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Foreword

At the end of the year, we start making plans about what we want to change in our lives for the coming year. We assess ourselves, and we find a lot of shortcomings; which is why we create New Year's resolutions. Bad habits die hard though, and we oftentimes cannot keep some of our resolutions. Get all the info you need here.



Resolution Forever

How to Keep Your New Year's Resolution All Year Round

Chapter 1:

Introduction

Synopsis

Sometimes we give up after a few months of trying changing ourselves. Then, at the end of another year when we assess ourselves again, we find out that the same things we wanted to change the year before are still the things we hope to change for the year to come. And so the cycle continues. But this does not have to be the case. We can keep our New Year's resolutions all year round.



The Basics

According to the dictionary, a resolution can mean firmness of determination. It takes 21 days in which to create a new habit. So, if we can be determined to begin a new and better habit in 21 days, then the remaining 344 days of the year will be easier.

There are some facts about New Year's resolutions that you might want to know. They might inspire you to stick to your resolutions.

According to statistics, the top four New Year's resolutions are: weight-loss by exercise, weight-loss by developing better eating habits, becoming more involved in work or school and, to stop smoking, drinking or using drugs, including caffeine.

Following the 21-day rule, let us take the weight-loss by exercise for example. Try to jog every morning for 21 days, nonstop, and you will find out that on the 22nd day, jogging will be part of your regular routine.

One important thing, if you want to make your resolutions a success, is changing the way you think. When we make New Year's resolutions, we have a feeling deep inside that we will not be able to keep them by the end of the first month.

We do not take them seriously, because we do not know very many people who have actually succeeded in keeping their resolutions year

round. If you change your mindset and believe in yourself, and believe that you can do it, then the battle is halfway won.

Now that you know you can do it, you have to visualize what you want to achieve. When you have in mind your exact goal then it will be easier to do something about it.

Let us take the weight loss for an example. See yourself at the Christmas ball wearing the sexiest red dress you have ever seen, with its back gaping open and showing your very sexy back; the skirt of the dress just reaching mid-thigh to showcase your toned legs, now honed from months of endless jogging.

Now imagine entering the door and all eyes are focused on you in awe and adoration. The image is so clear you can almost feel it. Now that you saw what it could be like, if you stick with your resolution, there is no going back. You will be determined to achieve your New Year's resolution.



Chapter 2:

Setting Creative Goals that Drive You to Take Action

Synopsis

For something to work, you need to have a plan. Like business, they have business plans. For houses, they have blueprints. For school lectures, teachers have lesson plans. For a New Year's resolution, you also need to have a plan. And for a plan to be successful you need to have goals. Your goals are also your New Year's resolution. For a goal to be within reach it needs to be SMART. Specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and time bound.

In the last article, we used weight loss as an example. Now let's use the desire to quit smoking. First, you need to believe in yourself that come December you will no longer be a part of the lung cancer high-risk community. You will be free of their chains; so visualize yourself with clearer skin, whiter teeth and with the beautiful glow that smoking has stolen from you. Imagine the pride in the eyes of your family when you tell them that you did it! You have quit smoking. .

The Goals

So now, for your SMART goal, it needs to be specific. Do you only quit smoking one brand of cigarette? Or do you do it for all? So, for our example, we will choose that you quit all kinds of smoking.

Next, it needs to be measurable. How many sticks per day are you going to cut from your smoking habit? Or do you plan to stop smoking entirely at once? If you smoke 30 sticks a day before New Year's, you can start with reducing your daily consumption to 25 sticks a day for the first week, then 20 sticks for the next week, and so on and so forth.

Next is whether your goal is attainable. This is just a simple matter of yes or no. Can you attain your goal? The answer will only be yes or no.

The fourth is whether your goal is realistic. All goals are realistic, if you believe they are. You can stop smoking, so there is no question about its reality.

The last is time bound. You have to set a time limit in which to achieve your goal, kind of like setting a deadline for a project. You will be more inclined to achieve your goal, if you have set a time and date when your goal is supposed to be attained. For our example, our whole goal would be that by the end of February you will have already

quit smoking. Or by the end of February you will have lessened your smoking consumption by five sticks a day.

