

Resolutions: Feeling Stuck?

As we enter the new year, many of us feel inspired and energized to become our best selves; to address old habits that may be dragging us down or holding us back from living as happily and healthily as we'd like to. Although each journey is different, we are all capable of making changes that can enhance our lives. And, this time of year, we're all in it together!

Making changes, especially long-term lifestyle changes, is sometimes easier said than done. We may know what to do, but following through is another story. When we have identified what we're going to focus on, are excited about becoming our new "selves" and know what needs to take place in order for it to happen, what gets in the way?

Often times, we get stuck: we want to be doing something different but can't seem to make it happen. Making lifestyle changes is not always easy, but when you are truly ready, success is attainable. Here are some tips that you may find helpful in getting unstuck:

**"You are pure
potential."**

--Martin De Maat

- **Set goals and include rewards.** Keep your goals realistic, measurable and attainable. Remember to set smaller, short-term goals to get you started and build in rewards to keep you going.
- **Replace old habits with new ones.** For example, rather than quitting drinking and leaving a void, take up a new evening hobby that will allow you to meet new people and help fill your time.
- **Identify potential barriers, and make a plan that addresses each one.** If you know that you won't exercise once you've gotten home from work, find a way to fit physical activity in before you go home.
- **Try what worked before.** If you've attempted this goal before and had short-term success, do what you did last time. The key is to identify what

caused you to get off track and make a plan for if/when that happens again.

- **Elicit support.** Would having a friend walk with you increase your likelihood of going? How about discussing your goals with a trusted listener? Create a progress chart, ask someone like a health coach to check in with you, keep daily affirmations in plain sight, join a support or community group, etc.; anything that would be helpful to you.
- **Make a plan.** Create a specific plan that includes the strategies, tips and resources that you plan to use each step of the way.

**“It’s kind of fun to
do the impossible.”**

--Walt Disney

These are just a few of many tips that can help us make challenging lifestyle changes. What you chose and how you go about it is up to you. Keep in mind whether or not this is a good time to make a change. Your chances of success increase if you’ve chosen a good time in your life to address a new challenge. If the time is now, set yourself up for success by utilizing the tips above. They may help you get “unstuck” and provide structure for making movement in the right direction (even if only mental!). Good luck with your goals for 2006. A new “you” awaits!

--by Wende McClay, MS

