

RESOLUTIONS

Yaaa—(I think!) It is time to make New Year's Resolutions, and it is time to reset our behaviors. Just something about the New Year causes many people to want to improve what has been! Maybe we want a second chance to improve—(whatever that means) or perhaps to get things right. This year possibly, we can activate our “self-efficacy”—that is, aspire to a personal goal(s) and follow through with our goal(s). Whereas absolute control over our lives will never happen, wouldn't some chosen positive personal effort be nice?!

Statistics show that at least a quarter of people typically makes at least one New Year's resolution. Many have good intentions of success, and many probably end their effort with disappointment. Some New Year's resolutions are hard to keep because of too idealistic personal expectations! Now is the time to reflect honestly on last year's behavior and make a reasonable individual effort to what you consider a more positive lifestyle change during the upcoming year.

For the extremely logical person, there is reason to believe that January is no better than any other for improving life through rational commitments to personal change. In case you didn't realize it -- life is challenging for most of us! However, there is some satisfaction in a tradition of sharing our New Year's Resolutions with others to help bond our world into an effort of mutual support and trust.

Science says that being earnest about a New Year's resolution(s) triggers a powerful “neurohormone” in the brain called Dopamine. Dopamine is known to help control the brain's reward and pleasure centers and regulates our emotional responses. Our dopamine level for many of us is high this month (January) as we set forth to establish our New Year's resolutions. Watch out—dopamine levels drop, eventually! No!---You cannot use a decline in your Dopamine as your excuse to forget your resolutions! Intellectually, we know inattention to our intended resolutions happens, and our resolutions are easily replaced with the same ole life realities.

This year (2023), plan to be especially kind to yourself! As a part of your plan, consider the most likely ways to fortify those intentional resolutions by:

1. Share your New Year's Resolutions with friends and family. Verbally express to them your specific positive intentions for an improved process or an effort to experience better outcomes in the year 2023. As a leader, have a New Year Party where invitations encourage group sharing of specific personal and positive worthwhile goals, hopes, dreams of personal success, love of self and others, and dreams of an improved 2023—make a toast to that! Why not have occasional progress-sharing get-togethers with friends and family to have a few laughs and everyone verbally share their progress on their New Year's resolutions? Such support by self and others remembering their resolutions and supporting the extent of compliance throughout the year is one sign of unconditional positive regard, no matter the degree of resolution success. Showing concern, kindness, and support for others is a wonderful and intentional way of a true leader.
2. Have some personal reward in mind once you reach your goal(s). Make it good! Individual rewards are best served by rewarding yourself frequently for sustaining your resolutions. Say exactly the meaning of the reward to yourself as the reward occurs. Be nice to yourself!

3. Go on through the wind—go on through the storm though your resolutions are tossed and torn. Go on with hope in your heart for maintaining your resolutions and year-long attainment, and you will never walk alone. Isn't there a song like that?

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

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