

A New YOU Year

HOW The 10% ACCOMPLISH New Year's Resolutions

By Debra Thompson

with contributions by others at the
Natural Health Co-op

The object of a New Year is not that we should have a new year. It is that we should have a new soul and a new nose; new feet, a new backbone, new ears, and new eyes. Unless a particular man made New Year resolutions, he would make no resolutions. Unless a man starts afresh about things, he will certainly do nothing effective. Unless a man starts on the strange assumption that he has never existed before, it is quite certain that he will never exist afterwards. Unless a man be born again, he shall by no means enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.
~ G.K. Chesterton

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Table of Contents

| | |
|--|----|
| Looking Forward to A Better You..... | 4 |
| The Ten Reasons New Year’s Resolutions Fail..... | 6 |
| Your Ten Steps to Success this New Year..... | 7 |
| 1. WRITE Down Your Resolution..... | 8 |
| Resolution..... | 10 |
| 2. Resolutions Require CONQUERING Procrastination..... | 11 |
| 3. SUPPORT Is Essential To Achieving Your Resolution..... | 13 |
| 4. You NEED A Detailed PLAN for Achieving Your Resolution..... | 16 |
| 5. Your Resolution Must Be SPECIFIC and MEASURABLE..... | 19 |
| 6. Making Resolutions PERSONAL And Meaningful..... | 21 |
| 7. You Must REFUSE To Let Obstacles Slow You Down..... | 23 |
| 8. Use POSITIVE REINFORCEMENTS To Keep Your Resolution..... | 26 |
| 9. Resolutions Need Regular CHECKUPS..... | 28 |
| 10. Becoming A Person Of ACTION Is Key..... | 30 |
| Wrapping It All Up..... | 32 |
| Making this A New YOU Year!..... | 34 |
| Recipe for A Happy Year..... | 36 |
| About the Author..... | 38 |
| Resources for a New YOU Year..... | 39 |

Looking Forward to A Better You

New Year's Day is every man's birthday. ~Charles Lamb

The New Year's resolution—it's an annual ritual for tens of millions of Americans and hundreds of millions more people around the world. And for good reason. It's a perfect time to honestly reevaluate the last 12 months—right along with hundreds of thousands of people around you. It's a good time to set or adjust goals and priorities.

Every year's end, people all over the planet give themselves very firm intentions that beginning on the first day of the next year they're going to quit smoking, learn to play guitar, lose weight, eat healthier, start exercising, manage their time better, learn a foreign language, begin a new hobby, begin writing that novel they've been talking about, be a better parent, friend, or spouse, etc.

It's a perfect time for people to make decisions about how they want to change their lives—a year has passed, and it's natural to think back on how this year could have been different, and envision a different life taking shape next year. And almost every one of these hundreds of millions of people making these New Year's resolutions really, sincerely means it.

And yet, if we are to believe experts who study and run the numbers on these things, by the end of January only about 10% of people are succeeding at keeping their resolutions. That means 90% of the people who made resolutions have already failed at them by the end of 30 days. That leaves 11 long months until we start again with one less year in our lives.

This is a real tragedy, an unimaginable waste of your potential. What makes it even worse is that **it's so unnecessary**. With very few exceptions, there's no reason the other 90% of people should fail at their New Year's resolutions. Why do they?

All the reasons most people fail at their resolutions boil down to only a few causes, most of them very simple, self-inflicted and familiar. We're going to discuss these main reasons why people fail at their New Year's resolutions, and you're going to learn how to be among the 10% of people who actually succeed at achieving them.

The Ten Reasons New Year's Resolutions Fail

Yesterday, everybody smoked his last cigar, took his last drink and swore his last oath. Today, we are a pious and exemplary community. Thirty days from now, we shall have cast our reformation to the winds and gone to cutting our ancient shortcomings considerably shorter than ever. ~Mark Twain

There are ten reasons that 90% of people fail in their New Year's resolutions. Any one of them is enough to sabotage your success. Fortunately, each is simple and easy to understand. If you will take the time to follow the instructions outlined in this book, you *will* succeed.

1. Not writing resolutions down on paper
2. Procrastination
3. Going it alone
4. Not enough knowledge to map a plan
5. Lack of focus
6. Discouragement
7. Those inevitable obstacles
8. Too vague
9. Laziness
10. Emphasis on negatives, not positives

Your Ten Steps to Success this New Year

One resolution I have made, and try always to keep, is this: To rise above the little things. ~John Burroughs

It is always the little things that keep us from doing the big things. We've all heard, "A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step," "Rome wasn't built in a day," and similar sayings hundreds of times. Yet it is so easy to gloss right over the simple truth they contain. Every successful project or achievement, no matter how large, is nothing more than the sum of little actions, pursued diligently, over and over again.

We "rise above the little things" by doing them. Whether we understand how they fit into the big picture or not, the steps outlined in this book are those that have worked over and over again. They are the keys to success. There are no shortcuts.

If you can resolve to follow the ten simple steps provided in this book, you will succeed. So grab your pen, a cup of coffee or favorite beverage, and take your first step to success right now!

1. WRITE Down Your Resolution

A New Year's resolution is something that goes in one year and out the other.
~Anonymous

In other words, get your resolution words down onto a real piece of paper—brief is fine—if necessary, dictated to someone who immediately gives you the paper is okay. If you are not one of the 10% who actually achieves their goals, *don't* skip this.

