

3 Reasons You Should Ditch New Year's Resolutions

I am done making New Year's Resolutions.

I am an expert at making resolutions—and immediately failing at them. And if there is anything I hate, it's feeling like a failure.

But what I hate more than feeling like a failure is feeling like a failure all year long.

There's something about a resolution that's so immediate, so final. A resolution seems so A-Z, with no steps from B-Y.

But life isn't like that.

Take what is likely the most common New Year's Resolution: Lose Weight

There is no A-Z with healthy, long-term weight loss. Weight loss definitely requires steps from B-Y to be effective and long-term.

It is a long-term goal that, for some, takes years.

We watch re-runs of *Extreme Makeover: Weight Loss Edition* and expect our journey to take us from obese to fit and thin in a matter of 12 months, but fail to recognize that in the hurry to shed the pounds, we've never really addressed the issues that led us to obesity in the first place.

And this is exactly why this year, I won't make New Year's Resolutions. Instead, I've decided to set goals.

Three Reasons I Won't Make New Year's Resolutions:

1. Goals lead me to create steps of action. By creating actionable steps to reach my goals, I am able to break down my

giant goal into smaller goals that are easier to reach, thereby allowing myself to grow into the big goal.

The ability to break my goal into steps of action gives me a sense of accomplishment each time I step closer to the destination.

2. Goals make the journey as important as the destination.

Take the illustration I've been using: weight loss. I've been on a weight loss journey for three years now. Some may wonder why my journey has taken so long. I wasn't obese when I started; I just had a lot of terrible habits. I have deliberately chosen not to rush my weight loss because I realized that if I was going to make it stick this time, I would need to make new habits a way of life.

The journey to losing weight has been as important as my destination. Along the journey, I've learned to stop and consider what I'm putting in my mouth before I munch down on it. I've learned that rest and sleep are essential and not to be taken lightly. I've also learned to value exercise, although I still don't always enjoy it.

These are lessons I hadn't learned the other two times I shed pounds in record fashion.

3. Goals allow time for personal growth. To be honest, if I don't meet every goal by December 31, 2017, I won't be disappointed in myself. Rather, what I'll want to see is how much closer I've come to my destination.

If I've made good progress, I'll be more than satisfied.

Friends, if there is anything I've learned this year, it's that when we expect perfection from ourselves, the only thing we'll get in return is frustration, stress and disappointment.

I know, because I've lived for years being

frustrated, stressed out and disappointed in myself.

But if there is anything 2016 has taught me is that I don't have to be stressed out and frustrated. And I am certainly not a disappointment: to God, to myself or to those around me who matter.

There is something lovely about being comfortable with being perfectly imperfect.

There is something attractive about being in the presence of someone who is comfortable at owning up to their imperfections.

And there is something very freeing about giving yourself permission to be that person. {eoa}

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