

The Communicator

Hello and welcome to the first edition of TLC's newsletter for 2010. I hope you all had a fantastic Christmas & a New Year full of wonderful opportunities.

Keeping Your New Years Resolutions

40 to 45% of adults make one or more resolutions each year. The top new years resolutions are about weight loss, exercise, and smoke cessation. The following shows how many of these resolutions are maintained as time goes on:

Past the first week:	75%	Past 2 weeks:	71%
After one month:	64%	After 6 months:	46%

While a lot of people who make new years resolutions do break them, research shows that making resolutions is useful. People who explicitly make resolutions are 10 times more likely to attain their goals than people who don't explicitly make resolutions:

10 Tips to Help You Stay on Track

1. **Be Realistic** - The surest way to fall short of your goal is to make your goal unattainable. For example, resolving to never eat your favourite food again because it bothers your system could be a bad idea. Strive for a goal that is attainable, such as avoiding it more often than you do now.
2. **Plan Ahead** - Don't make your resolution on New Year's Eve. If you wait until the last minute, it will be based on your mindset that particular day. Instead, it should be planned well before 31st December arrives.
3. **Outline Your Plan** - Decide how you will deal with the temptation to skip that exercise class or have one more cigarette. This could include calling on a friend for help, practicing positive thinking and self-talk, or reminding yourself how your bad habit affects your health.
4. **Make a Pros & Cons List** - It may help to see a list of items on paper to keep your motivation strong. Develop this list over time and ask others to contribute to it. Keep your list with you and refer to it when you need help keeping your resolve.
5. **Take About It** - Don't keep your resolution a secret. Tell friends and family who will be there to support your resolve to change. The best-case scenario is to find yourself a buddy who shares your New Year's resolution and motivate each other.
6. **Reward Yourself** - This doesn't mean that you can eat an entire box of chocolates if your resolution is to diet. Instead, celebrate your success by treating yourself to something that you enjoy that does not contradict your resolution. If you've been sticking to your promise to eat better, for example, perhaps your reward could be going to a movie with a friend.
7. **Track Your Progress** - Keep track of each small success you make toward reaching your larger goal. Short-term goals are easier to keep, and small accomplishments will help keep you motivated. Instead of focusing on losing 15kgs, say, focus on losing that first 2. Keeping a food diary or a symptom journal may help you stay on track.
8. **Don't Beat Yourself Up** - Obsessing over the occasional slip won't help you achieve your goal. Do the best you can each day, and take each day one at a time.
9. **Stick To It** - Experts say it takes about 21 days for a new activity, such as exercising, to become a habit, and 6 months for it to become part of your personality. Your new healthful habits will become second nature in no time.
10. **Keep Trying** - If your resolve has totally run out of steam by mid-February, don't despair. Start over again! There's no reason you can't make a "New Year's resolution" any time of year.

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