Whenever you make a New Year's resolution—or set a goal of any kind for that matter—you should always put it in writing. If you don't write your resolution down, it's NOT a resolution, but just a nice thought. When a legislative body considers a Resolution, it only considers the details and ramifications of the words put down on at least one piece of paper. Those words then acted upon will have consequences. This helps establish within yourself that you're serious about accomplishing this resolution. It's also an immediate encouragement because, all things considered, you can *see* for yourself it **is** doable.

Not writing a New Year's resolution down is a *major* reason many people have given up on or totally forgotten their resolution by the end of January. They didn't really have a New Year's resolution; they had some good intentions. And we all know what they say about good intentions!

The fact that you make the small effort it takes to write down a New Year's resolution shows that you are more serious about it than someone who doesn't. When you write your resolution down it's really the first step toward success in keeping your resolution. It's okay to type your resolution on your computer, but psychologists say that ideally you *should physically write it out by hand*, as the reinforcement factor is much stronger that way. But the important thing is to write it down somewhere, even if it's only in a computer file.

Many people like to write their resolutions on index cards or small pieces of paper which they carry in their wallet or purse. Others like to write them on sticky notes which they put on their computer monitor, bathroom mirror, etc. You should too.

Keep your written resolution handy so it's never far from your mind. In fact, many people write out their New Year's resolution at least once every day, some several times. However you choose to do it, just make sure you do it. The first step to keeping your resolution is writing it down and giving the idea some sort of physical form. If you won't bother writing your resolution down, odds are you won't bother keeping it. So get a paper and pencil and write it down!

Write it out and keep it handy to stay focused on your goal.

2. Resolutions Require CONQUERING Procrastination

Procrastination is the thief of time. ~ Edward Young

One of the main reasons people fail at New Year's resolutions is procrastination. They put off working on their resolution until tomorrow, or when the weather's better, or circumstances have changed, or "when I feel like it."

Many people do well in other areas of life but just can't seem to get around to acting on those New Year's resolutions. Some people are chronic procrastinators. Some of these resolve year after year to not be procrastinators. The problem is likely deeper than their New Year's failures. Find out what problems or unresolved may be holding you back in all areas of life. This particular guide is not intended to address those deeper issues—but don't fall into another self-made trap by inappropriately using this as an excuse not to act "until this circumstance somehow changes." Act to discover and resolve issues that are hindering all aspects of your life.

We highly recommend [the Healing Codes](#) for dealing with those core issues.

For those who normally have no trouble in facing life's tasks squarely and attacking them directly and promptly, but just can't seem to do the same thing when it comes to their New Year's resolutions, success is ahead!

The key is to be decisive, to make a real promise to yourself, from yourself. A promise you will do something every day (or weekday, or some pre-established time) toward your goal, and then remind yourself of that promise every day, and hold yourself to deliver on it. Then take action! Adopt the Nike® motto, and "just do it." Every day, do something toward your goal—skip the second dessert, teach yourself one chord on the guitar, walk for ten minutes after dinner, spend 15 minutes editing your poetry, etc. The important thing is to DO SOMETHING. Even if it falls short of what

you had in mind when you made your resolution, it's still a start. Choose to enjoy every step forward—not having put it off.

After you do a little bit the first day, the second day is just a bit easier, and the third is easier still, and one day you'll find you've got yourself a new habit. And as you reinforce your habit, you can do more each time, until you're at the level you had in mind when you made your resolution. Again, the key is to do *something*. One thing to keep in mind is that whenever possible, it's best to take your action as early in the day as possible. The longer you put it off, the greater the odds are that you won't do it at all.

A good way to build that daily discipline is to use the free [Simpleology](#) course. This fun and easy to use system takes only 15 minutes a day, and has been shown to increase productivity by up to 300%.

3. SUPPORT Is Essential To Achieving Your Resolution

How can one beam alone support a house? ~Chinese Proverb

This one's a very real but less obvious resolution killer. Many people aren't even aware how much support affects achievement. This one's a very real but less obvious resolution killer. Many people aren't even aware how support affects achievement. Sure, you know you shouldn't procrastinate, and you know you shouldn't quit after hitting an obstacle or two, but many folks have no idea how important support is when it comes to focusing on and walking straight toward a goal. But it's a fact—your chances of success at any endeavor are almost always going to be much higher when you do it with others rather than going it alone.

It may be humbling, and it may kill a pet excuse, but you're not the only one who's ever made your type of resolution or who's been through what it takes to succeed. There just are not any brownie points for struggling more than someone else when you could have chosen the easier route. Support is why people who join Alcoholics Anonymous have much higher success rates at quitting alcohol than people who try to do it on their own. The same thing goes for smokers—joining a support group of others who are quitting greatly enhances your chances of forever kicking the cigarette habit.

There are many different reasons why doing something with others is usually more successful than doing it alone. For one thing, there's the encouragement factor. When you're feeling down, discouraged at your lack of progress, or your slip-ups, and you feel like giving up, others are there to encourage you and see helps that were just not obvious or realistic to you. It works the other way too. You start being accountable to members of your group and they begin to count on you.

Of course, not all New Year's resolutions can be done as part of a group, and it may not be possible to have a local group to help you. If that's the

case there are online support groups for just about every endeavor imaginable. If you can't find one nearby, or it is not possible for you to get involved with one, try the internet. It's not quite as good as a local group, but it's a lot better than nothing. You will find groups with more targeted interests online, since almost anyone in the world can join an online group. Try both. It isn't an either/or proposition.

