How To Make Lasting Changes for the New Year or Any Time Of Year

Any Time Is A Good Time For Healthy Changes

Each year, many people make resolutions for change, and each year, most of those resolutions go... unresolved. This isn’t due to people’s lack of desire for a better life; it’s just a byproduct of the reality that change is difficult. Our habits become ingrained and automatic; changing them requires constant effort until a new habit is formed. This resource can help you to make necessary alterations in your expectations, attitudes, and methods of change so that you can experience real results that last. The following ideas can help:

Think in Terms of “Goals”, Rather Than “Resolutions”: While most people make resolutions that they’re determined to keep, a better tactic would be to create goals. What’s the difference, you may ask? With traditional resolutions, people generally approach change with the attitude, “From now on, I will no longer...” whereas goals are formed. This resource can help you to gradually work your way toward the life you want, and you experience much more ‘success’ along the way, rather than feeling like a failure if you don’t experience ultimate change overnight.

Have A Goal Each Month: If you’re like most people, you may have several sweeping changes at once; 2) you can’t expect that they won’t be perfect at first, and are pleased with any progress they make. Rather than letting perfectionism work against them, they allow motivation and pride to do their magic. The following ideas can help you with meeting your ‘New Years Goals’;

- Remember That It’s A Process: Expect to work your way up, rather than maintaining perfection and feeling let-down if you don’t achieve it immediately.

- Work Your Way Up: In setting goals for new behavior, aim for once or twice a week, rather than everyday. For example, instead of saying, “I’ll go to the gym everyday”, plan for “every Wednesday”.

- Set Yourself Up To Succeed: Set small, attainable goals, and add more steps as you complete each one. This way you gradually work your way toward the life you want, and you experience much more ‘success’ along the way, rather than feeling like a failure if you don’t experience ultimate change overnight.

Have A Goal Each Month: If you’re like most people, you may have several changes you’d like to make in your life; if so, it may be a good idea to tackle one each month. This way, 1) you can focus more, as you won’t be trying to make several sweeping changes at once; 2) you can re-commit yourself each month to a new idea, so you keep growing all year and self-improvement becomes a way of life; and 3) you can build on each success, so you can first free up time before you take on a new hobby or get involved in an important cause, for example. Also, habits generally take 21 days to form. This setup enables you to devote energy to forming new habits more easily before moving on to the next, so you’re not relying solely on will-power.

Reward Your Progress: While many of your resolutions carry their own reward, changing your habits can be challenging, and it’s sometimes easier to do so if you have a little extra help. Providing extra rewards for yourself can help you to stay on track and maintain your motivation, even if you sometimes don’t feel like making the effort solely for the sake of the benefit the change itself will create. The following are ways you can create rewards for yourself:

- Team Up: Have a buddy who knows your goals, and encourage each other, even if you’re working on separate goals.

- Reward Small Successes: Divide your goal into bite-sized steps and have a reward waiting at the completion of each.

- Align Rewards With Goals: Have rewards that are in line with your achievements (like new workout clothes for every 5 gym visits).

Source: http://stress.about.com/od/lowstresslifestyle/a/changes.htm

Source: Year of good health calendar

High 5 for Fitness

Fire up your New Years Goal to get moving!

Regular exercise offers dozens of benefits. This 5-step plan is sure to boost your enthusiasm for more activity in the coming months. YOU CAN DO IT!

1) Target 30-60 minutes. Target 30-60 minutes of physical activity most days. More you exercise, = greater the benefits. The best part: You can meet this level of activity with several short segments each day.

2) Raise your heart rate. Fit in aerobics to strengthen your cardiovascular system. Brisk walking, swimming, or cycling gets your heart pumping and can burn about 150 calories for a half-hours effort.

3) Think “physical” all day long. Add activities that work your muscles and burn extra calories. Look for possibilities: clean up the yard, walk to lunch. Blend exercise into your daily life so you enjoy it.

4) Stretch it out. Daily stretching, yoga and Pilates can add lifelong flexibility and protection from muscle strain and injuries. Stretching also feels good and eases everyday aches.

5) Muscle up some might. Add strength training workouts, such as weight lifting or calisthenics, 2-3 times a week. More strength means you can do more.

Source: Year of good health calendar
The Scoop on Snow Shoveling Safety

It happens every winter in the Midwest ... snow falls, usually leaving piles of the stuff to clear from your sidewalks and driveway. Consider the following before you grab your shovel after a major snowfall.

The good news is that 15 minutes of snow shoveling counts as moderate physical activity according to the 1996 Surgeon General's Report on Physical Activity and Health. We all should aim for at least 30 minutes of moderate physical activity of some kind on most days of the week. Brisk walking or social dancing are other ways to fit in moderate physical activity during cold winter months.

