

MySurvivalAlliance



A Beginner's Guide to Making New Year's Resolutions

By: Sarah Taylors

The beginning of a new year ushers in wishes, dreams, and plans that motivate us to work towards a better and more fulfilling year. For many of us, creating New Year's resolution is one of the most important tasks to start the year. The process of outlining one's resolution is very motivating as one sees the possibilities of accomplishing many great things. With new perspectives to embrace the New Year, New Year's resolution is indeed a necessary tool that allows us to make the most of the year.

I have devised a simple model, "5-Steps to Making New Year Resolution," which I believe is a good guide for anyone who wants to make their resolutions a reality. When applied consistently, you will find it to be very useful, practical, and effective.

Step One: Identify the resolution to accomplish. Categorize your resolution under various sections such as Career, Finance, Health, Religion, Family, and Personal Development. By listing down your resolution

according to different categories, it will help you to organize the planning and execution of your action plan later on.

Step Two:

Identify a time line to complete it. Without a time line, your resolution will not be realistic. If you find yourself having to fulfill the same resolution year after year, it is time to decide a definite time line to complete it this year. Draw an overall weekly and monthly timetable on a spreadsheet. Fill in the timetable with tasks concerning your resolution. Remember to space out your activities so that you will not overload yourself.

Step Three:

Identify the resources needed to materialize it. At this point, you will need to know how much resources are required to fulfill your resolution. Resources are the means and tools to materialize your resolution. It could be tangible means such as money, car, laptop, or intangible means such as knowledge, skills, and social network. This step will determine the necessary preparations to accomplish your resolution.

Step Four:

Translate your resolution into day-to-day activities. This step requires you to break down the overall resolution into day-to-day activities. In the timetable, write down the activities that you plan to carry out for each resolution.

Step Five:

Follow through your timetable consistently. Print out the resolution and timetable. Place it in visible places whether in your room or your office. The more you refer to it, the more motivated you will be to follow through your plan. You may want to read your resolution every morning to remind yourself consciously. When we are preoccupied with routine day-to-day activities, a constant reminder of your resolution will keep you in focus.

Before applying the above model, here are several rules that will help govern your effort.

Be specific. Your resolution must be very specific. Try to entail as much details as you can in your action plan. A vague action plan will only cause confusion and discourage you along the way. For example, if you want to develop your communication skill better, you have to pinpoint a specific area to improve, whether in the area of conflict resolution or listening skill.

Be flexible. Always allow space for unexpected changes or circumstances that may come in the way of your action plan. Be flexible to alter your action plan to meet the unexpected situation. For example, if you plan to buy a car and your spouse is stricken with unexpected disease that requires medical treatment, you may want to postpone your plan.

Enjoy doing what you have planned. Ideally, your resolution must be something that you enjoy and desire to make it happen. You will find great satisfaction and fulfillment in carrying out activities related to your resolution. For example, if you love cooking and would like to learn baking, you will really look forward to bake. On the other hand, if you dislike sewing, it will take a while for you to find interest in it, or you may never like it after all.

It is achievable within the planned period. Each resolution must be achievable within certain period. Usually, if the factors to fulfill a resolution are within your control, you will have no hindrance in following your timetable. However, when external factors are beyond your say, it will be challenging to complete the resolution on time. For example, if your resolution is to have a baby by year-end and your spouse is not ready emotionally, you will not be able to fulfill it. Therefore, it is vital to discuss with the person involved in your resolution. They could be your spouse, family members, colleagues, or friends.

Evaluate and make adjustments to fulfill it. It is important to understand that what you plan to fulfill may not be the expected and desired outcome. Take time to evaluate whether your action plan is moving you in the right path. This simply means evaluating the results to see if your action plan is effective. For example, when you want to learn a new foreign language and see no sign of improvement after months of self-study, you should consider another way to pursue it.

Build accountability by sharing your resolution with someone. Share your resolution with someone whom you trust to encourage and to keep track with your progress. They can be your spouse, best friend, father, mother, sibling, or colleague. This person acts as a personal coach to help you follow through your resolution with much more commitment and determination than having it done on your own.

It is never too late to begin planning and executing your new year's resolutions. The success lies in your decision whether you want to make the most of your life each year. We must realize that we are not able to turn back the clock and relive our lives again. That is the reason why many people found themselves in the "if only I have..." dilemma. Break free from this dilemma and start living your life with responsibility, commitment, and determination. Do you want to live a great year this year? Do you want to experience a moment of pride, satisfaction, and happiness when you look back into your life in years to come? Plan your resolution and action plan today.