As an example, a new site called [Stepping Through Grief](#) provides support for people dealing with grief, which can be especially difficult during the Christmas season. We are starting a community membership site in early 2008 designed to assist those with aging parents or other loved ones who are no longer able to completely care for themselves, called [The Caregiver Community](#).

Another unique program is called [Instant ADD Success](#). It is designed to show people with ADD how to use it to their advantage in getting what they want out of life. They've built a community of ADD people from all over.

Try to find a group of people near you, no matter how small, who share your goal. You may even be able to identify kindred spirits within one of the groups you already belong to who would benefit by taking on a resolution with you. Even just one other person is helpful.

If you want to exercise more, maybe your spouse would like to make the same resolution. If your resolution directly involves how you work with others you'll need to let them know at least the basics of your plan. It might be good to engage them to help you write the plan. It's much easier to create an ally than to overcome the resistance of someone who feels left out.

If your resolution is to write a novel, join a writer's group or find a mentor. Are you determined to start down the rough (but very doable) road to getting out debt and looking forward to a future where everything you have is paid for, even your home? Looking at a career change? This type of long term "big picture" resolution can be daunting, but with proper planning

and support, can be among the most rewarding things you will ever do. There are several organizations and coaching programs designed to assist you. [48 Days to the Work You Love](#) offers a wide range of online programs and coaching about career goals. [Debt Free in Three](#) is an online course designed to help you become debt free in three to five years.

There are almost as many ideas about finding support as there are resolutions. Whatever your resolution is, make a real effort to try to find another person, or group of people, who share the same goal. Doing so can really mean the difference between success and failure.

4. You NEED A Detailed PLAN for Achieving Your Resolution

Amid a multitude of projects, no plan is devised. ~Publius Syrus

Many people fail to keep their New Year's resolutions because they didn't give them enough thought when they made them. The bigger the goal the resolution represents, the more obvious this truth becomes. If someone resolves to lose five pounds, that's a worthy goal, and for most it's not that hard to achieve. Five pounds amounts to a little over half a gallon of milk. Even so, you still must act and plan ahead how you will get it off and keep it off.

Resolving to lose 50 pounds is a whole 'nother story, and while it's a worthy goal, it's not much of a resolution unless real planning and decision-making have gone into achieving it. There may be a learning curve to your goal that must be accounted for.

Any person who makes a New Year's resolution to lose fifty pounds without writing down a detailed and specific plan for doing so is bound to fail. We often minimize the importance of such a life changing goal by failing to take planning seriously. Losing 50 pounds can add years to your life, so don't short change yourself. Check out one of the wildly popular guides such as [Fat Loss 4 Idiots](#) or [Burn the Fat Feed the Muscle](#) for some proven strategies that have helped many others.

The same goes for New Year's resolutions like "I'm going to write a novel this year" or "I'm going to learn to play piano." Again, these are very worthy goals, and just like losing a significant amount of weight, there's no reason a committed person can't achieve either goal in a year's time. But it's going to be carried out in small increments—baby steps—and those baby steps need to be clearly understood and planned out before attempting the goal.

Instead of just resolving to take off fifty pounds, a person must ask himself what changes will have to be made and at what point on the time line in order to lose those pounds. Those details will become a part of your resolution to be considered and acted upon. “I’m going to lose fifty pounds,” isn’t really a plan, but “I’m going to quit drinking soft drinks at home” and “I’m going to avoid eating fast food” and “I’m going to go work out at the gym for an hour after work on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays” make up a specific plan for achieving the goal.

The same goes for any big resolution. Don’t just resolve to write a novel about Jack the Ripper, resolve to research and write for one hour each morning, to research fashions and customs of 19th century London, draw and write drafts of characters and plot, etc. There are professional, tried and tested, detailed checklists that successful writers follow precisely—even high tech aids such as [New Novelist](#).

Likewise with learning to play piano. Resolve to spend an hour a day and follow a proven system like [Hear and Play](#). Just like the old adage about eating an elephant one bite at a time, you’ll be surprised at how far you can get in a year’s time.

Bottom line: if you’re making a big resolution, take the time to sit down (or stand up to a white board) and analyze it, then write out everything you know you’ll need to do to accomplish your resolution. Now write out the action plans for accomplishing those small baby steps. Use a special year-at-a-glance calendar, or a daytimer, or an instructional guide matched to your own needs.

Don’t be afraid to invest in tools and resources that can move you along much more rapidly. Time is more precious than money, and nothing costs more than bad information or wondering around aimlessly.

Gary Ryan Blair, known as [The Goals Guy](#), outlines the importance of having a strategic plan:

Success is not an accident. It begins with a well-conceived plan. You can and will achieve more in the next year than you have in the past ten with a disciplined Personal Strategic Plan.

Personal strategic planning is a disciplined thought process, which produces fundamental decisions and actions that shape and guide who you are, where you are going, what you do, and how, when and why you do it. All of this is done with a focus on the future.

The purpose of personal strategic planning is to help you:

- Provide direction, meaning, and purpose for your life.
- Make decisions that positively affect your future.
- Focus your energies on what's most important.
- Achieve the greatest results in the shortest period of time.
- Significantly increase your level of performance.
- Enjoy more time, money, balance and freedom.
- Eliminate uncertainty, anxiety, doubt and fear.
- Leverage your skills more effectively.
- Enhance your quality of life, and overall peace of mind
- Be more, do more and ultimately to have more from life.

