

# >> MAKE THIS YOUR LAST NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION



Words:

Have you started thinking about your New Year's Resolution? Is it, by chance, the same resolution you made last year? Or have you become cynical and scrapped making them, not believing you'll achieve your goal?

Each year, countless people start the year eagerly wanting to redefine various aspects of their lives by means of "New Year's Resolutions". Something about the change in the calendar year encourages us to put the previous year behind us and look instead to what's ahead. With renewed hope, energy and spirit, we set goals we wish to accomplish. However, studies find that less than a fourth of people actually keep their New Year's commitments.

### What makes achieving personal goals so difficult?

One common pitfall is taking off blindly towards a goal without a map. We start out earnestly at Point A, but have no game plan to help us reach Point B. We quickly find ourselves wandering aimlessly, knowing where we want to be but unsure how to get there. When this happens, it's easy to abandon our plans and lapse back into our previous apathetic ways.

**Lack of accountability is another culprit.** January issues of magazines are full of articles advising New Year's Resolutionsers to create their own systems of accountability to reach their goals –

because that works for many people. We will make it to the gym if our friend is waiting for us there. We will forego the piece of cake if we know the scales at the weight loss center await us. Life creates mountains of excuses we can use if we don't have to face someone with our missteps.

**Ask Yourself...**How can we learn to keep personal aspirations alive, being accountable to ourselves? How can we set a goal and not lose focus, even if there would be no consequence for abandoning the goal? How can we commit to developing our interests and talents?

**Let this year's resolution be the last one you make.** To do this, you'll need to make one New Year's resolution. Go ahead, make it right now. Here's where the money is:

**Commit to continually better yourself.** Move towards your goals a step at a time. Celebrate the small successes. Make progress a way of life! Adopt this approach and in no time, rather than being overwhelmed and feeling defeated by goals not met, you'll be able to face your aspirations with guts and cross the finish line with glory!

## THE PLAN

**Identify your long-range goals.** In your new 2010 calendar, find a place to write out your ultimate goals, or write them on a separate piece of paper and post it next to the calendar where you can always see them.

**Relish your progress.** Pat yourself on the back as you check your mini-goals off your calendar. Keep moving! Figure out your next steps and put those on your calendar. You'll be less likely to burn out on a long-range goal by learning to find satisfaction in the pursuit. When you are motivated by your own effort, you'll be able to plod ahead towards the goal without becoming discouraged or losing interest.

**Don't be too specific with goals that are hard to calculate.** For instance, if you say "I'll lose 8 lbs this month". You may lose 8 lbs fat, but gain 5 lbs muscle, and you'll feel like you failed, even though you made significant progress. Instead, focus on steps you can measure, such as committing to working out 4x/week, and reducing calories by 500/day.

**If you pass a goal date without achieving the goal, don't quit!** Put it back on your calendar. If it's a difficult step to take, it may be beneficial to break it down into even small mini-goals. Be realistic, and allow yourself a reasonable amount of flexibility.

**Accountability works. Use it.** Find someone who can help you stay on track. Hire a coach or trainer, or sign up for a class. Subscribe to an interest magazine for periodical inspiration delivered to your mailbox. Find a mentor or join a support group. And don't forget the valuable resource of friendship! A buddy working towards the same goal, or a friend dedicated to helping you reach your goal will help keep your booty in gear!

**Break it down.** Identify mini-goals that will help you get closer to that goal. Write the first few mini-goals down on your calendar for the month of January – those are your first goal dates.

**Perform a monthly checkup at the beginning of each month.** Sit down with your list of goals and your calendar. See how far you've come, and figure out what steps you need to accomplish for the next month. Adjust if you need to. You can do this on the first day of each month, or it may be easier to pick a day you usually have a little free time, such as the first Sunday of each month.

**Make 2010 the year you commit to continually working towards a better you, one step at a time.** Put this endeavor into practice, then next year when New Year's rolls around, you won't have a list of things you want to change about yourself, you'll already be working towards and achieving those goals!