Now that your goal is SMART, you should have no more problems achieving it. With a set goal in mind you can now put your plan into action. As you go along you should try to keep track of your progress. One way to keep track is by documentation of your progress.

Take a picture of yourself and add a caption of how many sticks you did not smoke on that particular date. With all this planning you are a step closer to keeping your New Year's resolution all year round.



Chapter 3:

Stay Focused on Your Goals and Do One Thing at a Time

Synopsis

Sometimes we fail our goals because we lose our focus. We get distracted with everyday life and lose sight of our goals. One way to keep our goal on our top priority list is to do one thing at a time. If you have two New Year's resolutions, such as quitting smoking, and at the same time you also want to lose weight. Of course, you can multitask and do both things at once; but if we are talking about focus then it is advisable to finish one first before embarking on another. One trick is to free your mind of all the other tasks you have to do and focus on just doing one thing at a time.

There are steps you can follow, when you want to do one thing at a time. First, you choose the goal you want to accomplish. Second, after choosing the goal set your mind to obtain that goal no matter what. If you set your mind to it, you can do it. Commitment has a very important role in achieving goals. Do not change your objectives in the middle of the process. Sometimes you might encounter obstacles and difficulties; but if you tough it out, you are the one who will reap the benefits in the end.

Steps

After all the preparation - the choosing of a goal, the mind setting, and the committing - it is now time to start acting. Start doing your plan. The first step is always the hardest, but once you get started it will be easier.

The last step, more like a reminder though, is not to start another goal while you have not yet finished with the first one. Focus is easier when you only have to focus on one thing.

Let's try to shine some light on the obstacles you might face once you start setting the ball in motion. One problem might be falling back on old habits.

Take the smoking again, for example. Your goal is to lessen your smoking five sticks a week. So, on your second week you should have your original number of sticks minus ten. On Sunday of that week you were tempted to smoke one more for the day but that will set you back.

What should you do to stay on focus? You can call someone, like a sponsor when you join Alcoholics Anonymous (AA). You can also dance, exercise, watch TV, and sing at the top of your lungs or anything just to keep your mind out of smoking that one stick.

Another problem you might face is forgetting. Sometimes it will slip out of your mind that today you can only smoke ten sticks. It is good to put reminders all around you.

Put a progress card on your refrigerator, vanity mirror and all the doors. So, every time you move around within your home, you will be reminded that only ten sticks are allowed to be smoked on that day. There are also applications in phones nowadays that can remind you of your progress so you do not fall back.



Chapter 4:

Visualize your Success Every Day

Synopsis

A lot of self-help books today stress the importance of visualization and affirmation to help achieve your goals. That is because this method has proven to be very helpful. Once a figure skater skated wrong and broke a bone. The doctor said that her bone will heal nicely and, in time for the coming competition, so she will be able to join.

The problem was that she would not be able to practice. Her coach said that she could visualize her routine, in place of the practice. Every day she did that; she played her music and danced with everything she had, but only in her mind.

On the competition day, she was ready to perform. And perform she did! She did her routine perfectly, because she had practiced physically every day. So now you see the importance and advantage of visualization. If you can see it, you can get it.

See It

In the instance mentioned above, the figure skater visualized her performance perfectly in her mind's eye. Now, for your New Year's resolution, instead of seeing the process, you can visualize your success in its place. By that I mean if you plan on losing weight, then you would rather not imagine eating right and being all sweaty exercising.

Instead, you would want to see how your transformation will amaze everyone. What will inspire you to keep working is the look of remorse on the faces of the people who had taunted you growing up, the regret in the eyes of the guys who rejected you, and the pride emanating from your friends and family who stood by you all along. That is what will propel you to work your ass off achieving your goals.

Many more studies have been done to prove the efficacy of visualization. Many schools have employed visualization to motivate their students to do great in their studies. Also, visualizing before doing any specific thing will help ease you into the actual doing of it.

When you visualize your success once, your success rate will go up by at least one percent. Now imagine doing it every day. You will achieve your goals even before the deadline. Visualizing is part of

the process to ensure that you keep your New Year's resolution all year round.

You can try visualizing before you go to sleep, so that you can dream of your goals and wake ready to take on the tasks to ensure that you achieve those goals. You can also visualize in the morning so you can start the day with positive thoughts.

