

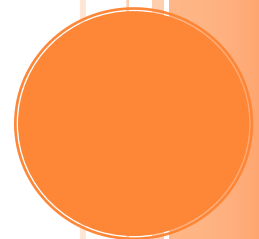
# LOSING WEIGHT IN THE NEW YEAR

*Powerful Resolutions for a New You*



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# Losing Weight in the New Year

## *Powerful Resolutions for a New You*

New Year Resolutions are a popular form of goal-setting that many people use each year, and resolutions related to weight loss, health, and fitness are some of the most popular goals.

Sadly, the success rate for New Year Resolutions isn't good, and that goes double for weight-related resolutions.

Have you ever set exciting New Year Resolutions to lose weight or get in better shape, and lasted only a few days or weeks before giving up? If so, you are definitely not alone! Failure is much more common than success, and for some really good reasons.

Here are some common mistakes with weight-related New Year Resolutions:

### Trying to accomplish too much, too soon.

If you have a lot of weight to lose, you can easily become overwhelmed by looking only at the big picture. You don't have to lose a large amount of weight at once – just 1 or 2 pounds at a time. If you keep thinking, "I have so much weight to lose," you are sure to feel overwhelmed fast. The task will seem too large and progress will seem to be too slow, which makes it much more likely that you'll give up long before you reach your goal.

### Focusing on the outcome alone, rather than the path to the goal.

Every goal requires you to take manageable, repetitive steps to reach it, but many people fail to properly think through the actions they'll need to take to achieve the goal. If this has been a challenge for you too, understand that you can't "get there" in one big leap.

### Failing to consider possible challenges and obstacles.

No matter what kind of goal you set, you are bound to run into a few obstacles and challenges along the way. If achieving goals was easy, everyone would be doing it! Rather than naively expecting it to be easy, it's important to prepare yourself to face challenges.

### Failing to prepare tools for overcoming challenges.

For every problem, there is a solution. For every challenge, there is a workaround. The only question is whether you are going to prepare the workarounds and solutions ahead of time, or wait until a big, gnarly challenge is blocking your path. Not surprisingly, people who plan ahead often move through challenges much faster and easier than people who don't.

## Tackling too many goals at once.

It's tempting to set goals to improve many areas of your life, but trying to tackle them all at once is just asking for trouble. Especially with a goal like weight loss, there are many aspects of lifestyle changes you may need to address; and trying to also overhaul your financial situation and meet your soul mate and quit smoking all at once will be difficult, if not impossible.

## Failing to prepare for dwindling motivation.

When you first set a goal to lose weight, you will feel motivated and inspired about it . . . for a while. But within a matter of days, weeks, maybe even a month or so – you're going to wake up one day and say, "Ugh. I don't want to do this anymore. I'm tired of counting calories. I'm tired of working out. I'm tired of making slow progress." It happens to everyone at some point. Knowing this and planning for it ahead of time will help you overcome it quickly and easily.

## Failing to define a set of clear action steps.

Imagine if you set a goal to walk to a specific destination. Now imagine that you didn't bother to map out a route; you just laced up your walking shoes and started moving in that direction. What are the odds that you would make it to your destination? Not very good! You need to know exactly where you want to end up, and exactly how to get there from your starting point.

## Holding counter-intentions that conflict with your goals.

This is a major cause of New Year Resolution failure, and especially related to weight loss goals. What is a counter-intention? It's an underlying (sometimes subconscious) intention that directly conflicts with your goal.

A good example is if you set a goal to lose 25 pounds, but deep down inside part of you feels scared about losing weight, so you keep sabotaging your efforts even if you aren't consciously aware that you are doing it.

## COMPONENTS OF SUCCESSFUL WEIGHT LOSS NEW YEAR RESOLUTIONS

To set really powerful, effective New Year Resolutions for losing weight, it's important to take a different approach that helps you avoid these common pitfalls.