The bad news is that researchers have reported an increase in the number of fatal heart attacks among snow shovellers after heavy snowfalls. This rise may be due to the sudden demand that shovelling places on an individual's heart. Snow shovelling may cause a quick increase in heart rate and blood pressure. One study determined that after only two minutes of shovelling, sedentary men's heart rates rose to levels higher than those normally recommended during aerobic exercise.

Shoveling may be vigorous activity even for healthy college-aged students. A study performed by researchers at North Dakota State University determined that, based on heart rate, shovelling was a moderately intense activity for college-aged subjects most of the time but was vigorous activity during about one-third of their shovelling time of 14 minutes. Shovelling can be made more difficult by the weather. Cold air makes it harder to work and breathe, which adds some extra strain on the body. There also is the risk for hypothermia, a decrease in body temperature, if one is not dressed correctly for the weather conditions.

Who should think twice about shovelling snow?
Those most at risk for a heart attack include:
- Anyone who has already had a heart attack;
- Individuals with a history of heart disease;
- Those with high blood pressure or high cholesterol levels;
- Smokers;
- Individuals leading a sedentary lifestyle.

Should you rush out and buy a snow blower?
Not necessarily. Not everyone who shovels snow is going to have a heart attack. Snow shovelling can be good exercise when performed correctly and with safety in mind. Also consider back safety when shovelling snow. Even if you exercise regularly and are not at risk for heart disease, shovelling improperly could lead to a strained back. If you've been inactive for months and have certain risk factors, use some common sense before taking on the task of snow shovelling.

A Pile of Snow Shovelling Tips:
Be heart healthy and back friendly while shovelling this winter with these tips:
- If you are inactive and have a history of heart trouble, talk to your doctor before you take on the task of shovelling snow.
- Avoid caffeine or nicotine before beginning. These are stimulants, which may increase your heart rate and cause your blood vessels to constrict. This places extra stress on the heart.

Are you SAD, with Seasonal Affective Disorder?

By: Michelle Lyle
Fewer daylight hours and less sunlight during the winter months can create a biochemical imbalance in the general clock work of your body. (What exactly occurs is still unknown.) Regardless, this imbalance leads to a mood disorder called SAD (Seasonal Affective Disorder.) Symptoms can flare anytime during September through April, but are most prevalent during December, January and February. (There is such a thing as SUMMER Seasonal Affective Disorder, but this is possibly for another article and does not seem to be prevalent in our area. I can’t imagine why not.)

Some people are almost completely debilitated by this disorder, depending on medical treatment to function normally during this time. Others have much more mild symptoms sometimes referred to as the “winter blues.” It affects both men and, more often, women generally between the ages of 18-30.

Symptoms include depression, a feeling of hopeless, anxiety, loss of energy, oversleeping, loss of interest in activities you once enjoyed, overeating—often craving carbohydrates resulting in weight gain, and difficulty concentrating.

It is difficult to diagnose SAD but generally you must have the following: at least 2 consecutive years of depression during the same season followed by periods of no depression. There must also be no other explanation for your mood or behavior.

SAD can be treated. If your symptoms are mild, you may be able to alleviate them simply by sitting at a bright window or getting outside for a while during the daytime. Other treatments include light therapy, medication and psychotherapy. You should see your doctor if you experience symptoms of SAD and they will determine what treatment option is best for you.

There is no way to prevent SAD, however if you have been diagnosed, you can often lessen the symptoms by beginning treatment before the season actually starts. Also, get yourself outside more when weather permits—go for a walk or simply sit and enjoy the sun on your face, make your home sunnier—put in skylights if you need to, and if possible go on a vacation to a sunnier, warmer climate!

Source: UP Health and Wellness, Winter 2007
7 Ideas for No-Nonsense Nutrition

How do you build a truly healthful food plan? The USDA Food Guide Pyramid provides a basic blueprint—but with important modifications. Scientists from the Institute of Medicine and several health agencies in the U.S. and Canada have offered additional guidelines for daily nutrition. Eating well can significantly reduce your risk for disease. And it doesn’t have to be complicated if you follow this recipe.

- **BALANCE:** 45%-65% carbohydrates, 20%-35% fat, and 10%-35% protein.
- **BETTER CARBS:** Choose fiber-rich sources—fruits, vegetables, legumes, and whole grains.
- **FIBER:** Men need 30-38 grams a day, women need 21-25.
- **SODIUM:** Restrict foods processed with added sodium and limit salting your foods, especially if you’re sensitive to sodium or have hypertension.
- **LEAN PROTEIN:** Seafood, poultry, legumes, and soy foods are top choices; 3-4 ounces, twice a day. Include fish 1-2 times a week.
- **BETTER FATS:** Choose sources with mono- and polyunsaturated fats. Avoid foods rich in saturated fats and trans fatty acids (they occur in partially hydrogenated oils).
- **SUGAR:** Limit to 25% of total calories, but strive to consume less; heavy consumption can lead to obesity or nutritional deficiencies.

