health and fitness (see page 4 for the top ten resolutions for 2011). Surprisingly only 20 percent are successful.

Why? Because most resolutions involve *changing behavior*, which requires time, effort, patience and planning — not to mention that this “*New Year, New You*” phenomenon comes during a time of year when most people can't find enough motivation to clean the bathroom... much less make an ambitious, life-changing, behavioral U-turn. So how do you keep them? Here are 9 tips to help you succeed:

Resolve to change only one behavior at a time. Setting just one big goal allows you to focus your efforts in one place. Changing habits and behaviors is challenging!

Be Realistic. Set smaller goals to be met gradually and then build upon your success. The fastest way to fail is to set a goal that is unattainable. For example, one common resolution is vowing to lose a large amount of weight over an unreasonable period of time (like, “I will lose 30 pounds by March”).

Plan Ahead!

Recognize that some goals will be short-term, mid-term and long-term. In your planning, break it down to make it less intimidating. By dissecting it into smaller pieces, regular progress can be seen and you will stay encouraged. For example, increase the amount of time spent exercising by five minutes every week or cut down your soda intake from four cans a day to one.



Set a measurable goal. If your resolution is too vague, you won't know if it's ever reached. “Being a better partner to my spouse” sounds good, but being more specific lets you know if you're making positive progress. For example: “spend at least 2 hours each week doing an activity that we both enjoy” is more measurable.

Talk about it. Tell friends and family who will be there to support your commitment to change yourself for the better. You may just find a buddy who shares your aspiration.

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How to Help Stop the Spread of Germs

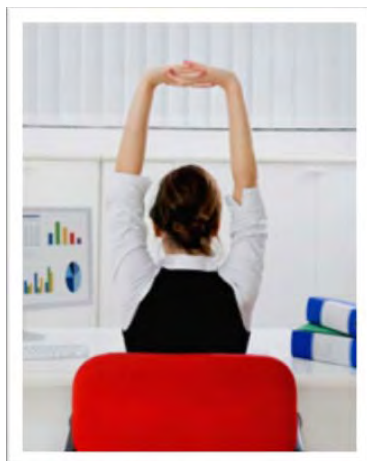
Illnesses, like colds and flu (influenza), are caused by viruses that infect the nose, throat and lungs. Viruses usually spread from person to person when an infected individual coughs or sneezes. To stop the spread of germs at home, work and school, the Center for Disease Control and Prevention recommends the following preventive actions to take every day:

- **Cover your mouth and nose when you sneeze or cough.** It is best to do so with a tissue and then throw it away. If you don't have one, cover your cough or sneeze with your inner elbow or upper arm. Clean your hands after every occurrence.
- **Clean your hands often.** When available, wash your hands with soap and warm water. Rub your hands together vigorously and scrub all surfaces for 15 to 20 seconds. When this is not possible, use alcohol-based disposable hand wipes or gel sanitizers. When using a gel, rub it in your hands until they are dry.
- **Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth.** Germs can live a long time (some for 2 hours or more) on surfaces like doorknobs, desks and tables. They are often spread when a person touches something that is contaminated and then touches his eyes, nose or mouth.
- **If you get sick, limit contact with others as much as possible.** This will help prevent spreading the illness. Stay home (or keep your child home) for at least 24 hours after a fever is gone (without the use of a fever-reducing medicine), except to seek medical care or other necessities.

For more information about preventing the spread of germs, visit www.cdc.gov/germstopper/resources.htm. For information about flu prevention, visit www.cdc.gov/flu/protect/preventing.htm Ψ

“Always bear in mind that your own resolution to succeed is more important than any one thing.”

Abraham Lincoln, 16th U.S. President



Tension Relief

We carry a lot of tension in our neck and shoulders. Most of the time we don't even realize we're tensing up. This continuous strain can lead to neck pain and headaches. To feel some immediate relief, do a few shoulder rolls, then roll your head from side to side. Taking a few minutes to stretch and release the tension can feel like a load has been lifted off your shoulders.

For more stretches that you can do at your desk, follow this link for tips from the Mayo Clinic: <http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/stretching/WL00030> Ψ

Do Your Homework on Helping Kids with Theirs

When you have school-age children, homework is a fact of life. But it doesn't have to be unpleasant. Do your part to help your child get the most from homework with this advice:

Show your interest. Ask children about their homework assignments. Talk about why they're important and what can be learned from them — confirming that it's worthwhile.

Establish a routine. Set aside regular time for homework — right after dinner, perhaps. This helps your child get into the habit of staying on track.

Eliminate distractions. Turn off the TV, radio, iPod or cell phone. Provide adequate space where she can work without being bothered by siblings playing, parents making dinner, etc.

Help your child prioritize. Time management is essential. It's helpful for your child to keep a notebook or log of assignments so none of them are forgotten. Advise them to identify which ones will be most difficult and time consuming so that they can start on those when they're fresh.