Whenever you choose to visualize totally depends on your most comfortable time; just do it at the same time every day so you can make it a habit. Remember: Do it for 21 days straight and it becomes a habit; do it for six months straight and it will be a part of your personality.

When the time comes that you have achieved your goal, the happiness you will experience will be a thousand fold of the feelings you experienced when you were just imagining it.



Chapter 5:

Power up Your Life with Affirmations

Synopsis

Affirmations go hand in hand with visualizations. While seeing your success in your mind, you should also listen to the voice saying you can do it. If there is no voice, there should be a voice. Say to yourself you can do it! Affirmations are the encouragement you need, when nobody else will give it to you. It boosts your self-confidence and will make you feel like you can do anything. It will help you greatly in believing whatever New Year's resolution you have decided to work on.

There are some tips to follow when affirming. Following these tips will help you achieve the most power out of affirming.



Affirmations

First, you need to be specific. For example, your New Year's resolution is to lose weight. You want to be sexy and, at the same time, healthy so you affirm to yourself that you are sexy and healthy.

Second, you need to repeat these affirmations to yourselves. And you should repeat them with attention, interest, faith and desire. Without these things, it is just like chanting to you. You need to believe in it, so that it can take effect in your life.

Third is that before affirming, you need to be relaxed. When you are relaxed you can concentrate more and your affirmations will be more effective.

Fourth is to affirm in the present tense instead of the future. These affirmations can transform your life, because you are hypnotizing your subconscious into believing that you are your affirmations; thereby instructing your body and mind to make them happen and thus attracting them into your life.

It has been mentioned in the previous chapter why some people do not take their New Year's resolutions seriously; it is because their minds tell them that they cannot do it, so why bother. Affirming can help get these negative voices out of our minds.

When you affirm, only the positive thoughts will remain and it will be then that you will believe that you can do it. When we focus on positive thoughts, we have control of our lives and our bodies, and with this control we feel at ease and sure. With the affirmations we can focus solely on succeeding in our goals instead of the fears and doubts surrounding it.

When you partner affirmation with visualization, their powers double, and you feel more confident that you will achieve your goals. When change seems impossible, affirmations can be very effective. When we change our thoughts our actions will easily follow.

With affirmations and visualizations we are in total control of ourselves, our bodies and minds. There will be no more doubts and we will be sure that all of our New Year's resolutions will happen. Our goals will be met.

Say your affirmations regularly, and every time doubt starts to creep in, they will battle the doubts away and give you, once again, total control of your mind. It really is true that it is all in the mind. If you think you can then you absolutely can.

Chapter 6:

Mastermind with Likeminded People

Synopsis

If you have someone who wants to pursue the same things as you, the likelihood of succeeding has just gone up. As the saying goes, two heads are better than one and there is strength in numbers; in this case it might prove very true. When you have someone you can talk to and share your goals with, the tasks you have to accomplish do not seem to be so daunting anymore. We will use the New Year's resolution as our example again for this article.

If you do not have to exercise alone, it will be more enjoyable; you will not dread going to the gym because you have a buddy who will accompany you there. All the hard work will be easier when you have someone to share it with, rather than doing it alone. Also, when you think you might fail because you are very tempted to eat that chocolate cake, you will have someone to talk you out of indulging in that temptation. And you can do it for your partner when the roles are reversed. You can be honest with one another if the other one is slacking off or not following the program; you can help each other keep on track.

Likeminded People

Another thing is to keep track of each other's progress, and reward one another when each of you has reached a short term goal or milestone in your weight loss program. You can reward one another by treating yourselves to a day at the spa, shopping, or anything that you enjoy doing.

And when the time has come to reap the results of all your work, the happiness is also twice more than when you were doing it alone.

When you are with likeminded people, it is easier to talk to them because they have an understanding of what you are going through. And if you both have the same goals then you can help each other achieve those goals. With likeminded people, achieving the goals will not be a competition or contest.

Setting up a support system or asking the help of a friend can do great wonders in helping you achieve your New Year's resolutions. If you have supporters and believers then it will be easier to work towards the realization of your goals because there are more people who will be disappointed if you fail.

