

Happy New Year for a happy new you!

By Leslie Burman R.D. L.D.



O.K. New year, new you...you have been down this route many times. This year, you mean it! You will accomplish your goals set out in anticipation to start off the New Year with big changes!

It is no surprise with over 60% of us are overweight and at any given time approximately 75% of us on some sort of diet, we can bet eating right will be the topic of conversation beginning 2007. As your blood pressure, cholesterol levels, blood sugars, medications, and trousers size are all increasing in numbers, this is a wonderful time to make positive changes!

Reality is 97% of those wholehearted solid resolutions sworn in with the New Year fall by the 'waist side' by years end. On the contrary to thinking "so why try", this grim statistic gives you a much clearer perspective on how to approach your goals.

Often we say that we WILL eat better, workout at a gym, not get fast food, ECT. These ideas are not backed up with a concrete blueprint explanations to answer who, what, where, when, why, and how. The way you might have approached your previous resolutions could be analogous to having you child sleeping with a chemistry book under his/her pillow. Osmosis is a good attempt but at best you're looking at a C(and that's provided full attention is paid in class).

First, examine the past in order to achieve future success. How did you get to the point in the first place? New job, less time, too much time, ECT. Also, evaluate your present pressure points. What are your trigger times and places. For example, most over indulgence takes place in the home. If this is true for you, do not set yourself up for failure. I have heard many times that the trigger foods are intended for a spouse or a child and they 'shouldn't suffer for personal weaknesses'. Instead of looking at it as a personal failure, why not simply see it a personality blueprint? If someone cannot tolerate alcohol in moderation would you lock the person up in a wine cellar? You are officially NOT at war with yourself this year; you are just working with your individual thumbprint. If your spouse or others in the household feel differently, try changes that will work with you. Buy food that will not tempt you, have your spouse bring the foods to work; or even better, change your household to a more nutrient dense environment. You can say," It is my role to make sure those I love are healthy and well- cared for with

food being no exception”. Who can argue with that? Instead of having your own personal Ben and Jerry’s ice cream store, why not forgo it in the freezer and make it an occasional family outing. Remember with children, 20% of learning comes from what is told and 80% comes from what is observed. Make the foods not as convenient. One recent study reporting ¼ amount of nuts were eaten when the individuals had to crack open the nuts themselves in order to eat them. Let’s put a positive spin on our inherent laziness by making foods a bit less mindless.

In order to achieve overall positive changes, we must talk about the successful exercise plan. What do you enjoy most? Do you like to work out around people, early morning, do competitive sports? Find what you enjoyed most in the past and go with it. Take up dancing, boxing, and speed walking. Of course you broke your last 10 New years resolutions because you told yourself you HAD to work out at the gym 3x a week on a treadmill. However when you think of treadmills it reminds you of your childhood pet guinea pig running on its exercise wheel. With that kind of self-talk, you might as well put needles in your eyes. Try something you perceive as fun so it isn’t pure torture but an anticipated treat.

Equally speaking, focus on how much fun it would be to get into your old high school clothes, how much more fun you would have going for a family bicycle ride instead of flipping channels on the T.V. Mentally set yourself up for the challenge!

Know you will always have a ‘green man’ lurking in your subconscious mind. When you get tired, bored, too hungry, anxious, or just out of habit, he returns and whispers in your ear...”go ahead just eat the burger and fries. You are hungry and you worked a long hard day”. Keep the green man at bay with planning your day BEFORE he gets too big and powerful. Pack food, sneakers, and other supplies so you will not have to succumb to power. The minute you are unprepared and/or not equipped for the fight, unfortunately he has you and you will need a miracle to get out of his grips. Know he is always around and, like family, when you least desire him he comes knocking at your front door.

It is true that 30 days form a habit. You will have to think about your new lifestyle consciously initially. However, small changes add up incredibly. Make small switches like from 2% to skim milk, don’t eat standing up, switch to smaller bowls and plates, start a no second helping rule, slow your eating down, or start trying to have foods without labels. By the way, did you ever wonder how we now must check the label to see what food groups we are getting?

All we need is just 20% less food in a day to promote weight loss. Could be that extra bit of pizza or fries on your kids plate...

This year, yes things will be different. YOU are ready for the green man to come. No more osmosis with good intention. Get your goal, answer specific questions, and allow yourself the gift of anticipation. Congratulations on successfully tackling your New Year’s resolution!

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