



MAKING SELF-IMPROVEMENT STICK

A new year offers each of us the opportunity to start fresh to set new goals, recalibrate priorities or establish some helpful new habits. It's a time when we can take stock of our lives, re-evaluate life choices and focus on what we truly want, like personal growth or other meaningful changes. Whether it's finally pursuing that passion project, forming healthier daily routines or simply being more present with loved ones, the new year is a great time to reflect on how we want to show up differently and lay out a plan to become a better version of ourselves.

Although temporal landmarks like New Year's Day motivate aspirational behavior, a phenomenon coined by researchers as "The Fresh Start Effect," many people

have trouble keeping their New Year's resolutions. For most of us, by mid-February, the sweet comfort of old, familiar patterns starts to creep in, and our enthusiasm for change starts to wane. That's because making your self-improvement stick and successfully affecting long-term change is challenging. There are, however, proven strategies grounded in behavioral science that can help transform resolutions into new sustained lifestyles and mindsets.

Award-winning behavioral scientist Katy Milkman wrote an article for CNN Health based on her book, *How to Change: The Science of Getting from Where You Are to Where You Want to Be*. Most effective for smaller, concrete goals, she lists out five proven ways for sticking to resolutions. View these five strategies on page 2.

IN THIS ISSUE

- 2 Making Self-Improvement Stick
- 3 Employee Assistance Programs
- 4 Recipe of the Month

Helpful Tips

TAKE A LOOK AT YOUR PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

Take just 10 minutes a day for the next five days to work on straightening up your surrounding spaces.

SPEND TIME WITH A FRIEND

Seek out a best friend this week and set a time for lunch, a movie, a walk in the park, or anything else that comes to mind.

TAKE A TELEVISION BREAK

This week, try reading a book, working on a craft project, play a game, write a story, or take a walk instead of turning on the TV.



STRATEGIES FOR MAKING CHANGE LAST

- 1. Make detailed cue-based plans outlining exactly when and where you will act** to increase accountability and the likelihood of following through with your change. For example, if your resolution is to go to the gym at least three days a week, make sure that you specify when exactly you will go, e.g., “I will go to the gym on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays at 6:00 a.m.”
- 2. Consider stakes or penalties like cash bets or social announcements** to motivate sticking to resolutions through built-in costs for failure. Incentives have the power to change our decisions, but penalties are even more motivating.
- 3. Keep it fun** by incorporating elements of pleasure into the habits themselves to intrinsically drive persistence and make it sustainable. If your exercise routine is not fun, it is unlikely you will keep up with it.
- 4. Cut yourself some slack** and allow for the occasional exception without writing off the entire resolution. If you stay up late watching your favorite show and miss your Wednesday workout, give yourself a get-out-of-jail free card and pick up the next day.
- 5. Get by with a little help from your friends.** By pursuing resolutions collaboratively with peers, the group increases its chances of success due to mutual support, motivation and the ability to learn tips and tricks from one another. For example, if you're just starting at the gym, get a workout buddy or ask questions of other gym-goers as they pop up. Learning how others achieved success and trying out their methods increases the chances of your own success.

While the optimism of a fresh start often fades by mid-February, with science-based strategies, lasting change is always within reach. Approaching resolutions as inviting experiments in living a more fulfilling life can set the stage for personal growth and meaningful progress. However, important keys to that approach are self-compassion, permitting for some flexibility, leveraging social supports, and, above all, finding pleasure in progress. With consistency around these supportive tactics, you can make self-improvement stick and become your best in ways that ripple outwards to the benefit of everyone you come in contact with.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Upcoming Wise & Well Webinar – Register Now!

Making Self-Improvement Stick: Strategies for Thriving In our Modern World

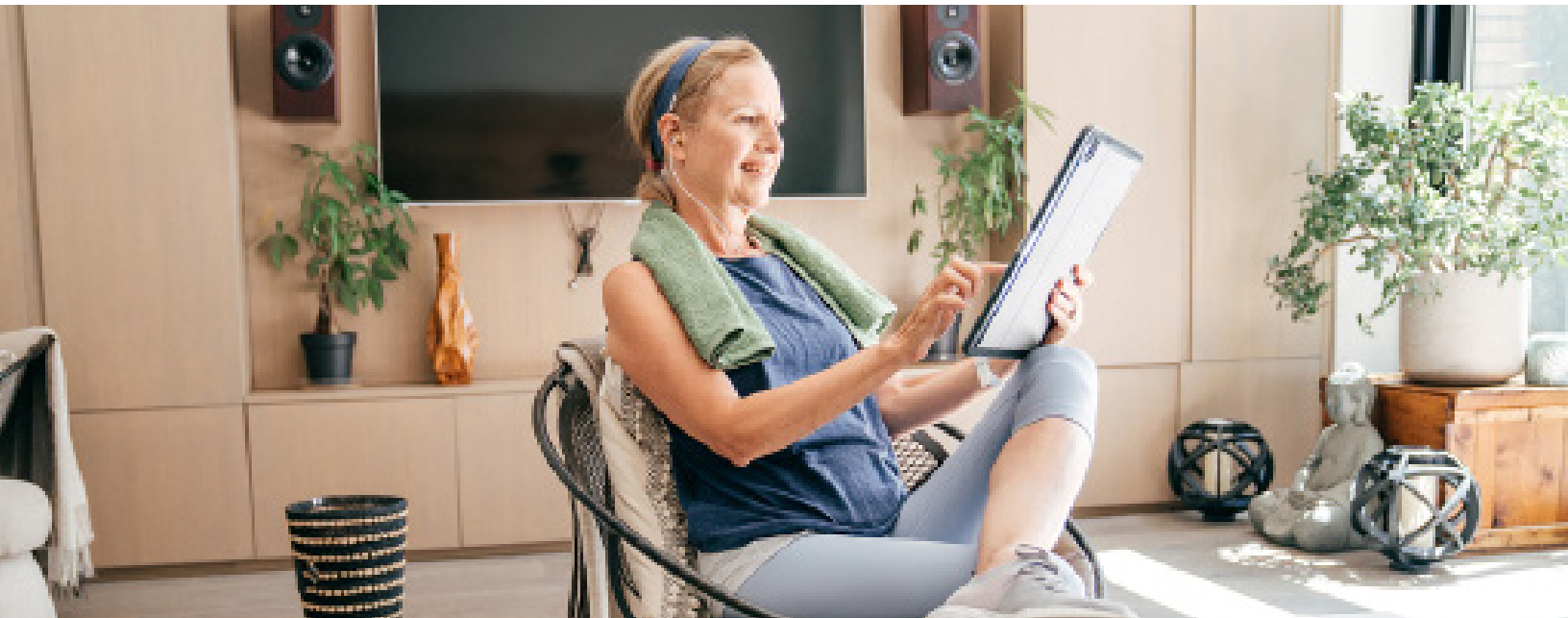
Tuesday, January 16 | Noon – 1:00 p.m. ET

