

Make 2011 Your Best Year Yet



Something wonderful is coming in 2011. Make it a better, stronger, smarter, and happier you! Do you have a new vision, new intentions, and exciting goals for the coming year?

Here's how to take action, follow through, and stay fired up as you work toward the achievement of your goals.

Do New Year's Resolutions Really Work?

Google "New Year's resolutions" and you'll turn up more than 80 million links. There's no question that January is an important psychological trigger for those of us seeking change in our lives.

Unfortunately, many surveys show that only about 20% of New Year's resolutions are successful. However, evidence shows you can *dramatically increase these odds* for yourself!

Here's the secret: Choose a goal and take the right approach to accomplishing it. That means working a plan.

Redefining New Year's Resolutions

The first step toward success is to stop thinking "resolution" and start thinking "commitment." A resolution is just one action—to make up one's mind. A commitment is active and ongoing.

Your Four Keys to Success

Clarity: Fixate on a goal in your mind with a clear definition of success. Visualize yourself accomplishing this goal. Allow yourself no substitute for achievement of it. Fall asleep at night visualizing it.

Planning: Plot your course to success by breaking down your big goal into small steps. Each step must be practical and realistic. For example, if you want to lose 1 lb. per week until summer, then you need to know how many calories you have to burn each time you work out. Know when you will exercise and how, where, and what you will do.

Scorekeeping: Frequent small successes and feedback are very motivating. Establish weekly and monthly scorekeeping into your plan. Small victories build morale. Celebrate each one! See setbacks as "feedback gifts" that allow you to tweak your plan.

Resiliency: You WILL suffer setbacks along the way. Eliminate preconceptions about your path to success. Course corrections are natural, so be flexible enough to ditch what isn't working and be willing to adapt new strategies when you're stuck.

Three Ways to Power Up 2011

Partner up: Share your goals and take a team approach with your family in order to overcome challenges. Don't blame lack of success on others. If necessary, get coaching to communicate more effectively, persuade, or negotiate with those who could sabotage your goal.

Unplug: Regularly schedule "media free" time to recharge and reconnect with loved ones—no cell phones, computers, or TV.

Double Down: The best way to kill a bad habit is to replace it with a good one. Turn that hour you waste watching TV into exercise time. Replace your post-meal cigarette with a brisk walk. When your old habit has a substitute, you're less likely to miss it.

Energize Your Environment

Your social environment has more effect on you than you know. Surround yourself with positive, like-minded people. Today, self-help, motivational, and personal improvement groups are everywhere, both on- and off-line. Never underestimate the power of peer influence and group support. This "tool" is so effective that it is the foundation of all 12-step self-help groups.

Your morning routine sets the tone for the day. Start with a review of your goals and spend one minute visualizing yourself accomplishing them. Then verbalize things you are grateful for today. Finish with a positive self-affirmation.

As you succeed, help others to do the same. This give-back step multiplies your success and reinforces behavioral changes.

What the EAP Can Do

Do you need support from an objective, nonjudgmental person who wants you to succeed? Use your employer sponsored employee assistance program to speed your progress and troubleshoot roadblocks.

**Child & Family Services
Employee Assistance Program**
(716) 681-4300
(800) 888-4162 [Outside of WNY]