



Goal Setting in 2015

Resolutions are possibly the best and worst part of beginning a new year. Who doesn't like a fresh start or a new challenge? However, New Year's resolutions can often be viewed negatively.

Part of the reason many resolutions fail is that the term is seasonal and fixed to a very specific holiday. Come February, New Year's resolutions start to look as relevant as a brown Christmas tree. On top of that, resolutions come loaded with a ton of cultural baggage and are often the setup to jokes about failure.

So, instead of making resolutions that will quickly fade, why not try setting goals for yourself? With that new attitude, here are some tips that should increase the probability of success for your 2015 goals.

1. Set specific, measurable goals. A vague goal is easily broken. If you're dieting to lose weight, set a specific number as your goal. If you're saving, decide on a precise dollar amount. Detailed goals help you focus, making it easier to determine an end point and to meet benchmarks along the way.
2. Choose goals that are meaningful to you, not to somebody else. If you're doing it for yourself, rather than to please others, you'll have much more motivation to succeed.
3. Don't do what you've always done. Try something new, especially if what you've been doing hasn't worked in the past.
4. If you have more than one goal, try varying the levels of difficulty. Completing smaller goals will give you the momentum you need to achieve a big one, and small successes will keep you from obsessing about difficulties along the way.
4. Use other people to hold yourself accountable. It's one thing to fail privately, but nobody likes to be seen as unsuccessful by other people. Announce your goals on social media to commit yourself, or consider adding another negative consequence to failure. In his book "Drop Dead Healthy," A.J. Jacobs conquered his snacking urges by asking his wife to mail a signed contribution to a hate group if he didn't stop snacking. The thought repulsed him so much that he refused to give in to temptation.
5. Most importantly, if you mess up, do not give up. There is a world of difference between experiencing a setback and stopping. So stick with it! It's a new year and a fresh start—there's no better time to make a commitment to a positive change in your life.

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National Blood Donor Month

While advances in medicine have lessened the demand for blood transfusions, the need for blood donors remains great. According to the American Red Cross, someone in the United States needs blood every two seconds. That comes to a total of 41,000 blood donations needed every day. January has been named National Blood Donor Month in an effort to offset a seasonal period when blood donations drop significantly.

If you've never donated blood before, it is a simple, four-step process: registration, medical history and mini-physical, donation and refreshments. The actual blood donation is a safe process that typically takes 10 to 12 minutes. A sterile needle is used only once for each donor and is then discarded. The average adult has about 10 pints of blood in his or her body. Approximately 1 pint is given during a donation.

Visit the [Red Cross website](#) to find a blood donation center in your area.



Battling January Gym Crowds

For those who make it a New Year's goal to exercise more, working out in January can quickly test their resolve as throngs of people pack the gym with the same goal in mind.

But since half the country lives where it's too cold to exercise outdoors during winter, how else can wannabe fitness fanatics get their workouts in? Here's how:

Be flexible. Whether you like to use the gym at a specific time or go about your workout a certain way, you need to be open to altering your routine. If manageable, try going before work, during your lunch break or later at night. When at the gym, make use of the available machines and free weights while watching occupied equipment to see when it becomes available.

"Work in" exercise between someone else's sets. While not the most appealing option for many, allowing another member to use a machine while someone is resting between sets is considered good gym etiquette. All you need to do is ask.

Think outside the gym. Avoid the hassles altogether by finding another place to exercise. Rock climbing centers, dance and yoga studios and even bowling alleys can provide you with some level of exercise while you wait for the gym crowds to subside. Even the most frigid locales have some winter days that are nice enough to allow for a jog outside, provided you dress appropriately. And that snow isn't going to shovel itself!

Calories Outside the Kitchen



Many people follow proper nutrition in the kitchen, only to fare poorly when eating outside their homes. While everyone should be allowed an occasional restaurant indulgence, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) estimates that Americans consume a third of their total caloric intake from dining out, and the nutritional uncertainty in all that takeout can be frustrating. However, changes are coming that should make keeping track of prepared food much easier.

On Nov. 25, 2014, the FDA announced that calorie counts must be listed for a wide range of food and drinks, including alcoholic beverages shown on menus. The rules require all restaurants with 20 or more locations to display calorie counts on their menus. The rules also extend to vending machines, amusement parks and movie theaters.

Businesses have one year to comply with the new rule. Until then, dieters are advised to stick to restaurants that voluntarily publish nutritional info and to eat healthily at home whenever possible.



Hoppin' John

Hoppin' John is a peas and rice dish from the Carolinas, traditionally served in many parts of the South on New Year's Day. Though the origin of its name is lost to history, it is thought to bring prosperity to the coming year.

- ½ cup brown rice, instant uncooked
- 1 tsp. canola oil
- 3 ounces low-fat turkey sausage ring, quartered lengthwise and cut into ¼-inch pieces
- ½ red bell pepper
- 1 jalapeno pepper
- 1 can black-eyed peas
- ½ cup water
- 1 tsp. salt

Prepare the rice using the package directions, omitting the salt and butter or margarine. Meanwhile, in a medium, nonstick skillet, heat the oil over medium-high heat, swirling to coat the bottom. Cook the sausage for 3 minutes or until richly browned, stirring frequently. Stir in the peppers and cook for an additional minute. Then, stir in peas, water and salt. Cook for 2 minutes or until the mixture is thickened slightly but some liquid remains. Remove from heat and let stand, covered, for 5 minutes to allow the flavors to blend. Finally, stir in cooked rice and serve.

Yield: 4 servings. Each serving provides 190 calories, 4.5 g of fat, 1 g of saturated fat, 10 mg of cholesterol, 340 mg of sodium, 9 g of protein, 2 g of sugar and 4 g of fiber.

Source: USDA

Live Well, Work Well