

Four steps to keeping New Year's resolutions alive in February

By Megan Huber

It's a NEW YEAR.

Are you going into it with your old health story—the same story from every year in the past? Are you like most people who resolve to lose the bulge that you've vowed to lose so many times before? If you are like most people, you've made a lot of resolutions, set a lot of goals and made plenty of declarations. But guess what? A new year is a clean slate.

Don't kid yourself. If you want to continue reaching towards your New Year's resolutions to create a healthier lifestyle for yourself, then something has to change on the inside. Do you wonder how many Americans out of the 66 percent who are considered overweight promise to lose pounds and get into shape when January 1 makes its mark each year? Apparently, not many of them are reaching that goal because the percentage of overweight Americans continues to be on the rise. The good news is that the direction you go is 100 percent up to you.

Do you find yourself saying that there just isn't enough money to buy healthy food at the grocery store? Or that you have to fit in with everyone else at work that eats out for lunch five days a week? Or that you just don't have the time or energy to put into cooking a healthy meal at night so you stop by a fast food restaurant on your way home? Or that it's normal to struggle daily with anxiety about food and self-image, and that you deserve to be out of shape. If you have thought this way, the fact is, you will be at the exact same place this time next year if you don't make a radical change today.

So now you're probably wondering to yourself how it's possible to change a

mindset that's been so ingrained inside of your being for so many years. Here are a few steps to get you started.

Step 1: What is your WHY?

You've decided that after the holidays and tons of food, calories, parties, and spirits that this is your year and you're going to lose weight. Did you forget to ask yourself WHY? Is it to fit into a Size 10 again, to feel good about yourself on the beach this summer, to run in your first 5K this spring, to feel energized in the morning when you wake up or is it to set a good example for your kids? Your why becomes your desire, your passion, your motivation and inspiration to keep going even through all of the adversity you'll face along the way and the negative self-talk you'll hear from your ego. Once you've identified your WHY, write it down and post it where you will see it every day.

Step 2: Think about what you want

Oftentimes, people find it easier to think about and say what they do not want. When we say to ourselves "I don't want to be overweight", what we actually hear is "be overweight". Subconsciously, our actions are geared towards activities that cause us to continue to be overweight. Think about what you DO WANT. If you're not overweight, what are you? If you're not stuffed, what are you? If you're not confident, what are you? Think it. Believe it. Do it.

Step 3: Develop a Plan

Without a plan of action, how will you reach your goals? It's great to declare a New Year's resolution on January 1 but if you don't have a plan, what will happen by February? More than likely your lack

of planning will get the best of you and you'll be right back where you started in no time. What do you want your plan to include? Will you partner with a buddy and go walking every day during your lunch break? Will you plan your meals on Sunday and pack a lunch each day? Will you take group fitness classes at the local gym three days a week? Find out what fits into your schedule and prioritize your health.

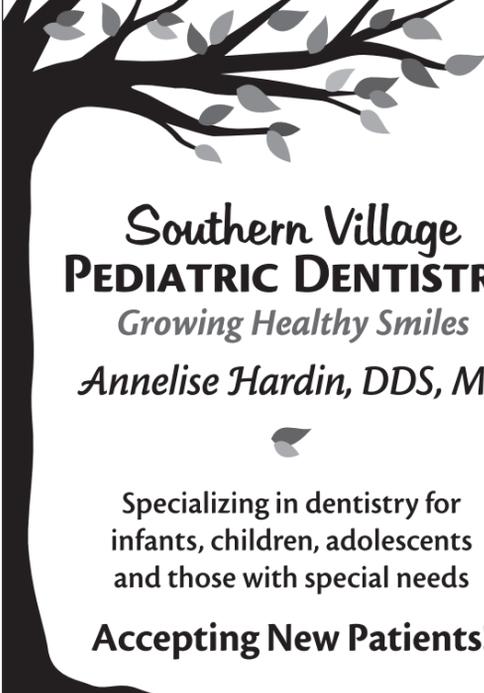
Step 4: Keep a Positive Attitude

You know, you've been down this road before – it isn't easy. And, it's not supposed to be. You are supposed to be widening and stretching your comfort

zone each step of the way. You can do it. Practice repeating to yourself each morning while you are getting ready for the day that you have already achieved what you want in Step 2. These are called Positive Affirmations – they change your thoughts, your beliefs, and eventually your actions.

Here's a start: I easily reach my weight goals because I deserve to be healthy.

Megan Huber is a Certified Professional Coach whose coaching style is designed to create structure both professionally and personally. For information, click on <http://structuredwellness.com> or by call 919.906.0753



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