

FOREVER ACTIVE

PERSONALIZED FITNESS AND WELLNESS FOR MEN 50 +

New Year's Resolutions and Goal Setting

Introduction

Every year millions of people start the new year with grand hopes and expectations. Often, their first step in trying to achieve these is the ritual of making one or many new year's resolutions. Unfortunately, for the majority of people who make these promises to themselves, failure and disappointment follows. It is never enough to make a resolution or goal for yourself, you must have a plan in place to make it a reality. Good intentions are nice but usually highly ineffective when it comes to trying to reach a goal or make a change in your life. This newsletter deals with the science of making a change in your life, why most new year resolutions fail, and how to set achievable goals so you can make the changes that will enhance the quality of your life.

Why New Year Resolutions and Most Goal Setting Fails

Making New Years Resolutions and goal setting can be a very positive resource. They can provide an opportunity for us to evaluate our progress in life; they can invigorate our lives with inspiring challenges and wonderful experiences to look forward to. However, there is a science and art to doing it successfully.

Most resolutions fail for two reasons;

1. They were too big or too unrealistic to be achieved. By definition, resolution means "the act of reducing to a simpler form".
2. No process was established and followed to reach the intended target. A goal is "the end toward which effort is directed". If that effort is not directed in a precise and orderly fashion then the likelihood of success is greatly reduced.

"Great" Expectations

Whether or not you expect to accomplish something will decisively impact whether or not you do. Expectations cause two things to happen;

1. They stimulate actions that are consistent with the expectation. Outcomes are then produced which are consistent with those actions.
2. Expectations inspire or create an environment for success. If you truly believe in your expectation to succeed, you will surround yourself and your environment, with friends, family, co-workers, acquaintances, etc. that will encourage and support you in achieving your goals and aspirations. If you truly embrace your expectations, why would you not create an environment that would help facilitate you achieving them?

As a result, your "Expectation" becomes a dominant force in determining the outcome.



Did You Know

Over 40% of the population engages in making New Years Resolutions

Success Rate of Resolutions

A 2007 study by Richard Wiseman from the University of Bristol involving 3,000 people showed that 88% of those who set New Year resolutions fail, despite the fact that 52% of the study's participants were confident of success at the beginning. Men achieved their goal 22% more often when they engaged in a systemized approach to goal setting, (small, specific, realistic, and measurable goals are set; such as, losing a pound a week, instead of saying "lose weight"). Women, have greater success when they made their goals public and received support from their friends.

Sustainability of Resolutions

Frank Ra, author of the new year's resolution book "A Course in Happiness" states that Resolutions/Goals are more sustainable when they are shared, both in terms of;

1. With whom you share the benefits of your resolution.
2. With whom you share the path of maintaining your resolution.

Conclusion

1. Set S.M.A.R.T. goals (see page 2)
2. Share your goals with your family and friends

Popular Goals and Resolutions:

1. Improve your physical well being
 - eat healthy foods
 - lose weight
 - exercise more
 - drink less alcohol
2. Improve mental well being
 - think positive
 - laugh more
 - enjoy the simple things
 - don't sweat the small stuff
3. Improve your finances
 - get out of debt
 - save more money
 - establish a realistic budget
 - make small, conservative investments
4. Improve your career
 - perform better at work
 - start your own business
 - upgrade your skills
 - get along better with your co-workers
5. Improve self and community
 - pray more
 - volunteer
 - spend more time with family
 - make new friends

Goal Setting

Research has shown that the practise of writing down your goals results in a great opportunity to achieve these goals. Goal setting only takes a few minutes of thought and effort but it can redirect your thought and actions into achieving something special.

The secret to Goal setting is to be **S.M.A.R.T.**

Specific - Be as specific as possible. The more specific you are the better you can visualize the result.

Measureable - If you can't measure it, you can't do it. You must identify specific metrics to measure your progress and achievements.

Action - What are the specific actions are you going to take to achieve your goals? Be specific.

Realistic - It is important that the Goal you set can be realistically accomplished based on the resources, time and effort you can commit to it. If not, frustration, disillusionment and failure will result. List how is your goal realistic

Timed Lined - Set a specific time (a week, a month, a year) to accomplish your goal. Set a long-term and short-term time line so you can measure your progress.

Worksheet

Use the following worksheet to list resolutions/goals in a **S.M.A.R.T.** way

First Goal:

<u>Specific</u>	
<u>Measureable</u>	
<u>Action</u>	
<u>Realistic</u>	
<u>Timed Lined</u>	

Second Goal:

<u>Specific</u>	
<u>Measureable</u>	
<u>Action</u>	
<u>Realistic</u>	
<u>Timed Lined</u>	