### BEST IN CHAMP

When it comes a celebration is without a bottle matter the bud selection for you

### BEST SPECIAL OCCASION CHAMPAGNE

CHARLES HEIDSIECK 1999 BLANC DES MILLENAIRES

**PROS**  
•Light-bodied yet complex  
•Ages well  
•Quite dry and we

**CONS**  
•May or may not improve with age  
•Expensive

### BEST VALUE, SPARKLING WINE

ROEDERER ESTATE ANDER VALLEY BRUT N

**PROS**  
•Value  
•Crisp, full-bodied complex  
•Widely Available

**CONS**  
•Not as complex as Champagne

### BEST INEXPENSIVE BUBBLY

GLORIA FERRE SONOMA BRUT

**PROS**  
•Better than other sparkling wine  
•Well Balanced  
•Widely Available

**CONS**  
•Not as complex as wines  
•Not as elegant as Champagne

### BEST VALUE, FRENCH CHAMPAGNE

NICOLAS FEUILLATTE BR

**PROS**  
•Good value for French Champagne  
•Bright, with a touch  
•Light and delicate  
•Citrus and floral  
•Complements m

**CONS**  
•Not as refined or Vintage Champagne

# don't put on a winter coat

Words

**Fall and early winter are busy times of the year, packed with beloved traditions, such as social events, festivals, and holidays.** Unfortunately, another tradition many of us would rather avoid, is that of abandoning our fitness and nutrition goals for a few months. Year after year, we let our health go throughout the holiday season and by New Year's we have a list of problems we need to fix. Clients come to me in January; feeling frazzled and out of shape, wish lists of health-related New Year's resolutions in their pockets.

**This year, how about starting a new winter tradition?** How about committing to placing wellness among your top priorities, starting right this moment, so you don't have to do damage control later.

Did you just moan thinking, **"But that takes all the fun out of the holidays!"**? It doesn't have to. By fine-tuning our thinking about this time of year, planning ahead, committing to making good choices

and employing smart exercise methods, we can take responsibility for enjoying the winter months, and enter the New Year feeling fantastic.

**What makes this time of year such a pitfall for so many?** Beginning with football parties and fall festivals, revving up with Halloween candy haul, exploding with Thanksgiving and the winter holiday parties and family gatherings, finally ending with a New Year's extravaganza, the entire season, for many, revolves around decadent food. The mindset has become one of treating ourselves and others, and ultimately over-indulgence. Meaning these activities leave us too busy to fit in our normal exercise routine – we're lucky if we just miss a few workouts, while many end up on an extended vacation from their fitness routine.

**Here are some tips to help you gear up** and commit to wellness ideas to help you devise a game plan and practical information to squeeze an effective workout in, even if you don't have much



## Adjust your Mindset

Don't accept a setback this season! This is the time of year when many fall into the "I won't worry about it now, I'll fix it in January." trap. Get your mind in gear for maintaining, or even improving, your fitness level throughout the holidays this year, starting right now.

- ✿ Set some new goals. Consider signing up for a holiday 5K, or commit to an event in the early spring such as a triathlon, fitness competition or a beach vacation.
- ✿ Create accountability for yourself by scheduling with a workout buddy or personal trainer.
- ✿ Find a new love. Sign up for a fitness class or sport that you've never tried, like kickboxing, spinning, boot camp, Pilates, yoga, tennis or golf. Check your community centers and colleges for low-cost introductory classes.
- ✿ Schedule a session with a personal trainer for new inspiration. Most trainers even offer express sessions if your schedule is packed.

**Remember:** make sure your goals focus on your fitness and not your figure.



## Make careful choices

Perhaps the biggest challenge of the holidays is all of the food available! Like delectable, edible booby-traps, cookies and other holiday treats are available at every turn. Calorie-laden buffets adorn every party. You bring home a holiday ham... and pretty soon, you feel like you're turning into the holiday ham! But remember, the choice is yours. Commit to choosing well.

- ✿ Maintain a healthy relationship with food. Before taking a bite of that cookie, consider what your body will gain. Will it provide healthy energy and nutrients? Or will it just help your Santa impersonation? Be conscious of how food intake affects you and what type of fuel you're providing yourself. This will help you make good eating choices.
- ✿ Don't equate food with caring. Many people use food as a way to show their affection. Neighbors bake cookies, friends and family create lavish meals, and we even treat ourselves. The meal is the centerpiece of many holidays and gatherings. It takes willpower and grace to accept the kind gesture, but politely refuse overindulging. You can, and should, do it!
- ✿ Remember that food offers a very temporary sense of satisfaction, but your health is a stronghold to enjoy day in and day out.
- ✿ Don't use food or alcohol to fill an emotional void or as a stress-buster. It will only fill up the void between you and your jeans. Instead, rely on exercise to work off those stress-induced unhealthy hormones.

