

# NEW YEAR'S WEIGHT LOSS RESOLUTIONS

January 1 sported plenty of people out jogging...apparently folks who usually do not jog. They struggled. They ran barely above crawling. They limped. And yet onward they jogged, full of agony. Why? Because their new year's resolutions told them to.

How long will these joggers keep running? Not long enough. Of the 70% of people who make new year's resolutions every year, a large majority will not keep them. They set unrealistic goals, do not have a proper plan in place, and believe that on an arbitrary date things will "be different."

## THE FRESH START APPROACH

The "fresh start," or clean slate, concept is what motivates many people to make new year's resolutions. It also gives them license to "be bad" up until that date, knowing that on the magical day of January 1 they will be transformed into strong-willed exercise machines.

Unfortunately, as someone who has seen many a January 1 (or many a Monday) come and go with no miraculous change within myself, I can attest to the fact that there is one big problem with the fresh start approach: The date may be fresh, but you are still... you. With the same life, same issues, same problems you had on

December 31. Until you resolve those problems and change your thought patterns, your resolutions will start, stop, and stay unfulfilled.

## WHAT TO DO

**1) Forget the resolution.** Begin *now* (whenever that is). Start *this day, this meal*. Don't wait for tomorrow. Don't wait for Monday. Every day you don't start is another day wasted – and another excuse.

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**2) From this moment on, think of your health - not your waistline.** Is that cookie good for your waist? Probably not. But more importantly, does it do anything good for your body? Your overall health? Your blood sugar levels? If it doesn't serve a purpose nutritionally, eat less of it. Notice the phrase "eat less of it" rather than "don't eat it?" Telling yourself you will never eat chocolate (or drink wine) again is *not* realistic. And you will *not* be

*continued*

~by Helen M. Ryan

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# NEW YEAR'S WEIGHT LOSS RESOLUTIONS CONTINUED

able to stick with it. You will “fail” yourself, and wind up waiting for yet another Monday, or another January 1.

**3) Set realistic goals.** Think baby steps. Don't look at your total weight loss goal. If you have 50 pounds to lose, think about your immediate short term goal and what it will take to get you there. Buy pants the next size down and make it your immediate goal to fit into them. Or work on making it through an entire exercise class without falling over. Or try for a target of eight push ups instead of two. When you reach that specific goal, set another (realistic) one. And another. Pretty soon you will be much farther along than you could imagine.

**4) Create a plan.** If you want to fit into that next size smaller, *plan* to add a lot of fruits and vegetables to your diet. *Plan* to drink a lot of water. *Plan* to start walking. Those few steps alone will help you lose that one size.

Then, for your next step, *plan* to cut down on sugar. *Plan* to add in weight training. Bingo. Another size bites the dust.

## THE HABIT

It takes around three weeks to create a new habit. Start a new healthy one at three week intervals. For every interval you finish, you are that much closer to your goal. And that much healthier.

## I HATE ME

Above all, don't beat yourself up if you slip. Simply try to go longer and longer between slip-ups. If you eat a pan of brownies, well so be it. You haven't “blown it.” Don't take that slip-up as permission to continue eating. Just get back on track *immediately*: The very...next...meal.

The best resolution of all: Recognize that you are human. And try to be the best human you can be...for yourself and your health. ☺

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Helen M. Ryan is a Spinning® instructor and a certified personal trainer. She uses her own experience of losing **80+ pounds** to help others. Read Helen's personal story at [www.flexyourbody.com](http://www.flexyourbody.com). And look for Helen's book “Real World Weight Loss,” coming in 2009.