Creative Ways to Repurpose & Reuse Old Stuff

By: Lina D.

Recycling is a hugely important part of our effort to take care of and live in harmony with the planet we call home, but it doesn't just have to be reserved to municipal authorities or waste management

companies. There are awesome and creative ways to recycle your old stuff that can be taken advantage of by almost anyone.

Every year, when spring cleaning comes around, many of us gather up our old used stuff and simply throw it out. Sometimes, trash is simply trash, but we often fail to realize that a lot of the things that we throw out can be transformed into something else that's useful and that we probably would have wound up buying later anyway. If that old ladder you have lying around isn't safe to climb on anymore, there's still probably a million other things it can be used for.

1. Old Ladder into Bookshelf



2. Bicycle into Sink Stand



3. Chair into Shelf/Closet Unit



4. Spoons into Lamp



5. Old Garden Rake into Wine Glass Holder



Healthy 2018: Drinking enough water helps many systems in the body

By: John Zaktansky

There is a new health drink that can help you lose weight, metabolize fat, improve blood circulation, prevent constipation and better digest solid food.

According to Geisinger nurse practitioner Ashley Hashuga, this miracle beverage is both cheap and readily available.

It is water — and chances are you are not drinking enough of it each day to reap the numerous health benefits.

“The general rule we tell our patients is to drink at least 64 ounces of water a day,” Hashuga said. “Other factors come into play, for example, you’ll need more water if you are exercising, sick, pregnant or breastfeeding.”



Sixty-four ounces — a half-gallon — of water can be easier to take in if broken up throughout the day.

“That’s eight 8-ounce glasses. If you work an eight-hour day and want to get your water intake in during the day, you can set a timer to go off each hour and be sure to drink an 8-ounce glass of water each time,” she said.

Children who may be more active can also need additional water — something that is on hand readily at youth-based programs such as the Donald Heiter Community Center.

“We have a Culligan water cooler that is always available to the kids. We carry coolers of water everywhere we go and we encourage the kids to carry water bottles,” said the center’s director, Andrea Tufo. “We typically offer all-natural fruit juice as an option during meals, but only one serving, and after that, its water. We think it’s important for children to have easy access to water and realize it’s importance.”

That importance starts with helping the body maintain proper hydration.

“The body is losing fluid throughout the day, from sweating to urination and a variety of other ways. It is important to replace that fluid to avoid dehydration,” Hashuga said. “Dehydration can cause a variety of health issues, such as headaches and muscle cramps and even some more severe long-term effects such as kidney failure.”

Water is the original, most natural calorie-free beverage available.

“Sugary drinks may taste better, but they are filled with so many things that aren’t good for the body,” Hashuga said. “Hidden calories in drinks can really affect weight management. Even many juices have sugars added. Those that are 100 percent fruit juice are OK in moderation, but we don’t recommend any more than four ounces a day of juice, which usually covers your suggested serving of fruit for the day.”

If you aren’t sure your body needs more water, Hashuga said there are some red flags to consider.

“Check your urine. If it is dark or has a strong odor, it can be a sign that you need more hydration,” she said. “Also, listen to your body. If you are thirsty, drink more water.”



8 Ways to Make Your Pet Healthier and Happier in 2018

By Dr. Karen Shaw Becker

As we kick off a fresh new year today, I bet that like me, many of you are thinking about what you can do differently over the next 12 months to make your pet's life happier and healthier. Fortunately, you know you can always count on me to offer some suggestions!

Remember: Don't become overwhelmed thinking you need to make big changes overnight. Baby steps in the right direction are absolutely acceptable. The important thing is to make a plan and move steadily forward.

1. Feed fresh

The goal in feeding your pet a diet she can truly thrive on is to mimic the ancestral diet of dogs and cats as closely as possible without breaking the bank. My basic recommendation is to feed yourself and your pet as much unprocessed, fresh food as you can afford.

I have clients who can't afford to feed an all-fresh, living and raw food diet, so they offer fresh food snacks instead. Research shows that offering some healthy foods is better than offering no healthy food at all.

I also have clients who can afford to feed their pet maybe two to four fresh food meals out of 14 in a week. Others do a 50/50 split, meaning one meal a day is a processed pet food, and the other is a fresh food meal. I recommend taking small steps toward providing the best diet you can afford for your dog or cat.



2. Exercise with your pet

Believe it or not, some indoor-only cats not only learn to go for walks with a harness and leash, they really enjoy it. In addition to exercise, it's important for indoor cats to put all four paws on the ground as often as possible. If your kitty is agreeable, consider making a daily walk with her part of your exercise routine in the New Year.