This is not to add pressure to you to achieve your goals, because no matter what, they will still be your supporters. Let me just remind you that if you are working with friends and peers to

achieve your goals, make sure that you are doing it for yourself, not because you were encouraged to do it. Being a support system to people who work to achieve their New Year's resolutions can be very fulfilling. You are with them along the way.

You know their struggles and hardships, but you also feel the happiness and pride when your friend finally achieved their goals. And they inspire you to also work hard to keep your New Year's resolution all year round.



Chapter 7:

Overcome Your Greatest Fears

Synopsis

A hindrance to achieving your New Year's resolutions is the fear that you might not succeed. And because fears are irrational, no matter what coaxing I do to make you believe that your fears are unfounded will not work. So we'll just focus on overcoming those fears. Nothing is impossible, and if you believe you can overcome those fears then you can and you will. The thing is you will never really know if you can succeed in something or not, if you never try. The affirmations discussed before are great ways to overcome fears because they focus on positive energies instead of negative ones. But there are also other ways to overcome your fears.

First, you can ask for the help of a friend. They can help you talk about your fears and try to help you overcome them. If you also have the same New Year's resolution, you can ask him or her to be your resolution buddy and you can help each other achieve your goals. With another person who believes you can do it, the fear will lessen and, you can bypass the fear and then go ahead with achieving your goals.

Overcoming

Second is to create structure. Having a New Year's resolution means that you are aiming for change and this can be scary. You will have to get out of your comfort zone to achieve goals. If you make changes with your lifestyle, try to make these changes a habit. Do them at the same time of the day so that they can be incorporated in your daily life, and very soon the fear regarding these changes will be gone.

Third is to learn techniques that can help you relax when anxiety is setting in, and there are many methods to help with this. One very common relaxation technique is deep breathing exercises. It will help return your breathing return to normal and get more air to your brain. Yoga can also be a great help in relaxing.

Other relaxation techniques include: meditation, visualization, listening to relaxing music, Tai Chi, exercising, watching a nice movie, and many others. You can read about them in detail in the library or on the Internet. When you find out more about them, you can decide which one will suit you best.

Fourth is to try writing. You can make a diary of the progress you are making. Write in your notebook the things you did that were effective in helping you overcome your fears. And maybe in the future you can share these notes with the people who are also experiencing what you went through.

Fifth and final is to face your fears. This is the most effective way of overcoming fears. Once you face them, you will realize that sometimes there is really nothing to fear about them and, once you realize that, you will start to feel at ease with the changes in your life.

Once you have faced your fear and overcome it then it will be easier to proceed with your New Year's resolution. The changes that you will gain will be worth all the trouble you went through to overcome your fears.



Chapter 8:

Reviewing your Goals Quarterly

Synopsis

Every three months you should check your progress card. Compare it to the goals you have written and see if you are right on track. Sometimes your card will show you that you may be behind schedule, but do not be discouraged. A few setbacks should not mean that you are going to fail; it will just mean that you might be delayed in seeing your final results.

Reviewing your goals will also ensure that you are doing something to reach your goals. When you evaluate your progress, in regards to your goals, you may see things that you do that do not work. That is one advantage of reviewing your goals; you can make changes to your methods when you see that they are not working. You can also do more of the things that you believe are working.

There are some questions you can use to evaluate your progress. This will include:

The Questions

First: Are you following the plan you made? When we first started discussion about sticking to your New Year's resolutions all year round, the first thing that was mentioned was to make a plan. Now, on the review, you can ask yourself if you indeed are following your plan.

Second: How do you improve your plan? It was mentioned that you can make changes to your plans if some things are not working anymore. So how will you improve it now that you can see some are not working properly?

Third: Do you have another plan? Have you considered making a contingency plan just in case the original one did not work?

Fourth: Are the results on time? It was also mentioned that for a goal to be within reach, it has to be SMART; so is your goal within the allotted time? If it is not, then why do you think you are not on time? What are the things that are taking you too long to accomplish and what should you do about them?

Fifth: Are the plans on the right track? In this question, you are being asked if the plans you are putting into action are working to help you achieve your desired goals.

Sixth: What are the things that you are learning about yourself in the process? Those are the questions you need to ask yourself when you review your goals. If you find out that the current plan you are using is not working then you need to improve it or you can totally replace it.

