

NEW YEAR RESOLUTIONS

New Year's resolutions are fun to make but extremely difficult to maintain. Each January, roughly one in three Americans resolve to better themselves in some way. A much smaller percentage of people actually make good on those resolutions. While about 75% of people stick to their goals for at least a week, less than half (46%) are still on target six months later. It's hard to keep up the enthusiasm months after you've swept up the confetti, but it's not impossible. This year, pick one of the following THREE worthy resolutions, and stick with it.

➤ **Lose Weight**

The fact that this is generally among the most popular resolutions suggests just how difficult it is to commit to. But you can succeed if you don't expect overnight success, and you are willing to take "small steps" toward your weight loss. Also, plan for bumps in the road. Use a food journal to keep track of what you eat and have a support system in place, as it's important to have someone there on a regular basis to get you through those rough times.

➤ **Stay in Touch**

Feel like old friends (or family) have fallen by the wayside? It's good for your health to reconnect with them. Research suggests people with strong social ties live longer than those who don't. In fact, a lack of social bonds can damage your health as much as alcohol abuse and smoking, and even more than obesity and lack of exercise, a 2010 study in the journal *PLoS Medicine* suggests.

In a technology-fixated era, it's never been easier to stay in touch—or rejuvenate your relationship—with friends and family, so fire up Facebook and follow up with in-person visits.

➤ **Save Money**

Save money by making healthy lifestyle changes. Take stock of what you have in the fridge and make a grocery list. Aimless supermarket shopping can lead to poor choices for your diet and wallet.

Stay home to eat, as eating out is usually more expensive, and typically not as healthy as cooking your meals at home.

Cut back on gym membership costs by exercising at home. Many fitness programs on videogame systems like Nintendo's Wii *Wii Fit Plus* and Microsoft's Xbox Kinect *Your Shape Fitness Evolved* can get you sweating. Also, get out and walk, weather permitting, and get UP AND MOVE during every commercial if sitting at home watching TV.