

5 Tips to Help Make Your New Year Resolutions More than Just a List

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Does this sound familiar? Each year at this time, you create a grand list of things you want to accomplish over the next year—"new year resolutions". With great excitement and high hopes you welcome the new year with a list of changes to make in the coming year. On January 1st you dive in to the list full force. This goes okay for a short while, until the change feels daunting and self doubt slips in. Motivation gradually decreases. By about February or perhaps April or May most or all, of the list has become only a memory.

The good news: It doesn't have to be this way! Here are some tips to help you create and implement your *New Year Resolutions for 2012*

- 1. Ask yourself** what you really want? What is most important to you this year? What matters most to you? Specify 3 reasons why you need the change(s).
- 2. Create a list** of new year resolutions that is a reasonable length. You may need to prioritize *what you really want*. If, your list is too long you may feel defeated before you start.
- 3. Take inventory** of your accomplishments and achieved resolutions from the current year and previous years. Celebrate these! Recognizing and honouring achievements helps boost motivation for change. Note what you did that helped you attain those resolutions.
- 4. Identify the resources** you will need to accomplish each resolution (e.g., financial resources, support from loved ones, information/knowledge, motivational coaching/counselling). Many resolutions never come to life because the supportive framework is lacking.
- 5. Enlist your resources.** Explore the type and availability of needed resources, and take steps to secure those needed. For instance, research shows that successful, long term weight loss or quitting smoking requires specific skills (e.g., stress management techniques), some lifestyle changes (e.g., activity level, good nutrition), and specific social and environmental supports (e.g., encouragement from family and friends, limited exposure to places/activities where others are smoking).

For many years I have been helping people make the changes they really want in their lives. I welcome the opportunity to get you started and/or guide you through the achievement of your New Year Resolutions in 2012 using these and other tips and strategies.

All the best to you and your loved ones at this time and in the coming year! Karen Turner