**THE KEY:** Wholesome carbohydrates and reasonable amounts of healthful fat can help control weight as well as cholesterol and block sugar levels.

**Eat for long lasting energy, long-term health—and pleasure!**

Source: Personal Best Publications, High Energy Nutrition

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**Why is High-Fructose Corn Syrup so bad for me?**

High-fructose corn syrup is a sweetener and preservative used in many processed foods. It is made by changing the sugar in cornstarch to fructose—a different form of sugar.

High-fructose corn syrup extends the shelf life of foods and is sweeter and cheaper than sugar. For these reasons, it has become a popular ingredient in many sodas, fruit-flavored drinks and other processed foods. Check your food labels. You may be surprised by how many foods contain high-fructose corn syrup.

Some nutrition experts blame increased consumption of high-fructose corn syrup for the growing obesity problem. One theory is that fructose is more readily converted to fat by your liver than is sucrose, increasing the levels of fat in your bloodstream. But this hasn’t been proved.

In addition, animal studies have shown a link between increased consumption of high-fructose corn syrup and adverse health effects, such as diabetes and high cholesterol. However, the evidence is not as clear in human studies.

Despite the lack of clarity in research, the fact remains that Americans consume large quantities of high-fructose corn syrup in the form of soft drinks, fruit-flavored beverages and other processed foods. These types of foods are high in calories and low in nutritional value. This fact alone is reason to be cautious about foods containing high-fructose corn syrup.

To reduce high-fructose corn syrup in your diet, read food labels. Avoid or limit foods that contain high-fructose corn syrup. Some other easy tips for cutting back on high-fructose corn syrup include:

- Buy 100 percent fruit juice instead of fruit-flavored drinks.
- Choose fresh fruit instead of fruit juices. Even 100 percent fruit juice has a high concentration of sugar.
- Choose fruit canned in its own juices instead of heavy syrup.
- Cut back on soda.

Source: http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/high-fructose-corn-syrup/AN01588
The good news is that anyone who can walk can go snowshoeing. From young kids to senior citizens!

There is no better way to begin snowshoeing than just going and doing it. Take a risk, rent or buy a pair of snowshoes, dress for the elements and enjoy. However, that’s just a start - there is more to it than just taking a refreshing plunge in some snow.

Snowshoeing has been around for thousands of years. And, obviously, the art of snowshoeing has become more sophisticated over time - now it’s considered a winter sport. From the early wood-frame to the aluminum-frame models, snowshoeing has garnered quite a following throughout the world. Modern day snowshoeing is made up of casual snowshoers who hike trails for pleasure, the snowshoeing enthusiasts who trek through the backcountry, and the competitors who race.

Considering this is the fastest growing winter sport in the world (snowboarding is growing fast too, but not fast enough). snowshoeing is poised to become a monster of a market. Many involved in skiing and snowboarding utilize snowshoes to participate in some great backcountry hikes to find the holy grail of mother nature: Deep, unscathed powder. Snowshoeing is a great alternative for many sports - especially those who like running.

What’s So Great About Snowshoeing?

The sport is easy to learn, virtually inexpensive (compared to other winter sports), poses little risk of injury and is a great way to exert energy during the cold winter months. According to research provided by Snowsports Industries America (SIA), 40.8 percent of snowshoers are women (a number that is increasing rapidly), 9.4 percent of snowshoers are children (ages 7-11), and 44.2 percent of snowshoers are ages 25-44.

One of the more appealing facts about snowshoeing is how it can help enrich a person’s health. Known to help maintain or improve cardiovascular fitness, the sport helps burn more than 600 calories per hour. Snowshoers can burn more than 45 percent more calories than walking or running at the same speed, according to SIA. Snowshoeing is a great way to pursue losing weight; however, a healthy diet should be maintained to seek the appropriate effectiveness in a healthy lifestyle as well.

Source: http://www.snowshoemag.com/first.cfm

Where to go in Marquette?

Marquette County has a number of wonderful trails for your snowshoeing pleasure. Try places like, Presque Isle Park in Marquette, Old Town Trails in Negaunee, Lower Noqueamanon Trail in Marquette Township, Harlow Lake/Little Presque Isle in Marquette Township, Songbird Trail in Marquette Township and Al Quaal Red Trail in Ishpeming. For more information on these trails, maps and conditions please visit: Marquette Tail Report. Or visit Marquette County’s web-site.

For rentals in the area please contact local sports shops or Northern Michigan University Recreation Services.

Get out there and enjoy the winter wonderland that Marquette has to offer!