Below is an effective 7-step plan for setting and pursuing weight loss New Year Resolutions:

### Step #1 – What Are You REALLY After?

Every goal has an underlying desire associated with it, and these desires are always related to feelings. In other words, you don't just want to lose weight – you want to

feel a certain way about your body. You want other people to react to you in different ways which will make you feel a certain way about yourself.

It's not just about the outer goal; the key is tuning into the way you will feel when you achieve the goal. When you first set a goal, it's beneficial to get clear about what you're really trying to accomplish so you don't aim for something that won't satisfy you.

Why exactly is it important to you to lose weight? Grab a sheet of paper and jot down the main reasons why you are setting this goal. Which benefits will you gain from achieving your weight loss goal?

Here are some examples:

- I want to have more energy.
- I want to feel sexy and attractive.
- I want to feel proud of my body.
- I want to live a longer, happier life.
- I want to enjoy vibrant health.
- I want to wear clothes that make me feel attractive.
- I want to feel light and energetic.

There are no wrong answers – just write down the essence of what you are trying to accomplish by losing weight.

Then, pick out the biggest, strongest reasons from your list and expand on those thoughts a little bit. Go into more detail about why they are so important to you.

Here are a couple of examples from our list above:

### **I want to have more energy.**

"I want to wake up in the morning feeling energized and ready to start the day. I want to live an active, exciting life. I want lots of energy so I can take care of my obligations, pursue my dreams, and still have plenty of energy for having fun. I want to feel strong and vibrant, rather than depleted and tired all the time. If I were in better shape, I could easily accomplish the things I need to do each day, and still have energy to do the things I WANT to do. It would mean a lot to me to be able to get through each day, no matter how busy, with plenty of energy to spare."

### **I want to feel proud of my body.**

"I want to be excited about getting dressed in the morning. I want to put on clothing that makes me feel slim and attractive. I want to walk down the street feeling good about myself. I want to receive compliments from people I know, asking me what I'm doing that's making me look so good lately. I want to feel proud of my body when I'm out in public, rather than feeling embarrassed because I've got this extra weight. I want to feel attractive and confident, no matter where I go and no matter what I do."

## Step #2 – What Would Help Me Achieve This Goal?

Now that you've identified exactly what you want to accomplish, take some time to think about the circumstances that would help you feel the way you want to feel.

Certainly, the end result of losing weight would help you feel confident, attractive, and energetic.

But even before you achieve that goal, there are action steps that can awaken those feelings of satisfaction and confidence within you.

Here are a few examples:

- Daily exercise.
- Eating better quality food.
- Drinking plenty of water.
- Taking vitamins.
- Reducing my caloric intake.
- Getting plenty of rest each night.
- Taking better care of myself.
- Finding things to appreciate about my body right now.
- Wearing clothes that make me feel good, even before I lose weight.

As you start to explore the circumstances that would contribute to your positive feelings, you will realize that there are many things you can start doing right NOW that will help you experience those feelings even long before you have achieved the ultimate goal of weight loss.

Taking better care of yourself, getting plenty of exercise and rest, drinking plenty of water, appreciating your body now – these things will help you move toward the completion of your goal faster and easier than simply focusing on weight loss alone.

Don't worry that focusing on these things will weaken your desire to actually lose the weight!

The purpose of focusing on these related issues is to help you start moving toward the feelings you are seeking by wanting to lose weight in the first place. Even though you still want to lose weight, you will start to feel better about yourself even before you have lost a single pound.

That will help you to feel better AS you lose weight, rather than waiting until you've reached your goal weight before you can feel better.

Do you see the importance of this step? If you have ever tried to force yourself to follow a very strict, unpleasant diet and fitness regime to lose weight, you probably know that it takes every bit of willpower you have to stick with it until you can enjoy the feeling of success at the end. But taking a gentler approach like we've described above helps you avoid all that struggle and unpleasantness. Instead, you start feeling better now, even as you are still losing weight.