It is very important that your progress is documented so that your quarterly review will be effective and efficient. You can just write in a notebook the things that you have accomplished; also you have to write the things you were not able to achieve so you can ponder on why it did not succeed.

All the things you are going through should be documented; even the things that you think are trivial. You might later realize that the small things are actually the ones making all the difference towards your success or failure.



Chapter 9:

Always Follow your Passion

Synopsis

Some say that following your passion can be the worst advice when it comes to career; but with a New Year's resolution it can be positive. Following your passion is great advice, but sometimes it can really make you poor because most of our passions are not lucrative. You can do your passion and still get a job. The most important thing is that you are happy and that you will have no regrets whatsoever.

Whatever you want to change in your life, make sure that you are doing it for yourself and you believe that it will make you a better person. If you are doing something which someone mentioned is not a good look on you then you can say 'screw them'. First of all, you have to be confident about yourself. When you believe in you, you emit the same aura to other people and they will also believe in you.



Your Passion

Usually when what you do is what you are passionate about, you will really excel in that area. When a student does not do good in academics in school, it does not mean that person is stupid. It might just be because that person's passion is elsewhere.

There are students who excel in school because that is where their passion lies. That is why you should follow your passion because it will come easy for you. On the other hand, if you are passionate about challenges then go do something that you find hard, and you will still be following your passion. If you want to be an artist, then follow your passion and paint.

But if you are not making any money at what you're passionate about, you should also get a regular job. This does not mean that you are turning your back to painting; it just means that you need a little help. We all need help sometimes and, for this, there should be no shame.

If your New Year's resolution is to quit smoking, you have to be passionate about it. You have to feel strongly about quitting otherwise you might not succeed. Although you know it is the right thing to do; but if you cannot find it in yourself to change, there is a big risk that you will always revert back to it.

So passion about the change you want to do is very important.

When you want to lose weight, it should not be because a guy dumped you for your weight; although that can be a motivation. But if you do it for somebody else there is a big chance you might also not succeed. What if the next guy likes chubby women; are you going to gain back the weight again?

Do something because you want the change; not because somebody wants it for you. The secret to sticking to a New Year's resolution all year round is the passion you have for it. The overwhelming desire to be changed and to improve... with emotion this strong you can definitely succeed.



Wrapping Up

Rise Above Any Obstacle with Perseverance

This is the final part of this series.. During the course of the year when you were busy acting on your plans to reach your New Year's resolution you may have encountered many problems. There will always be problems with aiming to change. But hopefully you sailed through all of them and achieved your goals.

To be successful in achieving your New Year's resolution, it is important that you try again if you fail. There are twelve months in a year and that gives you plenty of time to try and try again. Every time you fail, put it in your diary and you can look at it during your reviews. Check carefully what you did wrong and set to make them right. With much perseverance you can lose weight, you can quit smoking, you can quit alcohol, you can quit drugs, you can do well in work or school, you can be a better person.

The most successful people today are also the people who persevered when life became rough. They encountered many problems and difficulties before they were able to reach where they are today. Some people have risked their livelihoods to be who they are today. Compared to these successful people, keeping your New Year's resolution all year round should be very easy. But we may still find it difficult because obstacles, no matter how big, are still obstacles. And

sometimes we give up, but then we get up and try again because that is the definition of perseverance.

We know that life is hard; especially trying to change. Getting rid of old habits and creating new ones are hard. But when we believe that we can persevere, even in the worst situations, then we can definitely succeed. When faced with problems, our first thought should not be to give up. Instead, we find solutions and solve these problems, and if we fail? We try again. If our Plan A does not work, there is no need to worry because there are 25 more. There will always be hope, and no point in giving up.

Success is constantly moving. If we stop reaching for success that is the time we fail. With more perseverance, there are more successes waiting to be discovered. One failure should not discourage us from ever trying again. Because the second time we might succeed; if not, then the third and the fourth and eventually we will get it.

Vision is important if you want to succeed. You need a 20/20 sight when it comes to the things that you want. If the things you aspire for are blurred then your reality might also be. Perseverance and passion are the keys to success. If you have these two you are golden. Even if you encounter challenges you will just walk all over them and continue on your way to bigger and greater things. With this belief in mind, I think you are very well on your way to keeping your New Year's resolution all year round.