Personal strategic planning is based on the premise that life will not go according to plan, if you do not have a plan.

5. Your Resolution Must Be SPECIFIC and MEASURABLE

Sudden resolutions, like the sudden rise of mercury in a barometer, indicate little else than the variability of the weather. ~David Hare

This relates to the previous step, but it is not exactly the same. Unless you get specific about your goals, you can't define the little steps that add up to real success. Unless you can measure the results, you'll never know when you've completed a step and are ready for the next one.

Most of us have made vague types of New Year's resolutions, such as "I'm really going to get into shape." Chances are you can't even remember how many times you've done that, because vague resolutions never work.

The desire to get into shape is wonderful, and awareness of the problem is always the first step to solving it. But "getting into shape" is not an effective resolution, and anyone who makes such a vague, formless resolution is not going to stick with it for very long. It's just not possible. Imagine trying to grab hold of a cloud, and you'll understand right away.

What does getting "into shape" mean. Does it mean you're going to lose 3 inches off your stomach? Or that you're going to lose 25 pounds? Or add 4 inches to your chest and biceps? Maybe it means you'll be able to run a 10k race without stopping, or beat your previous record by 5 minutes. For others, it might mean getting those six pack abs to show off at the beach. Whatever it means to you, that's your ultimate goal. Now you can write your New Year's resolutions around the behavior or actions that will cause you to achieve your goal.

Once again, you can start out miles ahead by following a proven system. If you can afford a personal trainer, that's ideal. If not, [The Truth About Six Pack Abs](#) and [Fit Over Forty](#) are two proven fitness programs. If you work long hours on your computer or at a desk, take a look at [Better Posture Guaranteed](#).

The point to remember is that resolutions must be specific and measurable. If they're not, you're setting yourself up for disappointment, because there's no real way to know if you've met your goal or not. Imagine playing football without a goal line, or baseball without home plate. This is true for all New Year's resolutions, not just ones involving losing weight or getting fit.

“I am going to spend more time with my family,” is an admirable statement, but it's not really a New Year's resolution. Contrast that with, “I'm going to be home from work every night by 6:30, plus, I'm going to turn down extra work assignments for Saturdays and Sundays, and plan the days around family outings and activities.” There's a huge difference between the two—one is a vague idea, the other involves specific and measurable actions. So be specific and know what you want when writing your New Year's resolutions—it can mean the difference between success and failure.

6. Making Resolutions PERSONAL And Meaningful

The reason of a resolution is more to be considered than the resolution itself.

~Sir John Holt

This is where a lot of people go wrong with New Year's Resolutions. They choose resolutions that they believe others think they "should" have, or resolutions that they feel would impress someone else, but have no real meaning for themselves. Because their heart isn't in it, as you would expect, their resolutions drop quickly by the wayside. In this case, a failed New Year's resolution may be no big deal, because it should never have been made in the first place.

You've got to make New Year's resolutions that are important to you, not resolutions that you think others would find important or be impressed by. If you feel like you're in a rut, and not using all your skills and talents, then it's fine to resolve to work toward a promotion at work. But if you're perfectly happy where you are, but you feel like some people don't think you earn "enough" money or achieved enough status, take a step back.

Who do you want to impress by getting that promotion? How much does their opinion matter? Is their concern genuinely about what is best for you? Hey, if your spouse is worried because the bills keep growing even after you've tightened up your spending, that's a legitimate concern. Fretting over how you'll be perceived at the class reunion is not. We all tend to be too concerned over how others look at us. That's human nature. The reality is that we are that way because we spend most of our time thinking about ourselves. So does everyone else.

Of course, our greatest joy and happiness revolves around our relationships with family, friends, and loved ones. We can always be a better parent, spouse, child, friend, etc. These areas can be challenging to address,

but greatly rewarding. In most cases, just learning to open up and communicate with those close to us will make a world of difference.

Again, we'd like to recommend the [Healing Codes](#) as a resource for addressing the core issues that hold us all back. It is rooted in the wisdom of King Solomon, "Guard your heart, for out of it flow the issues of life" (Proverbs 4:23) and builds on the latest scientific findings regarding stress, cellular memory, and quantum physics.

If you are making a resolution just to impress someone else, you're making the resolution for the wrong reason. Even if you achieve it, you've failed, because you're letting other people define your happiness for you. You may very well have caused yourself heartache because you hate your new job. Were the other people impressed? Are they satisfied now? But—you did achieve a specific goal and are in that elite 10% group, if only by conscientiously increasing your productivity to what it should have been all along. Come to think of it, I have some resolutions I'd like you to make ...

Even if your resolution reflects a genuine desire on your part, and not just an effort to go along with or impress others, that's still not enough. You must have a strong desire to achieve what your New Year's resolution represents. Merely wanting something isn't enough. It's got to be something that you deeply care about and believe would make a substantial difference in your life if you achieve it. Otherwise, you're swimming upstream, and over time keeping your resolution will start to become a drag.