## Step #3 – Daily Action Steps for Weight Loss

Now we can delve into the physical part of your goal; the nitty-gritty action steps you will be taking to lose the weight. If you are following a specific diet plan, most of this planning will be taken care of already. If you are creating your own plan, then you will need to think about the specific action steps you will take each day to move you steadily and surely toward the completion of your goal.

For most people, a weight loss goal will include steps like these:

- Improving eating habits.
- Reducing calories.
- Drinking more water.
- Daily exercise.
- Improving mind-set.

For each of these categories, you will want to get very clear on exactly what your approach will be. Examples:

### **Improving Eating Habits & Reducing Calories**

Are you going to omit “junk food” from your diet? Or limit yourself to a treat just once a month? How many calories will you eat each day? Which foods will comprise the bulk of your diet? Create some sample menu plans to make it easier to stick to your new eating habits.

**See:** [Track Your Calories Online With the FitWatch Calorie Tracker](#)

### **Drinking More Water**

How much water will you drink each day, and when? Will you drink 8 ounces of water before each meal? Will you carry a bottle of water with you throughout the day? Get a clear idea of how you plan to implement this part of your goal.

### **Daily Exercise**

How much exercise will you do each day? What kinds of exercise, and for how long? Do you prefer to work out in the morning, afternoon, or evening? Will you do cardio exercise for certain days, and resistance training on other days? Will you join a gym, or work out at home? Create a specific plan that you will follow each day, so you know ahead of time that you are committing to a specific workout routine.

### **Improving Mind-Set**

Weight loss is not just about taking specific physical actions, simply because so many of your actions stem from your mental focus. Which attitude changes will help you follow your new action steps each day? Do you need to work on building up your confidence? Strengthening your self-esteem? Seeing your new habits as positive, life-affirming decisions rather than daily “chores” that must be done? Do you need to reinforce your commitment and determination each day so you’ll stick

with your new healthy lifestyle? Think about the general mind-set you usually have, and come up with ways you can improve it to support you in achieving your goal.

Once you've gotten clear on the exact steps you will be taking each day to achieve your goal, write or type them onto a sheet of paper that can be displayed prominently in your home. Create a one page "snapshot" of your daily action steps so you can see at a glance EXACTLY what you should be doing each day.

Here's an example so you can see how it should look:

## DAILY ACTION PLAN (EXAMPLE)

### **Morning:**

- Cardio workout first thing in the morning Monday, Wednesday, Friday – 30 minutes (walking outside, treadmill inside, elliptical machine, or calisthenics). Resistance training Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday – 30 minutes (weights, push-ups, crunches).
- Drink 20 ounces of water before/during/after workout.
- Meditation, affirmations for building confidence.
- Shower, get ready for work, eat healthy breakfast (fruit, grain, protein – 300 calories).
- Mid-morning snack (protein, vegetable, grain – 200 calories).

### **Afternoon:**

- Brisk 15 minute walk outside.
- Drink 20 ounces of water.
- Lunch (protein, vegetable, grain – 300 calories).
- Mid-afternoon snack (vegetable, fruit, grain – 200 calories) plus 8 ounces water.

### **Evening:**

- Dinner (lots of vegetables, protein, grain – 300 calories).
- Drink 20 ounces of water.
- Dessert (fruit – 200 calories).
- Brisk walk after dinner, 15 minutes.
- Positive reinforcement (focusing on goals, my reasons for wanting them, etc.)

This is just an example, but you can see how the entire day is laid out in a clear fashion so you know exactly what you need to do, and when.

## Step #4 – Possible Obstacles & Challenges

The plan on the previous page looks fairly easy to follow, doesn't it? But we all know that things rarely go according to plan! Just because you put a plan onto paper doesn't mean you will be able to follow it easily each day. Life has a way of throwing curveballs now and then, and they can totally catch you off-guard if you're not prepared.

What kind of obstacles can you expect as you work toward your goal? Will you struggle to find time to prepare healthy meals? Will you procrastinate about working out? Will you have a hard time avoiding pizza and beer with friends on Friday nights? Will the vending machines at work keep calling to you throughout the day? Will you have a hard time avoiding the gourmet coffee and pastry shop that's just around the corner from your office?

