

Hello everyone and happy holidays! I wish you and your families a happy and fulfilling new year!

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### **TIPS FOR KEEPING YOUR NEW-YEAR RESOLUTIONS**

Since we are beginning a new year I want to offer some tips for setting and attaining new-year goals.

We make new-year resolutions because we feel discontented with something in the present. Before you set your goals for the coming year give yourself permission to let go of last year's mistakes and to start off the new-year with a clean slate. Rather than beating yourself up and feeling like a failure for not making the changes you intended to make, learn from last year's mistakes. Think about what you can do differently.

Here are a few tips for succeeding at keeping your resolutions:

1. Keep it simple. Rather than trying to change everything at once focus on making two or three small changes in your life. Remember the fastest way to reach your goal is to go slow.
2. Once you have decided on the small changes you want to make write a letter to yourself from the future. Write about what your life looks and feels like now that you have made these changes. This is an important step. You are mentally trying on the changes and getting a sense of what your life will be like.

For example, if you want to lose 20 pounds write about how you feel now that the weight is gone. What are you wearing? What are people saying to you? When you are at a party or luncheon and someone offers you a big plate of cookies how are you reacting?

If you desire to change jobs what does it feel like in your new job? What are your co-workers saying to you? What is your family life like?

3. Make a personal commitment to change. Are you ready to make this commitment? Are you still contemplating the change or have you moved to the next stage of mapping out a plan?
4. Make SMART goals.
  - S – specific: vague goals lead to vague, half-hearted attempts
  - M- measurable: you need to evaluate your progress
  - A – attractive: it has to be a goal you feel motivated to attain otherwise you will lose interest.

R – realistic: it has to be a goal you can achieve – don't set the goal too high you will only end up discouraged if you do not meet it.  
T – time-framed: you need to have a time in mind for when you want to begin and when you want to reach your goal.

S - If your goal is to lose 20 pounds, be specific as to how you will do it. For example, exercise 3 times a week and follow the South Beach Diet.

M – You will weigh in once a week and keep a log of your weigh-ins.

A – Your clothing will fit better and you will feel better about yourself.

R – Since you work all day you will walk for 15 minutes during lunch and exercise for another 15 minutes when you get home.

T – You will put together your weekly plan and start on Monday.

**FREE WORKSHOP** - Good-luck with achieving your goals! I wish you the best in your endeavor. I will be offering a free one- hour workshop on achieving your new-year resolutions! Stay tuned!

**HAPPINESS TIP:** Perform acts of kindness. Every religion and philosopher has spoken and written about how happiness comes from helping others. Try it this week and experience a lift in the way you feel about yourself. Perform three acts of kindness and see how you feel! Research in positive psychology has shown how performing acts of kindness can shift negative feelings into positive ones.

All the best and very happy new year!

Donna

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References: Coach yourself: a life-coaching program, Anthony Grant