When the going gets rough, if you don't really have a burning desire to achieve your resolution, you're going to quit. To avoid this, do a thorough examination of yourself and the self you'd like to be—the one you know you could be—a year from now. That's where the rubber meets the road—mentally drawing a map from A to B will show you the changes that are most important to you. You can use them to craft your New Year's resolutions to achieve your real goals.

7. You Must REFUSE To Let Obstacles Slow You Down

Perseverance is more prevailing than violence; and many things which cannot be overcome when they are together, yield themselves up when taken little by little.
~Plutarch

Call them whatever you want. Obstacles. Problems. Hassles. Discouragement. Difficulties. Circumstances. Whatever you call them, when making your New Year's resolutions, and when trying to stick to them, you have to understand that you're going to run into obstacles. No matter how much part of you wants to overcome the obstacles and achieve your resolution, there's going to be another part of you that will be constantly looking for any excuse to quit, to give up, relax, chill out, just take it easy, go back to the way it used to be.

You are going to have to deal with roadblocks, because, as the old cliché says, anything worth doing is never easy—if it were, you'd already be doing it. There *will* be problems along the way. You *will* have trouble getting up an hour earlier to study and write. One man has said he discovered by an alarm clock error that it was physically easier to get up at 4 am than 5 am because the shock and awe of it kept him awake and he didn't even feel like sleeping anymore (more likely he discovered his sleep cycle up phase).

It *will* be cold and wet outside when you want to walk. Some guitar chords *will* be unbelievably hard to master. Writer's block is a real phenomenon, and it *will* happen to you. You *will* hit a plateau where no matter how little you eat or how much you exercise you don't lose anymore weight. The fitness center *will* sometimes be crowded, and you *will* sometimes look foolish. You *will* get cramps, blisters, and sore muscles from working out. You *will* have terrible hunger pangs. You *will* have trouble conjugating French verbs. At times, you *will* go crazy for a cigarette. These few examples are true, and you're not doing yourself justice if you don't have a plan for dealing with these problems as they arise.

This is also key and again, can mean the difference between success and failure when it comes to keeping New Year's resolutions. Those who can deal with and overcome obstacles will achieve their New Year's resolutions; those who can't, won't. So be prepared for them, and be ready to face them head on.

How you deal with them, of course, will depend on the situation. If it's cold and wet all the time, instead of walking outside maybe you should join a gym or wellness center (they are generally affordable even on modest incomes), or go to the mall—some have been known to open the halls earlier to walkers, or get a treadmill. But you should not give up your resolution to walk an hour every day. Think creatively and ask around for ideas. People like to tell you how they handled problems.

If you're having trouble with a particular piece on the piano, take a break and work on something more familiar and easier. You know you don't want to just write off the hard piece—come back to it when you're feeling refreshed and less frustrated. Find a new method to approach it. If you're constantly getting cramps and blisters, don't give up on your resolution to work out. Instead, investigate different kinds of shoes and diet advice.

Paying for a private trainer or instructor or coaching program to show you what you're doing wrong, or doing too much of too soon or maybe in the wrong order is a great idea. [Workout Pass](#) offers online membership to 43 different workout sites with specialist programs. [Healthy Food for Healthy Living](#) is an online community designed to help you develop a better diet and stick with it.

There may be days when you just physically need to take a break, and skip working on your resolution. That may sound inconsistent, but it's not. Ideally, you should stick to your schedule, and stay with your plan, but if you're getting so frustrated and angry at yourself that you're at risk of giving up completely, there's no shame in taking a day off.

Better to miss one day than to fall entirely off the wagon, but don't go overboard either. You should only take a day off when you are extremely frustrated. Don't make it a habit. Always keep that ultimate goal in view. Stay focused on that during the hard times. Also, see the next section on using positive reinforcement to help keep your resolutions for ways to battle discouragement.

There are many different ways of handling problems you encounter as you pursue your goals. How you choose to deal with obstacles and discouragement will be up to you. But you most definitely will have to face these obstacles and deal with them, so honestly evaluating and planning for hard times will make all the difference when they arrive. The old adage may hold true for your resolution: Expect the best, plan for the worst. I've heard children remark much later, "Gee, you said this would happen or maybe that and we planned all this stuff an' we were waiting but then nothin' happened. It was kind-of a waste of time an' everything..." Are you thankful nothing happened? Did we avoid those very problems because of what we learned and how we prepared?

8. Use **POSITIVE REINFORCEMENTS** To Keep Your Resolution

Speech is a mirror of the soul: as a man speaks, so is he. ~Publius Syrus

Let's be real. Normal, thinking, well-adjusted people don't love to hurt themselves, inflict pain, deprive themselves of sleep, food, or enjoyment, or any number of negatives that may be associated with many New Year's resolutions we could make. Many can only focus on the negatives they see ahead—the sacrifice, the pain, the self-denial, the struggle, the inconvenience, the costs, etc. They lose sight of the goal they're striving to achieve and focus instead on the perceived pleasures or comforts they're missing out on, or the bad attitudes of other people being negative for all their own reasons. There are those out there who don't appreciate any success and would love to help you feel good about quitting.

These things can lead to discouragement and resentment, and finally to a feeling of futility, or doubt, and eventually to giving up on one's New Year's resolutions. One way to combat this, of course, is to stay focused on the end point, the goal, which is much easier if you write your resolution down and keep it handy, where you can refer to it every day. It's your inspiration—another reason it should come honestly from within yourself. Inspiration generated from within outperforms motivators from without every time.