Offer help — within limits. Don't do their homework for them. If they get stuck, ask questions and guide them through the difficulties so they're doing the work themselves. Otherwise, they won't learn the subject or take responsibility for doing their own work.

Praise their efforts. Getting the right answer is important, but so is working through the process. Praise them for working hard and not giving up when they're tired or frustrated.

Give them a break. Let children take short breaks if they start to get too frustrated with a particular assignment. You don't want a complete "meltdown" over a math problem.

Work with the teacher. Stay in contact with your children's teachers so that you know their expectations for each child as well as for you as a parent. Ψ



How NOT to Drive Your Co-Workers Crazy

No one likes an annoying pest, especially at work. Obviously you'd never commit any of these obnoxious behaviors, but don't take any chances. Stay away from these common workplace no-no's:

- Playing music in your cubicle — at any volume
- Speaking too loudly on the phone or using the speaker phone for non-conference calls
- Eating food from the fridge that isn't yours
- Complaining about how busy you are to your co-workers, without actually doing much work
- Finishing the coffee without making any more
- Gossiping
- Missing deadlines, whether it's for your boss or a colleague
- Adopting a negative, defeatist attitude about your job or organization Ψ

(RESOLUTION from page 1)

Reward yourself. New Year’s resolutions are rarely easy, so a little conditioning goes a long way. This doesn’t mean that you can eat a 1/2 gallon of ice cream if your aim is to cut back on sugar. Instead, celebrate your success by treating yourself to something that doesn’t contradict your goal — go to the movies with a friend instead of eating that ice cream, for example.

Don’t beat yourself up. Since no one is perfect, you can expect an occasional slip, but obsessing over it won’t help you meet your goal. Identify possible causes of the misstep, think of ways to avoid it in the future and move on!

Stick to it, but be flexible. Sometimes life changes will influence your plans. Stay on track but also be open to adjusting your tactics.

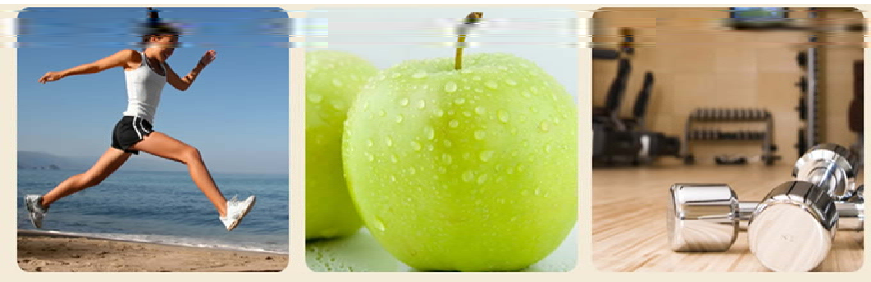
Keep trying. If your resolution has totally run out of steam by mid-February, don’t despair! Remember that goals are achieved in stages so do the best you can — taking *one step* at a time and *one day* at a time. Ψ



Top 10 New Year’s Resolutions
(in alphabetical order)

- ✓ Drink Less Alcohol
- ✓ Get a Better Education
- ✓ Get a Better Job
- ✓ Get Fit
- ✓ Lose Weight
- ✓ Manage Debt
- ✓ Manage Stress
- ✓ Quit Smoking Now
- ✓ Save Money
- ✓ Take a Trip
- ✓ Volunteer to Help Others

For more information on each of the goals listed above, visit:
[www.usa.gov/Citizen/Topics/
New_Years_Resolutions.shtml](http://www.usa.gov/Citizen/Topics/New_Years_Resolutions.shtml)



Healthy Granola Bars

from www.mealsmatter.org (© 2010 Meals Matter)

Ingredients:

- 2 eggs
- 2 tbsp. honey
- ¼ cup molasses
- 1 tsp. vanilla
- ½ cup plain yogurt or milk
- 1 tsp. cinnamon
- ¼ cup peanut butter (plain or chunky)
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- 1 ½ cups oat bran
- 1 cup rolled oats
- ½ cup all purpose white or wheat flour
- ½ cup dried fruit like cranberries, raisins, apricots, etc. (chop large pieces into smaller ones)
- ¼ cup raw almonds (or nut of preference)
- 1 ¼ cups rice cereal (like Rice Krispies ®)

Instructions:

- Preheat oven to 350 degrees.
- In large bowl, mix first 7 ingredients. Gradually stir in dry ingredients in the order listed.
- Spread mixture into greased 9x11 inch baking dish and smooth down well with spatula (mixture will be somewhat moist in order to hold together).
- Bake for 20 minutes and allow to cool for at least 30 minutes before cutting.

Servings: 20 bars

Prep time: 15 – 30 minutes

Cook time: 20 minutes

Nutrition Information Per Bar:

Calories: 265; Total Fat: 8g; Carbohydrates: 44g; Protein: 10g; Fiber: 5g