

do
your
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easy

smile

live
now

let it be

make
a
difference

be cool

focus

help

share

KEEPING YOUR RESOLUTIONS FRESH

by Mechelle Meadows

The phrase "New Year's resolution" probably makes you think of the typical January goals (e.g., lose weight, eat better, spend less money). This year, challenge yourself by setting smaller goals out of the ordinary that help you achieve that final resolution.

Switch it up. Incorporate variety into your goals so you don't lose interest when your willpower weakens. For example, if your goal is to exercise more often, try committing to one new form of physical activity each month. If you want to increase your volunteer time or charitable giving, try devoting your time and resources to a different organization each month.

Spread the word. Sharing your goals with others will help you stay accountable and make the journey more fun. For example, if your goal is to spend less money eating out, try having a different friend over for dinner each week. Or if you are trying to exercise more often, take a different buddy with you each time you go.

It's a new year full of new opportunities. Keep it fresh by setting goals outside of the norm. Challenge yourself, but most importantly, have fun! ✕

IN THIS ISSUE

- 2 5 Steps to Stop Negative Self-talk
- 3 Rethinking Resolutions
- 4 Harvest of the Month: Bok Choy

SMART FACTS

➤50%

Number of Americans who make New Year's resolutions.

1 IN 8

Number of adults who will keep their New Year's resolutions for at least 1 year.

66 DAYS

The average time it takes for a new habit to become routine.



5 STEPS TO STOP NEGATIVE SELF-TALK

by Kelly Thomson, MSHP

Many of us are all too familiar with nagging thoughts such as, “I’m not good enough,” or “I can’t do this.” This negative self-perception, whether related to your appearance or an ability, can cast doubt on your goals and undermine your accomplishments and happiness. Excessive negative self-talk can affect many parts of your life, including your relationships, attitude, stress, and how you perform at work.

If you are struggling with your inner critic, there are five simple steps you can take to silence that voice and mold your self-perception into something positive.

- **Think happy thoughts.** How you think about yourself is often directly related to how others think about you. Your attitude always shines through, so think positively and your relationships will benefit.
- **Don’t dwell on shortcomings.** When things don’t go as planned, it can be hard to move on and stop yourself from overthinking the situation. Negative feelings tend to worsen the more attention you give them, so try to learn from your mistakes and look for the silver lining so you can let go.
- **Distract yourself.** If you can’t stop overthinking, find a way to distract yourself. Play a game with your family, watch television, or do anything that will fully engage your mind and limit the amount of time you spend in the negative zone.
- **Make reminders.** It may not be easy to switch all of your negative thoughts into positive ones right away, so try posting positive reminders around you, like on your desk at work or in your bedroom. These reminders can be inspirational quotes or simply a list of your best qualities to keep you on the right track.
- **Empower yourself to make a change.** It’s a powerful thing to realize how you could benefit from making a change in your life and going for it. The change could be losing those 10 pounds you’ve been holding on to, becoming more organized, or getting your financials in order. If you find that you are having a recurring negative thought, it may be time to make a change and mold that thought into, “I can make this better, and I know how.”

Negative feelings tend to worsen the more attention you give them.

These tips can help you get on the right track toward a more positive self-perception, but it will take practice and patience. When you are stuck in a difficult situation, give yourself the same compassion you would give to someone you care about if they approached you with the same problem. You’ll be happier for it. ✨

Sources: WebMD. webmd.com/balance/express-yourself-13/negative-self-talk?page=1. Accessed 12 December 2014.

Health.com. health.com/health/gallery/0,,20683082,00.html?utm_source=huffingtonpost.com&utm_medium=referral&utm_campaign=pubexchange_article. Accessed 12 December 2014.

RETHINKING RESOLUTIONS

by Laura Lubus, MPH

What if we didn't make New Year's resolutions, but instead made lifetime resolutions? Nearly 45% of Americans start the New Year with great intentions to make positive changes in their life. Of those people, only 8% typically succeed in their goals. That is great news for the 8%, but what about everyone else that wanted to make personal improvements and didn't succeed? It doesn't take long for the months to fly by and for those fresh new goals to become a distant memory.

