

## **It's never too late for wellness resolutions**

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If you made a New Year's resolution this year, chances are your goal was to improve your health in some way. Maybe you're determined this is the year you'll start exercising more and eating better. Maybe it's the year you'll give up smoking for good. Maybe you've vowed to stop procrastinating.

Whether you're trying to quit an old bad habit or start a new healthy one, lifestyle changes are challenging. If you made a resolution this year and are still on track, way to go! Reward yourself and keep it up!

What? Your resolution was to not make a resolution? Don't give up! Change is possible and you can do it. Start with a simple, realistic goal. Over the course of a lifetime making small healthy steps in the right direction will take you where you want to go.

Here are some tips to keep in mind if your resolutions involve exercise or eating well:

### **Exercise**

Play! Just move! Find activities you enjoy. Schedule them. Make them part of your routine. Make exercise as important as any other part of your day. Involve your family. Recruit a friend. Take a class. Keep a journal. Try something new. Keep moving! Get a physical exam and talk with your physician. Stretch. Raise your heart rate for 30 minutes at a time most days of the week. Do strength building and muscle toning exercises 3 or 4 days each week.

### **Eat Well**

Think of diet as a long-term eating plan, not something to go on and off. Eat real foods. Eat whole foods. Eat foods that resemble food. Watch out for highly processed foods. Be careful with fast foods. Think of sweets as treats – enjoy them once in awhile. Eat a couple whole fruits and a few servings of vegetables daily. Take smaller portions and try smaller bites. Chew your food for a long time and savor the flavor! Learn healthy cooking practices.

### **Activity-Balance-Connections: The ABCs of wellness**

Physical activity and healthy eating are essential for wellness but there's more to it than that. Besides your physical self, you've got spiritual, intellectual, emotional, and social selves to think about. All these parts of you are connected – they interact and affect each other.

Wellness involves protecting, nurturing, and balancing your whole self. Here are a few ideas for doing that:

## **Spiritual**

Schedule daily soul exercise. Meditate. Pray. Spend time alone. Apologize. Forgive someone. Forgive yourself. Trust. Contemplate right & wrong. Identify your values. Examine your behavior in light of your values. Appreciate natural beauty. Sing. Renew your faith. Serve. Put someone else first. Be honest. Be truthful. Accept yourself. Volunteer.

## **Physical**

Eat well. Exercise. Play. Recreate. Keep moving. Wear your seatbelt. Wear your helmet. Use other protective gear. Get enough sleep and rest. Avoid harmful substances. Don't smoke. Alcohol in moderation if at all. Never drive with alcohol onboard. Practice breathing exercises. Drink plenty of water. Take a self-defense class. Give and get hugs.

## **Intellectual**

Ask questions. Challenge your own beliefs. Organize a closet, garage, or file cabinet. Seek deeper levels of understanding. Simplify. Learn a new skill. Learn a new game. Read for pleasure. Figure out food labels. Do crossword puzzles. Use a new word daily. Create art. Write poetry. Write an editorial. Question crime and violence as entertainment.

## **Emotional**

Manage stress. Smile more. Talk to a friend. Talk to a counselor. Cry. Laugh. Speak your love for someone. Be a role model. Give someone the benefit of the doubt. Clean up your language. Stop gossiping. Find the good in others. Go on a news fast. Show your affection. Say thank you. Accept compliments graciously. Listen. Be kind.

## **Social**

Reconnect with an old friend. Mend a broken relationship. Travel. Experience different cultures. Join a club. Take a class. Teach a class. Volunteer. Be a mentor. Support a worthy cause. Get involved in your community. Share something. Start a tradition. Research family history. Host a dinner. Commit a random act of kindness.

## **Get started today!**

As you set goals and take steps toward better health, keep these guidelines in mind:

- For serious health issues seek help from professionals.
- Visualize the healthy lifestyle you want.
- Write goals as affirmations and post them everywhere.
- If you're trying to break a bad habit, replace it with a healthy one.
- Predict obstacles and plan ahead to overcome them.
- Identify a support system.
- Backsliding happens. When it does, get past it and keep going.
- Keep a daily journal of your progress.
- Reward your success.