But this isn't the only tactic to keep us pushing forward to achieving our New Year's resolutions. We need to use positive reinforcements to keep us motivated, and to keep us going when we feel like quitting. There are many varieties of positive reinforcement, and you should experiment and see which ones are really right for you. Every person is so unique that if it works for you—do it.

Many people swear by the use of affirmations, where they turn their resolution into a positive affirmation and repeat it to themselves out loud

several times a day. For example, “I’m going to lose 50 pounds” becomes “I’m healthy and fit at my ideal weight of 175 pounds.” The idea is that this burns the thought into your subconscious, which in normal response, goes to work directing systems making the truth a reality.

However, Dr. Alex Loyd, author of the [Healing Codes](#), believes that stating affirmations which aren’t true for the person stating them can cause harm and even make the problem worse. This is because internal conflict can be set up within the person, creating additional stress. Our bodies have an innate, natural wisdom that recognizes what is true and false. We often refer to it as intuition, and it is what the Bible calls the heart.

Another popular idea is to cut out pictures from magazines and catalogs that represent some aspect of achieving your New Year’s resolution, and then posting several of them on a bulletin board, wall, or mirror which you use every day, in order to keep your mind on your ultimate goal. Many would say “keeping your eye on the prize.”

One of the most popular methods of positive reinforcement is the idea of planning rewards for yourself after reaching a milestone on the way to your ultimate goal. Treating yourself to a new set of clothes or dinner at an exclusive restaurant every time you mark off significant progress toward your goal are common ways of rewarding staying with it. Not only does this lighten your load and cheer you up, the promise of that sure reward at the next milestone is tremendously motivating. People who get to join you will certainly be cheering you on.

9. Resolutions Need Regular CHECKUPS

It is a bad plan that admits of no modification. ~Publius Syrus

Think of your New Year's resolution as the vehicle that's going to get you from the person you are today to the person you want to become. And just like all vehicles, New Year's resolutions need regular assessments, check-ups, and tune-ups. If you're going to be successful at keeping your resolution, you're going to need to refer to it constantly—you should have it written down somewhere, as we've discussed, and you should look at it regularly to remind you of your goals and to keep you on track. This is where the free [Simpleology](#) program can be of great help.

The more changes you're making, the more important making checkups becomes. This habit helps keep you motivated and focused; without it, it's just too easy to forget your resolution when you get too busy or distracted. So check your written resolution every day, and read it either silently or out loud a few times. Some people like to do it several times a day.

After your checkup, ask yourself how well you're progressing toward your goal of keeping your New Year's resolution. Are you making progress? Are you backsliding? Are you stuck? This is the assessment part. Be honest with yourself. You're the only one who knows the real truth and the only one who's responsible for keeping your resolution and reaching your goals.

There here may come a time when your *resolution* needs a tune-up of sorts. You may come to honestly realize that you bit off more than you could chew with your original resolution, and it may be time to scale it back to a more realistic and achievable goal. There's certainly no shame in this, as long as you're being totally honest with yourself, and not just using it as an excuse to slow down or give up because "it's hard."

Along the same lines, life has a funny way of changing all the time, and unexpected events in your life may truly prevent you from keeping your original resolution. An injury, pregnancy, job change, or death in the fam-

ily are some events which could make sticking to your original resolution impractical, inappropriate, or just flat-out impossible.

While that would be unfortunate, there's no reason to give up on it entirely. Revisit your written resolution, and see if there's not some way to scale back, but keep baby-stepping in the right direction—especially keeping the habits not affected by the change. The important thing is to keep making forward progress.

Finally, if you're diligent and follow all the suggestions you've read here, you may well find yourself achieving your goal far ahead of schedule. If so, congratulations! And again, congratulations!! But why stop there? Instead, use the momentum and success you've earned and build on them by either taking your New Year's resolution to a new, higher level, or by coming up with some new goals that you can immediately start pursuing. There's no need to wait for another new year to roll around, especially when you're on a roll!

But if you want to rest and bask... bask away! I'm one who really understands the reward system.

10. Becoming A Person Of ACTION Is Key

Every man feels instinctively that all the beautiful sentiments in the world weigh less than a single lovely action. ~James Russell Lowell

Although this is related to our first topic, it's not quite the same thing. Plain ol' every day *laziness* is another big problem when it comes to both making and keeping our New Year's resolutions. You may think it's a harsh label, and no one likes to think of themselves as lazy, but the fact is many of us have gotten used to doing very little physical or mental activity outside of work. It's just as true that the vast majority of New Year's resolutions will require increased mental or physical activity, or both.

This can be quite a shock to our systems (especially older folks) when we try to make the adjustment no matter how well-intentioned we are when we make our resolutions. We're a nation of couch potatoes, and obesity is becoming something of a national epidemic—especially among Americans. There's only one cure for laziness, and that's taking action! Getting up out of our recliners and **doing** something!

Although laziness (or if you prefer, inertia) is a separate problem, doing all the things we suggest in this book can play a big part in overcoming it. If you've been a couch potato for a long time and your resolution will involve becoming a non-couch potato, take care not to bite off more than you can chew at first. Be realistic about your abilities and tolerances, and write your resolution accordingly. If you're grossly overweight, while your ultimate goal might be to lose 100 pounds, your immediate goal might be to walk once around the block every day for a month (preferably without passing out).

