

Your Wellness Resolution Making It Work Throughout the New Year

By Tim Brewer

It's that time of the year. Time to make a New Year's resolution and, more importantly, stick with it in 2008! Exercise and a better diet usually top the list of resolutions. The intentions are always noble, but it is very difficult to follow through unless one comes up with a plan and makes adjustments to both lifestyle and attitude.

Planning the way

First, set difficult yet obtainable goals. If your goal is to lose weight, set target dates to reach this goal (one pound a week is a good start for many). Next, identify why you want to shed pounds and what you think might happen when you reach this goal. Motivation to push an extra 10 minutes on the stationary bike or walk the dog another three blocks will help your success.

Your plan should include a complete exercise and balanced diet program. Focus your time at the gym on cardiovascular training, stretching and strength training. If you are a rookie to the gym, it might be wise to hire a personal trainer for at least two or three weeks to design a program for you and to demonstrate proper use of equipment.

A balanced diet is equally important. Numerous web sites have great advice on the food guide pyramid and benefits of specific foods. If you are like me, your plan should probably include eating more fruits and vegetables, just like mom said many years ago.

Be sure to surround yourself with resources to make your plan work. Recruit a friend, a co-worker or a family member to be your workout buddy. Seek support from family members to help you maintain a healthy diet at home and to encourage you to do your workout even on those tough days. Be sure to schedule time to exercise, not counting on working out when it is convenient for you. Pack your workout bag the night before, eliminating the excuse of being rushed in the morning. Change your workout program every six weeks so you don't get burned out.

Lifestyle adjustments

Fitness isn't working out during the month of January and swallowing a magical diet pill. Fitness is a part of your life 365 days a year. Before purchasing a gym membership, an

exercise machine or new workout clothes, ask yourself if exercise and better nutrition will be part of your life long term. Am I committed to exercising four or five times a week? Will I give up fast food as the majority of my meals?

Keep in mind: You will likely not be overweight if you live a lifestyle that doesn't encourage it. You will likely not be overweight if you don't eat bad foods, eat too much food and consume too many calories from drinks. You will likely not be overweight if you've made a schedule and committed yourself to exercise.

Attitude changes

Just like anything else we do successfully in life, the right attitude is needed before taking on difficult tasks. Erasing



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years and years of poor eating habits and little exercise is one large challenge. It is really up to you, if you want to make the change. Don't go to the gym during the first week of January with the idea exercise is punishment for holiday feasts.

Your commitment to a healthier life is not boring, a waste of time, time consuming, an

obligation to someone else or a task that will make your muscles sore. No. The right attitude is required to make this resolution finally work past the second week of February.

Your choice to stick with your commitment will lead you to improving your quality of life very quickly. Exercise will boost your energy. It is your chance to let off some steam from a rough day at work. It might be your only opportunity to have some time for yourself. Exercise and a balanced diet are your keys to fighting high health care costs and your avenue to living a longer and healthier life.

Develop your plan and make it happen. You can do it!



INFORMATION LINK

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