Whether it's a football party, a family Thanksgiving dinner, or a festive holiday party, this plan will help you power through the event, feeling great, enjoying yourself, and keeping your healthy diet in check.

- ✿ Before you get ready, do a 20-minute interval training session to jump-start your fat-burning metabolism. Amazingly, just 20 minutes of high-intensity interval training can boost your body's fat-burning for several hours after the workout. It will increase your energy, help curb your appetite, and you'll remain focused on your accomplishments. You'll also be less likely to overindulge and sabotage the hard work you just put in. Not only that, but you'll look and feel great.

- ✿ Have a healthy, satisfying meal or snack before facing a smorgasbord of temptations.

- ✿ Wear something fitted. Showing off your body will help you remember what you've worked this hard for, and will help you remember when you're overeating. You don't want to feel like unzipping your pants after your meal!

- ✿ Sample, but don't over-indulge. Try to pick veggies and healthy options at the buffet. Go for flavorful or spicy foods that are satisfying...you'll eat less of them than bland things. Also, stay away from sugar.

- ✿ Choose beverages wisely. Remember, alcohol slows down your metabolism, so having more than one alcoholic beverage will counteract that hard work you did. You'll also spend several days working off the alcohol you consumed rather than burning fat. Artificial sweeteners can increase cravings, so it's also best to also stay away from diet drinks.

- ✿ Focus on conversation, dancing, or other activities. You're there to enjoy the gathering! Make an effort to really get to know people (but not the bartender!)



## Plan ahead

This time of year, we're especially susceptible to interruptions and over-scheduling.

- \* Schedule your workouts at least a week in advance. Hire a trainer now to help keep you accountable. Make sure you keep your gym shoes and clothes in your office or car.
- \* Plan healthy meals, and as often as possible, prepare them yourself.
- \* Keep healthy snacks handy at all times. Having a bag of almonds or raw veggies handy will help you pass up the temptation of holiday treats.
- \* Beware of interruptions. I make it a point to do my workouts first thing in the morning even before I check my email or voicemail. As a business owner, if I don't do that, I may take the chance of getting caught in a meeting or project and missing my workout all together.



## Don't skimp on your exercise

You may be committed to maintaining your wellness, but the fact remains that it's a busy season; you're likely to find yourself squeezed for exercise time.

- \* Starting early in the season (as soon as you read this article!), increase the frequency of your workouts. Get ahead before you get behind. Adding extra exercise days now will help build yourself a little leeway, especially for holiday weeks when getting to the gym may be all but impossible.
- \* When short on time, carve out enough time for a quick 20-minute interval-training session. I love incorporating intervals into my client's cardio training. It cuts down on time and actually burns more fat. When you interval train, you want to push your body to move faster for a short period of 1-2 minutes and then back off and recover for 1 minute and repeat.
- \* Don't forget to squeeze in some strength training! These three basic moves are the most effective choices for a quick strength workout: lunges, pushups and crunches. Treat it like a circuit and push yourself through these exercises adding enough weight to increase your heart rate and burn calories. Alternate with bursts of high-intensity cardio for a super-charged fat blasting workout that only takes minutes!

**Want a detailed interval workout?** Contact a personal trainer or visit [www.ExcelWellnessStudio.com](http://www.ExcelWellnessStudio.com) for a downloadable workout.

## Most importantly, enjoy yourself!

A commitment to health shouldn't squelch the fun or spirit out of the holidays. Embrace the meaning of the season and work wellness into your activities. You may not get a major workout, but you'll enjoy your friends and family, spend more time moving and less time eating by keeping busy.

- \* Bring a Frisbee or football to toss during halftime or after the meal.
- \* Switch up a dinner out with friends to an ice skating outing or a night out dancing.
- \* Explore local outdoor festivities such as Christmas tree lightings, the luminary walk at the Overland Park Arboretum, or enjoy a stroll on the Plaza.
- \* If there's snow, call some buddies and go sledding or build a snowman – or do a good deed and shovel the driveway for an elderly neighbor or relative.
- \* Don't forget to take the time to rest! Including much-needed sleep and down-time on your schedule will give you energy to keep up with your exercise routine and all of your activities.

**Make a commitment** to yourself and start planning right now for one precious gift you'll give yourself this year – your own health.



Find out today how you can have a week of gourmet meals delivered to your doorstep each morning. Look better and feel better than you ever have in your life!



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