You want to dream big, but you also have to keep in mind where you're starting from. Trying to do too much at once will only lead to injury, discouragement and failure. Along with not trying to do too much at once, having written goals and referring to them often will also help spur you

into action. Keep that index card in your wallet, or taped to your bathroom mirror, where your resolution will haunt your conscience if you plop down in front of the TV every night.

And finally, make a point of becoming a person of action in *all* areas of your life. When you've got a task to do, *just do it*. Make a conscious and constant effort to fight procrastination, which is the twin brother of laziness. Keep to-do lists, and mark off tasks that you've successfully completed. Not only will this habit help you keep your New Year's resolution, it will also improve your life in a great many other ways.

Wrapping It All Up

The changes in our life must come from the impossibility to live otherwise than according to the demands of our conscience not from our mental resolution to try a new form of life. ~Leo Tolstoy

Around 90% of the people who make New Year's resolutions won't keep them. You may have failed at keeping your New Year's resolutions in the past, but you have the basic tools and knowledge you need to make New Year's resolutions and see them through to completion. By using what you've learned in this book, you can put your past failures behind you and really begin changing your life for the better.

First, only make a New Year's resolution that involves something you care about, a resolution that's important and meaningful to you.

Second, be quite specific when it comes to what you're resolving. Design in measurable results. Vague and half formed resolutions are an express ticket to failure.

Third, have a plan for accomplishing your resolution. It needs to be as detailed and thought-out as possible if you're going to succeed at your New Year's resolution. Be realistic. You want to stretch yourself, but at the same time you don't want to set a goal that's impossible to reach, as this will only lead to disappointment and discouragement. Know what you're capable of, and start from where you are.

Fourth, and please don't underestimate the importance of this one, you must write your New Year's resolutions down. Actually putting them in writing is the first step to making your goals a reality. Skip this step, and it's highly unlikely you'll keep your resolution.

Fifth, do not procrastinate. Jump right into your new lifestyle or habit right away, at the first of the year, and whenever possible, cultivate your new habits and choices as early as possible during the day.

Sixth, if at all possible, try to find a partner or group to work with in keeping your New Year's resolution. Your chances of success will be much higher than if you try to go it alone.

Seventh, realize that you're going to face obstacles and difficulties, and have plans for dealing with them. Don't let them be excuses for giving up your New Year's resolutions.

Eighth, use positive reinforcement to stay focused and encouraged while on your journey. Reward yourself when you reach significant milestones.

Ninth, revisit your New Year's resolutions every day and check yourself against them. If necessary due to circumstances, revise them and update them, but keep making forward progress.

Tenth, cultivate the habit of *action*, of getting off the couch, of completing tasks immediately. This habit alone can revolutionize your life.

Making this A New YOU Year!

Anyone who stops learning is old, whether at twenty or eighty. Anyone who keeps learning stays young. The greatest thing in life is to keep your mind young. ~Henry Ford

So often we think of New Year's Resolutions in terms of our shortcomings. We all have things we need to improve, habits we need to break, and so on. While addressing these things is important, it isn't sufficient. We've got to keep growing, and learning, and finding what truly brings us fulfillment. It's much better (and easier) to be pulled along by a great love or passion than to be pushed by necessity.

For instance, it is much easier to improve our diet and stay in shape because we love to take long walks down remote nature trails or run half-marathons than it is because the doctor has ordered us to. When we are driven by a larger vision and goal, the smaller things tend to fall in line much more readily.

What do you love to do? Is there a hobby or skill that you've wanted to explore or develop for a long time, but have put off? Learning to play the piano, or paint, or build a rock garden. Taking up ballroom dancing, or writing a book. There are hundreds of things you can choose from.

Why not make a resolution this year to do something you have always wanted to do. Even if it is just taking a small step towards it, like reading up on it for 5 or 10 minutes every day. Don't have time to sit and read? Get an mp3 player and listen to podcasts or books on tape while you are doing the dishes or driving to work.

Start looking for places during your day where you can "upgrade" low quality time with something of higher value. Start filling that time with things that really interest and inspire you, and by the end of the year you'll look back in amazement at what you have accomplished.

Learning basic skills can open up a whole world of opportunity you never even imagined. For example, have you thought about how learning to draw can improve your powers of observation along with problem solving and communication skills while boosting your confidence? That's what the new Simpleology Great Teachers [Learning to Draw](#) course promises. Once you think about it, that does make sense, because it is such a fundamental skill, like reading or writing. Think of where we would be without them!

What about starting up your own business? All the futurists keep pointing to the day when we all will become independent contractors, but how many people do you know who are working towards developing the skills to do that? Even more to the point, how many of us are feeding our children into an educational system still designed to prepare them for the the workplace of twenty years ago? Why not look into raising a family of entrepreneurs with a community such as [Entrepreneurs at Home](#). Can you imagine the head start your child will have in learning to run a business at a young age? There are certainly a lot worse things to fill his or her time with.

Building a home business can be a great way to generate residual income while gaining tax advantages. There is a lot to learn, but the rewards can be great over time. One of the more unique programs we've seen is [BookWise](#). It requires a very low monthly investment for a turnkey business that provides business and tax training. If you are looking at starting an internet business, [Sitesell](#) brings everything together that you need.

If you already have a going business, have you thought about taking it to the next level with a program like [StomperNet](#)? All businesses, whether local or worldwide, will need to learn how to market online to stay competitive. The [7 Day Business Turnaround](#) can give your business a fast start in the new year.