Several studies in recent years suggest people who regularly walk their dog are more likely to be in better physical shape than people who walk with other people. Even older people are more

likely to take regular walks when their walking partner is a dog rather than a human.

Of course, physical exercise helps keep your canine companion's heart, lungs, joints and digestive and circulatory systems in good working order. It also helps him stay trim and burn off energy. And it's really no joke that "a tired dog is a good dog." Under-exercised, bored dogs are prime candidates for developing undesirable habits and behaviors, as well as anxiety.

3. Consider replacing your retractable leash

Retractable leashes are popular primarily because they aren't as confining as regular leashes, allowing dogs more freedom to sniff and poke around on walks. But unfortunately, there are many downsides to this type of leash. For starters, the real purpose of using a leash to walk your dog is to keep him safe and under your control. Retractable leashes often do the opposite:



On a retractable leash, your dog can get far enough away from you to either get into trouble or into harm's way

Retractable leashes are responsible for many injuries to both dogs and dog walkers — from superficial burns and cuts to horrific amputations. These leashes are also typically counterproductive when training a dog to walk politely on lead, because they actually teach dogs to pull on the leash to extend the lead.

4. Crate train your pet

Most people assume crate training is just for dogs, but it's actually a really good idea to crate train your cat as well, so he doesn't freak out when he needs to be crated for a ride in the car or a vet visit.

And I'm a huge fan of crate training dogs and recommend it to every dog parent, especially those who need to housetrain a puppy. Whether your canine companion is a puppy or a senior, a new member of your family or an old hand, providing him with his very own cozy space has a number of advantages for both of you. A crate can help not only with housetraining, but also car or plane travel, and overnight stays with friends, family or at a pet-friendly hotel.

5. Refuse unnecessary vaccinations

I'm not talking about become an anti-vaxxer. I'm talking about recognizing the difference between too many vaccinations and protective vaccinations, and advocating for your pet to insure he or she is not

over-vaccinated. Find a vet who believes in minimal vaccines to create immunity against disease, with follow-up titers for the lifetime of your pet.

There's significant risk involved in over-vaccinating dogs and cats. Some veterinary vaccines are substantially more toxic than others. It's your job as your pet's advocate to know enough about the subject to make the best decisions for your animal companion. And if your vet doesn't respect your opinion and point of view, find a new vet.



6. Do your homework before adopting a new pet

Adopting a pet is one of the most significant commitments you will make in your lifetime. Accepting the responsibility of caring for another life — a creature that will be totally dependent on you — isn't something to take lightly. Sadly, too many pets are acquired on a whim, without thought or preparation. Your heart may be in the right place, but unless you're prepared to invest the time, effort and money necessary to properly care for the pet for its lifetime, things can quickly sour.

In those cases, and there are far too many of them, the animal is the inevitable loser. Shelters are full of pets that were the result of an impulse purchase or adoption. According to a recent report compiled by the ASPCA, over a million households in the U.S. re-home a cat or dog every year.

I can't emphasize enough the need to carefully evaluate your readiness and ability to care for a pet, and encourage you to do your homework before making a decision to bring home a new family member.

7. Learn about genetic diseases your pet may be predisposed to

Unlike dogs, the majority of domestic cats reproduce without interference from humans, which helps dilute disease-causing genes in their lineage, with the result that they acquire inherited disorders less often. The most frequently diagnosed feline diseases involve combinations of multiple genes and environmental factors.

While genetic diseases are unfortunately quite common in many purebred and mixed breed dogs, it's important to keep in mind that just because certain disorders may be inherited in certain breeds, it doesn't mean your dog of that breed is destined to acquire that condition.

There are steps you can take to help prevent your pet from acquiring diseases to which he may be predisposed, and there are ways to successfully treat or effectively manage existing genetic conditions.

8. Provide your pet with ongoing training and socialization

Kittens can benefit tremendously from kitten kindergarten classes, and many adult cats are trainable as well. Well-socialized cats make wonderful companions and have much less chance of winding up at an animal shelter. And stay alert for ways to enrich kitty's environment every so often.

When it comes to canine companions, there's no doubt about it — training and socialization are the secrets to a sensational dog. The ideal age to socialize puppies is between 5 and 16 weeks, when they are most able to investigate new environments and stimuli.

Providing daily opportunities to interact with new people, places and things for the pup's first year is critically important. It's also important that puppies are trained in basic obedience. One way to get your pup off to a good start is by taking advantage of local puppy classes. Ongoing training and socialization are important throughout your pet's life — not just when he's young.