Everyone will have different challenges, and just by reading the examples above you are probably getting a clearer idea of your unique challenges.

Take a few minutes to jot down some obvious challenges you know you will have to deal with as you adopt your healthy new lifestyle habits.

You don't have to spend a lot of time on this step, because it will be impossible to predict every possible challenge. However, you can focus on the ones you KNOW will be an issue for you.

## Step #5 – Prepare Solutions

Now, how can you prepare solutions to handle these challenges when they come up? Some of the challenges will be easy to overcome.

For example, you can avoid the siren call of the vending machines at work by making sure you eat frequent, healthy snacks and meals throughout the day, and drink plenty of water. The vending machines will still be there but you won't be so tempted to visit them if you avoid getting too hungry.

You could keep a container of sliced vegetables and low fat dip, low calorie protein snacks, a few pieces of fresh fruit, and a large bottle of water nearby to keep your stomach happy and avoid intense cravings.

The larger challenges, like pizza and beer night with friends every Friday night, may require a bit more creative problem-solving.

You could stick to salad and water. You could adjust your caloric intake to be lower throughout the week so you can splurge on a slice of pizza and one glass of beer on Friday nights. You could put in an extra 15 minutes of exercise each day to help create a bigger calorie deficit to absorb the extra calories you eat on Friday nights.



There are no right or wrong answers – just create solutions that help you stay on track while also allowing a treat here and there so you don't feel deprived.

## Step #6 – Steady, Gradual Progress

Have you ever noticed that weight loss goals in particular seem to trigger a strong sense of impatience in many people? Perhaps they do for you too. You feel confident and motivated during the first week or two, but as time goes on you start to get restless and think that you aren't making nearly enough progress.

It's like children on long car rides; "Are we there yet? Are we there yet? Are we there yet?"

Avoiding this sense of impatience is as easy as adopting the right attitude about your new healthy lifestyle habits. This will include three basic tasks:

### **#1 - See your daily actions as permanent changes.**

Impatience usually arises when you view your daily action steps as temporary measures to get you where you want to be. In the back of your mind, you may be thinking that you'll only have to do these things until you've reached your weight loss goal, and then you can finally relax and enjoy life again.

This entire premise is flawed because going back to a more "relaxed" lifestyle will most likely mean gaining back the weight you've worked so hard to lose! Instead, see your daily action steps as a lifetime commitment. You can still enjoy the foods you really love, just do so in moderation, and only occasionally instead of every day.

### **#2 - Focus on the progress you have made so far.**

Rather than groaning about the fact that you've still got a long way to go, look back over the past few weeks or months and notice how far you've come! This is a surefire way to ease feelings of impatience.

Think about where you were just a short time ago. Feeling frustrated, sluggish, unhealthy – and now you've made some fantastic changes to your lifestyle that are really starting to pay off. You're probably feeling more energetic and losing weight, and you should feel really good about that. Every time you feel tempted to look far into the future with dread, stop yourself and instead look back to see all you have accomplished so far. Immediately, you will feel eager to continue.

### **#3 – Feel confident about the journey ahead.**

You can certainly look ahead to the future, but do so with a sense of confidence and happiness that you are creating a healthier, more vibrant future for yourself. Rather than feeling frustrated that you've still got more work to do, look forward to the benefits you will enjoy because of the hard work you are doing right now.

With every healthy meal you eat and every workout you do, you are investing into a healthier, happier future. Feel good about that!

## Step #7 – Encouragement, Motivation, and Positive Reinforcement

Earlier we touched upon the concept of positive reinforcement and creating the right kind of attitude to help you stick to your goals. This is such a crucial part of weight loss because poor lifestyle habits are almost always the result of destructive thoughts and beliefs.

