



BalanceWorks® Newsletter

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Sticking with your Resolution

Happy New Year and welcome to 2012! For many people a new year signifies a fresh start, which is why resolutions are so popular. Research shows that 40%-45% of Americans make New Year's Resolutions that they are invested in and plan to maintain throughout the year.

People generally start strong with their resolution, but their willpower tends to fade as the year goes on:

- 75% of people maintain their resolution past the first week
- 71% of people maintain their resolution past the second week
- 64% of people maintain their resolution past the first month
- 46% of people maintain their resolution past 6 months

However, even the simple act of making a formal resolution makes you 10 times more likely to stick to and achieve your goals. So making a resolution is a great first step to starting the year on the right foot. Use the following tips to help you maintain your resolution throughout the entire year.

Limit the number of resolutions you make. It's easier to effect real change when you can focus on only a few goals. Resolutions generally take a good amount of energy to achieve so spreading yourself too thin is often counterproductive.

Write it down. Putting pen to paper helps to make your resolution official. It also allows you to post your resolution in a place where you can view it often. Consistently reviewing your resolution can help you remain accountable and can remind you why you made the resolution in the first place.

Be specific. Making your resolution too general is a recipe for failure. With a broad goal such as "I want to lose weight" it can be difficult to measure results at the onset, which can be frustrating and lead to giving up. Instead make a resolution such as "I want to lose 20 pounds by the end of the year." This goal acknowledges that losing a significant amount of weight is a long journey and when you weigh yourself after 1 month and have

For more information or support on sticking with your resolution, contact the work/life experts at **BalanceWorks®** by calling:

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lost 5 pounds you will be encouraged to continue, instead of disappointed that you had not already lost all 20 pounds.

Make subsequent incremental goals.

Breaking down your resolution into smaller steps makes it feel much more achievable. If your resolution is to start a fitness regimen, make an incremental plan to achieve it. Plan on walking for 20 minutes 3 days per week and then slowly work your way up to a more rigorous exercise plan.

Begin Immediately. If you haven't done so already, start working on your resolution today. It's easier to stick with a goal if you start taking steps to achieve it immediately. So start researching that dream vacation, eat a salad with dinner, schedule an appointment with your doctor, make a to-do list, or dig those running shoes out of the closet. Taking that first step toward achieving your goal will feel great!

Reward yourself. Sticking with a resolution is a big deal so be sure to recognize your accomplishments. Whenever you do achieve one of your incremental goals make it a celebration! If your goal is to quit smoking and you make it through a week/month/etc without a cigarette reward yourself with a massage, dinner with a friend, or anything that makes you feel good. Soon you will be looking forward to the reward instead of the cigarette.

Change your patterns. Usually the behavior you are trying to change is entrenched in your daily lifestyle. Therefore, it is important to limit your exposure to situations that will encourage you to break your resolution. For example, if you are

Here are 10 of the most popular resolutions that people tend to make year after year:

- Quit Smoking
- Exercise
- Lose Weight
- Enjoy Life More
- Quit Drinking
- Become more Organized
- Learn Something New
- Get out of Debt/Save Money
- Spend More Time With Family
- Volunteer

trying to quit drinking, do not hang out in bars, if you are trying to give up soda, take a different route and don't walk past the vending machines at work. Instead, put yourself in situations that promote your resolution.

Enlist support. You are much more likely to stick with a resolution when you have support from friends and family. It also helps if you make a joint resolution with a friend, that way you are accountable to yourself and your friend.

Use these tips to make 2012 the year that you stick with your resolution!

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