So let's change how we think about resolutions. This year while you are thinking about what you want to accomplish, set out to make a true behavior change. If you change your behavior instead of small, short term changes, the impact will continue for many years versus a few months. For example, you might want to lose weight or build up your savings. Start with setting a long-term goal (e.g., five years from now) and then break it into smaller pieces (e.g., in six months). Having a long-term goal and realistic smaller steps to get there will help you make lasting life changes. ✧

FINANCIAL CORNER WITH PETE THE PLANNER

Setting goals for the new year? Here are my tips for setting and accomplishing goals this year:

1. Don't make a year-long goal. I always recommend making 30-day goals. Thirty days is plenty of time to complete a goal and it keeps your momentum going. Plus, it prevents burnout.
2. Make a very specific goal. Bad goal: I am going to save more for retirement. Good goal: I am going to increase my retirement contribution by 5% this month. Your goals need to be quantifiable and realistic.
3. Establish an emotional connection to your goal. If your 30-day goal is to contribute \$1,000 more to your daughter's college fund, take a moment to think about your daughter's future. When the choice comes down to a \$100 steak dinner versus your daughter's happiness, the decision is obvious. An emotional connection to your goal will help you overcome roadblocks. ✧



NEW YEAR'S DAY JANUARY 1

January 1 has been the day to celebrate the New Year since 45 B.C. Why? Because Julius Caesar said so. Caesar updated the Roman calendar that year to better match the lunar cycle.

HARVEST OF THE MONTH: BOK CHOY

by Kaitlin Enneking

Bok Choy is a vegetable of the cruciferous family, which includes cabbage, kale, and brussels sprouts. Cruciferous vegetables have leaves that do not form a head, which is why bok choy is often referred to as a non-heading Chinese cabbage. It is also known as white cabbage or white-stem cabbage. Unlike other members of the cruciferous family, bok choy has 21 nutrients that provide excellent nutritional value, including Omega-3 and a number of antioxidants that help remove toxins from the blood stream and have anti-inflammatory properties.

How to select

Choose bok choy that has firm, bright green colored leaves and moist hardy stems. Avoid wilted or brown colored leaves.

How to store

Once you've purchased your bok choy, store them in a plastic storage bag, removing as much of the air from the bag as possible, and refrigerate. While refrigerated, they should last one week and maintain their firmness.



How to prepare

You can consume virtually all parts of bok choy without much trimming or worrying about problematic textures or cooking times. Simply rinse the bok choy and then slice. Let the bok choy sit at room temperature for five minutes before cooking. It can be enjoyed raw, sautéed, steamed, or even in soups. ☒

Source: The World's Healthiest Foods. whfoods.com/genpage.php?tname=foodspice&dbid=152. Accessed 16 December 2014.

RECIPE OF THE MONTH: *Bok Choy and Apple Slaw*

Ingredients

- 1/3 cup reduced-fat sour cream
- 1/3 cup reduced-fat mayonnaise
- 2 Tablespoons apple cider vinegar
- 2 teaspoons sugar or honey
- 1/2 teaspoon celery salt
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 6 cups very thinly sliced bok choy (1-pound head, trimmed)
- 1 large granny smith apple, julienned or shredded
- 1 large carrot, julienned or shredded
- 1/2 cup slivered red onion

Nutritional Info

PER SERVING: 56 calories, 2g fat, 3mg cholesterol, 8g carbohydrates, 1g added sugars, 2g protein, 1g fiber, 272mg sodium, 224mg potassium

Source: Eating Well. eatingwell.com/recipes/bok_choy_apple_slaw.html. Accessed 16 December 2014.

Directions

1. Whisk sour cream, mayonnaise, vinegar, sugar (or honey), celery salt, and salt in a large bowl until smooth.
2. Add bok choy, apple, carrot, and onion; toss to coat.

Makes 8 servings, 3/4 cup each.