

## RESOLUTION SUCCESS-

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So you made that New Year's resolution to be more fit and healthy in 2004 and you are wondering how to keep that resolution. I have a few suggestions that may help.

1. Setting goals
2. Professional advise from a health and fitness expert
3. Finding the right exercise for you
4. Setting aside time
5. Rewarding yourself

Knowing where to start is dependent on goal setting. So I would suggest making short term as well as long-term realistic goals. Goals could include losing weight by cutting down on calorie consumption or exercising 2-3 times per week.

After you have established some goals then I would suggest approaching a health and fitness professional to assist you with setting up a program. Program design is crucial for physique and health changes. Personal trainers are well versed in program implementation and nutrition.

Many times our idea of what's fit or healthy is not necessarily so. After many years of schooling in the field of health education I thought I knew what was healthy. When I met my partner Kent I was going out to dinner often for social reasons and constantly getting a stomachache.

He asked me what choices I was making and many of them had lots of hidden fats and sodium. I basically had to realize that I didn't have a clue on how to eat healthily. Kent has been an instrumental person in re-educating me. Asking a professional can help you to look at your lifestyle from a different point of view and make the necessary suggestions so change can occur.

Finding the right exercise for you is important to making consistent lifestyle changes. Realizing that going to a gym doesn't mean that you lift weights and get bulky. Lifting weights can actually increase your metabolic rate and assist in weight loss at a fairly rapid pace.

There are many other programs offered at a fitness center and I always encourage people to cross train. Cross training means a variety of fitness classes and exercises. The importance is to feel good while exercising and enjoying yourself.

I also encourage people to utilize the buddy system. When you plan on meeting a friend to exercise you are more likely to stick to the plan. It can also be a fun opportunity to get caught up on your social time. One day a week I teach a women's weight training class and afterward we take a sauna and chat. We work out hard and have fun. The women who have come to this class have met other women to exercise with.

Participating in a class can assist in meeting other people who have the same interests in their life. If you are truly interested in making a positive change in your health and fitness condition, surround yourself with other people who have the same intention. Once you establish a fitness routine, you will find it to be addicting in the sense that it will make you feel good.

You have to be willing to make change in your habits. The resolution to be more fit and healthy is basically about a lifestyle change. Making time to exercise, prepare food, and rest takes time. We often have the excuse that I don't have time. Everyone can make time if they want.

Follow through is the big point here. Saying you are going to do something does not produce results unless you do it. I would suggest starting with small goals so that you will feel a sense of accomplishment. For example, decide to exercise 30 minutes to begin with and eliminate one thing out of your diet that is holding you back.

After you have accomplished the first set of goals then you may consider making a new set of goals. When I first starting to workout my goal was not to train for a body building show. My first goal was to rehabilitate my knee so I could ski again. Now I am training for a show.

Rewarding yourself for small successes is important to staying motivated through your program. For example, you made it to the gym 2 times a week for 6 weeks and lost 5 pounds. Why not reward yourself with a massage or a new pair of pants.

Looking and feeling good can also require a change in our self-esteem. Many times we fail at changes that will make us more healthy and attractive because we are afraid to be the best we can be. Why not? Maybe we can enjoy life more if we all were happier and healthier.

Most of the times our resolutions are based on dreams and not realities. This year make that dream become a reality.