

2008! Happy New Me!

Every year we make ourselves promises and we back them up with concessions that are too difficult to achieve for more than a day! Making those health and fitness changes for a better lifestyle can be very challenging- after all self control is a limited resource! BUT- it is not nearly as impossible as you think! Stick to the following guidelines and DON'T underestimate the power of you!

Make your health and well-being a priority

Many people put themselves last on the "Things To Do List"- caring for others needs before their own. Taking your health and well being for granted can end in illness and disease. Why wait to get sick to start taking care of yourself? By exercising and eating well now, you may save yourself hours (even years) of sick time in the future.

Change for the right reasons

The right reasons to change your lifestyle are positive, and based on the belief that you deserve a little time each day to keep yourself healthy. When you take a little time to nurture yourself, you will have more to give to the people and things you care about -- your family, your work and your community.

Prepare for change

Change is not always comfortable or easy. Adding physical activity to your life requires both time and energy. Where will the time come from? How will you summon the energy? Make a concrete plan for fitting exercise into your life. Then take a critical look at your plan. Is it realistic? People beginning the New Year often overestimate their powers, and underestimate the time and energy required to stick to their resolutions. If your goals are too unrealistic (you probably won't lose 30 pounds in 30 days), you will quickly be disappointed. Set attainable goals. For example, many experts recommend that instead of a weight-loss goal, make your goal the lifestyle change itself: enjoying daily physical activity and eating less junk. If you are successful in achieving these daily goals, the weight loss will gradually follow.

Anticipate difficulties

Make plans to get back into your program when it is interrupted by illness, travel, weather or the million other unexpected situations that may arise. Remember, it's not a question of whether you will have to skip an exercise session, but a question of what you will do when this happens -- everyone misses a workout from time to time.

What are the reasons that have kept you from exercising in the past? How did you respond? Are there ways to keep these difficulties from arising? Or ways to exercise despite these challenges? If you stop exercising for some reason, how will you get back into your exercise routine as soon as possible?

Get moving!

If exercise is new to you, start slowly and build gradually. Record your workouts in an exercise log, and be proud of your progress. Enjoy the way exercise gives you energy and reduces stress. From time to time, consider what's working and what's not working with your exercise routine. Do everything you can to make regular physical activity a lifelong habit.