



# Don't Give Up on Your New Year's Resolution!

HAPPY  
NEW YEAR

**If** you are about to break your 2017 New Year's resolution, you aren't alone. Some statistics find that up to 92 percent of us never meet our goal. However, you can beat the odds this year by employing some of these strategies that the successful 8 percent use to reach their goals. Half of the tips involve setting yourself up for success by thinking through your resolution and being realistic. The other half help with keeping you motivated and on track. Planning and executing your resolution are equally important.

**1 Write down a complete resolution.** People remember things they write down, so place your resolution somewhere you see it every day, such as taped to the bathroom mirror. *Move this reminder to a new location every three-four days so you don't start overlooking it.* This process of actually touching it will also reinforce your commitment. Think through your resolution, including why you want to meet your goal. Understand the motivation behind the resolution. Do you want to lose that 40 pounds to lower your cholesterol or to drop three pants sizes? Understanding what you will gain by keeping your resolution will help keep you on track.

**2 Set a more realistic goal.** Many people blow off their resolutions because they set unrealistic goals. You can't expect to go from saving no money at all to socking away \$20,000 in a year. Start small. Instead of exercising an hour a day, six days a week, try a half hour a day, three to four days a week. You can always add to your goal after you've been successful for a while.

**3 Share your resolution with others.** When you tell others what you plan to do, you're making yourself accountable to them. Ask an assertive, but trusted family member or friend to ask you about how you are achieving your goal. Having supportive people in your corner increases the odds that you'll keep your resolution.

**4 Address the naysayers.** We all have at least one negative person in our lives. Whether it's your jealous relative or a nasty coworker, you cannot let what they say derail you. Plan what you'll say to the naysayers. Try a conversation stopper, such as, "Thank you for your input," or "I'll certainly consider what you've said."

**5 Pat yourself on the back for your successes.** Once you've successfully worked toward your goal for a week or two, be sure to give yourself some credit. Celebrate your successes in positive ways. If you are trying to lose weight for example, treat yourself to something (other than unhealthy food or slacking off on exercise.) Some studies find that we have as much willpower as we think we do, and reminding yourself that you've been successful in the past will help you when the going gets rough.

**6 Don't abandon your resolution because of a setback.** Most people give up after they break their resolution once or twice. It's unrealistic to believe we are going to work toward our goals consistently, especially when trying to break unhealthy habits or establish healthy ones. Note what happened to get you off track, make any adjustments you can to avoid those circumstances and start again. It doesn't matter how many times you start over, as long as you reach your goal. You can always start your day, or even your year, over. Look back at your previous successes, and keep going.

We view each January as a fresh start with potential for life-changing possibilities. Making a New Year's resolution and attempting to keep it requires work, but the payoff is huge. Not only will you reach a goal, you'll become more self-confident from the lessons you learned during the process. Here's to hoping your 2017 sees some of your dreams come true!