In today's world of non-stop notifications and work-life overlap, modern day stressors and lifestyle are leading to burnout and unfulfillment. This webinar will empower attendees with the knowledge and tools to make the changes necessary to thrive, both personally and professionally.

The webinar includes:

- The five fundamental building blocks of happiness and resilience
- Using mindfulness techniques to manage the negative thoughts that hold us back
- Rewiring our brains for positivity and resilience through neuroscience
- Evidence-based research from the leading scientists who study human flourishing
- Customizable, “toolkit” (workbook) to put building blocks into action
- And much more!

To register, [click here](#) or scan the QR code. For more information about the webinar, view the [Employee Flyer](#).



Monthly Moves: Seated Knee to Chest Chair Exercise

This exercise helps stretch your hamstring and glutes, which are large muscle groups that need to be flexible to prevent injury. Flexibility also reduces stiffness and pain, allowing you to perform day-to-day activities. **To perform the exercise.**

1. **Sit up straight in your desk chair with your left foot firmly on the ground.**
2. Grasp the back of your right knee and slowly pull it toward your chest until you feel a stretch.
3. Hold the position for 30 seconds and then repeat with your left leg. Perform 30 repetitions in total.

Click [HERE](#) for a demo video.

RECIPE OF THE MONTH

When you want a healthy, filling meal, you can't beat a dish centered on salmon. For this healthy dish featuring potatoes, Yukon Golds are great because they get crispy on the outside but completely creamy on the inside. A brush stroke or two of balsamic glaze provides a rich color and a sweet finish to the roasted salmon.



Recipe:

Rosemary Roasted Salmon with Asparagus and Potatoes

Ingredients:

3 tbs extra-virgin olive oil
1 tbs chopped fresh rosemary
1 ¼ pounds Yukon Gold potatoes, cut into 1-inch pieces
1 teaspoon salt, divided
¾ teaspoon ground pepper, divided
1 pound asparagus, trimmed
4 (5 ounces) skinless salmon fillets, preferably wild
1 medium lemon
2 tablespoons balsamic glaze
½ teaspoon whole-grain mustard

Directions:

Preheat oven to 425 degrees F.

Stir together oil, rosemary and garlic in a small bowl. Place potatoes in a large bowl and toss with 1 tablespoon of the oil mixture and 1/2 teaspoon each of salt and pepper. Arrange the potatoes on a large rimmed baking sheet. Roast until lightly browned and tender, about 20 minutes.

Place asparagus in the large bowl and toss with 1 tablespoon of the oil mixture, 1/4 teaspoon salt and 1/8 teaspoon pepper. Arrange the asparagus on the other end of the baking sheet. Roast until the asparagus is bright green, about 3 minutes.

Brush salmon with the remaining 1 tablespoon oil mixture and sprinkle with the remaining 1/4 teaspoon salt and 1/8 teaspoon pepper. Place the salmon in the center of the pan. Thinly slice half the lemon and tuck the slices around the salmon and vegetables. Roast for 5 minutes more. Cut the remaining lemon half into wedges.

Whisk balsamic glaze and mustard in a small bowl. Brush 1 tablespoon of the mixture on the salmon. Continue roasting until the salmon is just cooked through and the vegetables are tender, about 5 minutes. Drizzle the vegetables with the remaining sauce. Serve with the lemon wedges.

Nutrition Information (10 servings):

CALORIES: 341; SUGARS: 36G; FAT: 16G; CARBOHYDRATES: 46G; FIBER: 2G;
PROTEIN: 3G; SODIUM: 73MG; POTASSIUM: 80MG

Sources:

1. <https://edition.cnn.com/2021/11/29/health/5-steps-habit-builder-wellness/index.html>
2. <https://pubsonline.informs.org/doi/10.1287/mnsc.2014.1901>
3. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LF1gOCOS5nk>
4. <https://www.vivehealth.com/blogs/resources/chair-exercises-for-seniors>
5. <https://www.eatingwell.com/recipe/280094/rosemary-roasted-salmon-with-asparagus-potatoes/>