The physical changes we've been covering are very important in creating a healthier lifestyle and losing weight – but those physical changes will be a LOT easier to perform if your head is in the right place too. Below are three key areas to pay attention to as you set your weight loss resolutions and begin working toward them:

### #1 – Encouragement

If you are like most people, your mental self-talk is geared more toward the negative. Do you often berate yourself for mistakes? Do you talk down to yourself? Do you express doubt and disbelief that you can achieve your goals? If so, you will want to turn that habit around pronto! Negative self-talk is powerful enough to derail your goals. Turn that self-talk into positive daily encouragement and you will see and feel a huge difference in your ability to stick with your healthy plan. Each day, make a point of speaking kindly to yourself. Say things like this: "I'm really proud of myself for making these positive changes. I know I have what it takes to achieve this goal. I'm going to love the feeling of satisfaction I get from succeeding! I can do this; I know I can do this." Over time, you will come to truly believe it.

This is where you can work on counter-intentions too. If you notice that you feel tempted to sabotage yourself, overcome the temptation by encouraging yourself: "I really DO want to lose this weight, and I'm not going to be seduced by self-sabotage. I can overcome this temptation and stick to my plan easily."

### #2 – Motivation

Keep reminding yourself of the powerful reasons WHY you want to lose weight. Remember that list of reasons and expanded explanations you wrote down earlier? Keep that list close by and read it frequently – especially during moments of weakness. But don't just read it – really focus on those reasons and what they would mean for you. How would your life change if you did feel vibrant, energetic, attractive, and healthy? Remind yourself of these benefits every single day – multiple times a day if necessary.

### #3 – Positive Reinforcement

We touched on this briefly in Step #6, but it's such a helpful tool that we should stress it again. One of the most powerful ways to stay motivated is by acknowledging how far you've come and allowing yourself to feel really good about it. Every day, spend a few minutes feeling proud of what you have accomplished so far. Give yourself a pat on the back for every challenge you overcome; for every

healthy move you make; for sticking to your workout routine, and more. Build yourself up and you'll be more likely to keep going.

## One Step at a Time Will Get You to Your Goal!

Hopefully this guide has shown you that planning ahead and taking steady, deliberate steps each day will absolutely lead you to the achievement of your weight loss goal. There's no way you'll fail if you simply keep moving forward.

As you go along, you'll want to gauge your progress by weighing yourself once a week, or perhaps taking bodily measurements so you can see how many inches you are losing. However, there is a reason we haven't included this suggestion until now, and that is because putting too much emphasis on visible signs of progress can actually work against you. If you get too attached to seeing obvious results early in the game, you may end up getting discouraged. Instead, if you focus more of your attention upon simply taking the right ACTIONS each day, the results will happen whether you are watching for them or not.

Before long, the results will be very obvious – your clothing getting looser, having more energy and stamina, enjoying better concentration, and diminishing cravings for unhealthy foods.

Once those results become obvious, it will be easier and easier to keep going. You'll start to get used to the healthier lifestyle habits you are adopting, and they will override your prior negative habits. You'll feel excited about the signs of improvement you are enjoying, and you'll become more and more motivated to keep going.

New Year Resolutions may have a high rate of failure, but ONLY if you approach them in a haphazard way. If you plan ahead as we've described in this guide, you will find it easy to move step by step to the completion of your goal.

## Recap – The 7 Steps to Successful Weight Loss New Year Resolutions:

Step #1 – Get Clear About What You REALLY Want (Feelings You Want to Experience)

Step #2 – Identify Steps You Can Take to Feel That Way Now

Step #3 – Create Daily Action Steps to Begin Moving in the Right Direction

Step #4 – Identify Possible Obstacles & Challenges

Step #5 – Prepare Solutions for those Obstacles & Challenges

Step #6 – Stop Feelings of Impatience in Their Tracks

Step #7 – Encourage, Motivate, and Empower Yourself

While you may face moments of temptation and frustration along the way, these 7 steps will make your journey much smoother and easier than it would otherwise be. Focus on taking one step at a time and you simply cannot fail.

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