These are just a few ideas to get your juices flowing. Think outside the box! Challenges are wonderfully stimulating. Make this year the year you turn up the jets on your life!

Recipe for A Happy Year

Take twelve fine, full-grown months. Select only those which are thoroughly free from all old memories of bitterness, rancor, hate and jealousy. Clean them completely free from every clinging spite. Pick off all specks of pettiness and littleness. In short see that each of these months is freed from all the past so that they are as fresh and clean as when they first came from the great storehouse of time.

Next, cut these months into thirty or thirty-one equal parts. They will keep for only one year, so do not attempt to make up the whole batch at one time. Far too many people spoil the entire lot in this way. Rather, prepare but one day at a time.

Into each day put twelve parts of faith, eleven of patience, ten of courage, nine of work (some people omit this ingredient and so spoil the flavor of the rest), eight of hope, seven of fidelity, six of liberality, five of kindness, four of rest (leaving this out is like leaving the oil out of the salad—don't do it), three of prayer, two of meditation and one part only of well-selected resolution. For spice and sweetening, according to our scruples, add about a teaspoon of good spirits, and a dash of fun, a pinch of folly, a sprinkling of play and a heaping cup of good humor.

Pour love, ad libitum, into the whole and mix with vim and vigor. Cook thoroughly in a fervent heart. Garnish with a few smiles and a sprig of joy. Then be sure to serve with quietness, unselfishness and cheerfulness—and a Happy Year is a certainty.

Remember—with a smile and a prayer—twelve new and wonderfully glorious months have been issued in your name to do with as you wish. Father Time has signed your note, so that you have been issued a “credit card” for the entire year!

If you make a mistake, be sure you don't make the same one over again. Laugh at difficulties, and they will soon vanish. Attempt heavier respon-

sibilities, and you will find them growing lighter. Face a bad situation and it will clear up. Tell the truth and find an easier way out. Do an honest-to-goodness day's work every day and reap the rewards. Believe men are honest, and you will find them living up to your expectations. Trust in God and He will surprise you with His goodness. ~Anonymous

About the Author

Debra Thompson is the author of [*How to Protect Your Child from 12 Diseases Your Mother Never Told You About*](#), and the founder of the [Natural Health Co-op](#), a website designed to bring together people involved in solving health issues naturally.

Debra is also the host of [A Healthy New Year](#), a podcast featuring interviews with people involved in natural health related issues. She has a background in biology, and has spent over 25 years applying natural health practices in her family.

If you are interested in being featured at the Natural Health Co-op or interviewed for *A Healthy New Year*, please [contact us here](#).

Resources for a New YOU Year

Nothing is worth more than this day. You cannot relive yesterday. Tomorrow is still beyond your reach. ~Johann Wolfgang Von Goethe

Most of us create New Years Resolutions in the following categories. We've listed some recommended resources for each of them. Following a clearly defined path can make the difference between success and failure.

We live in an age of information overload. What we need is the right information, put in easy to follow steps. The internet has allowed for a wide range of specialist information that was not practical to produce and market physically before. Transactions are handled by credible third party sites such as Clickbank and Paypal, providing the best protection for the buyer. All information products carry at least a 30-day guarantee, and most have even longer guarantees. You can get instant access, and get your money back if the product doesn't work for you. All from the comfort of home.

We've compiled a listing of the most popular resources below, along with others we've tried and recommend.

If we don't have one listed from your area of interest, you can search for it [here](#).

Resolution Resource Links

Getting Organized

[Simpleology](#)

[Goals Guy Personal Strategic Plan](#)

Getting into Shape

[Fit Over Forty](#)

[Better Posture Guaranteed](#)

[Workout Pass](#)

[The Truth About Six Pack Abs](#)

Lose Weight!

[Fat Loss 4 Idiots](#)

[Burn the Fat Feed the Muscle](#)

Eating Right

[Healthy Food for Healthy Living](#)

[Meal Plans 101](#)

Education/Get a Better Job

[BookWise](#)

[Entrepreneurs at Home](#)

[48 Days to the Work You Love](#)

Quit Smoking!

[EasyQuit System](#)

[Quit Smoking.com](#)

Reduce Stress

The [Healing Codes](#)

Pay Off Debt

[Debt Free in Three System](#)

Travel

[Fired Travel Agent](#)

Improve My Business

[StomperNet](#)

[Sitesell - Build an Online Web Business](#)

[7 Day Business Turnaround](#)

[Basic Accounting for Small Business](#)

[Ebiz Tax Tips](#)

Family/Personal Challenges

[Instant ADD Success](#)

[The Caregiver Community](#)

[Stepping Through Grief](#)

Enrichments/Hobbies/Skills

[Learn to Draw](#)

[Hear and Play Piano](#)

[Electric Guitar](#)

[Acoustic Guitar](#)

[Drums, Bass, and Guitar](#)

[Sing](#)

[Read Music](#)

Learn A Language

[Spanish](#)

[French](#)

[German](#)

[Japanese](#)

[American Sign Language](#)

Write a Book or Novel

[New Novelist](#)

Pets

[Sit Stay Fetch Dog Training](#)

[Dog Training System](#)

[Cat Secrets Revealed](#)

[Dog Care Secrets](#)

If you don't see your subject covered, you can [find dozens more at the CB Mall.](#)