

Step up your resolution to a lifestyle change

Have you made new year's resolutions only to have it fail after one day, one week or one month? Then year after year January 1 comes and you say "This is it. This is the year I'm transforming into a new me"; only to fall back into your old bad habits AGAIN. New year's resolutions are the worst. They are recipe for failure because we're not 100% committed, there's usually no thought-out plan for success, and the initial motivation to make a change quickly subsides.

New year's resolutions are thinly veiled goals; markers out in the future that will either be reached or not. If you don't reach your goal, you've "failed." If you do reach your goal, then what? Often it means you quit doing the things that got you to the goal. Either outcome – failure or success – tends to rob you of motivation to keep going.

If you are serious about wanting to make a long-term and lasting change; focus on a lifestyle change not on a resolution. Lifestyle changes grant more flexibility and leeway therefore making it possible to achieve success along your journey.

Check out the tips below to help guide you through a meaningful and permanent lifestyle change.

Focus on one change at a time – Making one long-term change is not going to be easy. Research shows it takes 66 days to form a new habit and focusing on more than one is a quick way to get overwhelmed and revert to an old way of life. Choose what's most important to you and focus on that for 3 months. Once you make the initial change routine, then you can decide if you want to add another lifestyle change to the mix.

Make sure you have complete control of this change – Wanting to decrease stress in your life? Typically, stressful events are usually outside of our control but focusing on how you react to stress is controllable.

Start small and make a plan – Going from a 'eat whatever I want' carnivore to a plant based whole food eater overnight would be incredibly difficult. Making small monthly changes such as eliminating red meat the first one, eliminating red meat and cheese the second month, and then eliminating red meat, cheese and deli meat the third month is an example of starting small and making a plan.

Practice self-compassion – Mistakes are proof you are trying. Skipping one day at the gym, having a small bowl of ice cream, or not getting eight hours of sleep one night is okay. Don't beat yourself up over a slip up. Figure out what led you to make that decision and learn from it next time.

Give it time – Rome wasn't built in a day and the same holds true for a lifestyle change. If you want to lose weight but you aren't seeing results as quickly as you would've liked, don't get discouraged. Trust in the plan you created and believe in your process. If you work hard and stick with it positive results will come.

Recruit a friend – It's more difficult to fail with a friend. Having someone to hold you accountable, lean on during tough times, and share suggestions and advice with are invaluable.