

7 Steps to Magnetic New Year's Resolutions

By Michelle May, M.D.

Your New Year's Resolutions should be like powerful magnets that draw you toward them. The following seven steps will help you create inspiring goals *any* time of year—and a map for reaching them.

1. Create space. Invest time and space to think about your present life and set goals that will bring you greater health, happiness, and fulfillment. As part of your resolution-making process, decide how you'll carve out space daily to accomplish your goals. Most of us can easily find the time in the wasted minutes we spend on unproductive activities like watching TV or surfing the internet. Some of us may need to get up a few minutes earlier or say no to joining another committee.

When I will work on my goals:

2. Consider your values. What is truly important to you—family, friends, health, career, achievement, contribution, spiritual growth? When you're clear about what really matters, you'll willingly invest your valuable time and energy pursuing meaningful goals that are congruent with your principles and values.

What is truly important to me:

3. Be inspired. Go for the shiver-factor: If the thought of achieving your goal gives you a little shiver of excitement, you're on the right track. Your goals should act like a magnet that draws you toward them. (Hint: If

you are repelled by the thought of working toward a particular resolution, start over with a new goal that excites and challenges you.)

A goal that excites and challenges me:



4. Predict your future. Close your eyes and project yourself into the future. Imagine what it's like as you achieve your goal. Picture how you feel, think, look, and act—as though it's happening this very moment. Create a vivid, exciting image of yourself living it out then return to this vision regularly to maintain the pull your goal has on you.

How I feel as I achieve my goal:

5. Set mini-goals. A magnet cannot attract an object that's too far away to feel its pull. Similarly, goals that feel too far from where you are now quickly lose their attraction. Therefore, create achievable mini-goals that are within reach but challenging enough to pull you toward your larger goals.

My mini-goals:

6. Give your brain a map to follow. Write your goals and mini-goals in positive, present terms using specific details. For example, instead of "I won't eat sweets anymore," try "I enjoy eating fresh fruits and vegetables at each meal to support my energy and health." You could also create a collage of inspiring pictures. Put your goals in a place where you'll see them often; you'll be amazed at how these concrete words or images begin to manifest themselves in your life.

My goals (positive and in the present):

7. Be flexible and creative. Use your goal as your compass and steps one through six as a map to chart your course. However, remain open to new paths to your goals. Obstacles and detours are a natural part of change and provide important learning opportunities. When you're patient and gentle with yourself, you'll discover creative solutions that help you grow beyond anything you could have planned.

What I'm learning about myself:

As you become clear about your goals and more mindful about the process, you'll see that you're not only drawn toward your goals, your goals are drawn toward you.

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