

A Cardinal Key to Fulfilling Your New Year's Resolution

Did you make a New Year's resolution? Did you make a plan to follow through with your resolution? You and I know it takes more than a resolution to move an idea into a behavior. How many of us, including me, made a resolution in the past to lose a couple of pounds, and well, it just didn't happen on schedule?

As a counselor, I know people need a plan to follow and must be accountable to someone in order to be successful in carrying out the plan. Remember, that it will take more than a day or a week to see some of these changes.

I have found with myself and with clients that if a plan is measurable, I am much more likely to be successful. The key to being successful in your New Year's resolution is having a plan and an accountability partner of the same gender.

Every time, and yes there have been several times, I have tried to lose weight, I have two choices: immeasurable and unintentional or measurable and intentional. You see when I do the, "Oh, I really want to lose weight" song and dance, if I don't do more than that, I don't usually lose weight at all. I might even have an idea of a plan, but I don't usually follow through with whatever the plan is. You know, the plan is vague, something about food and something about exercise, but the details are somewhat elusive.

Now when I get measurable and intentional, I get serious. I get a piece of paper out. I write the categories of my goals for my plan this time. The categories might be, 1) exercise 15 minutes, 2) do not eat after 5:00 p.m., 3) no unnecessary sugar and, 4) write down my weight for that day (just for factual reality). Then daily, I measure these goals.

Now I'm kind of tricky, so I know I can fool myself. So what I do is tape my goals on my mirror where I shave. Now I have to face these goals every day. I have to check off each category of my goals. If I get lazy and don't check off my goals even when I'm failing, I know I'm not being honest about losing weight.

The phrase I have told my clients for years consistently rings into my head: "Believe behavior." You see, the one important thing that I have learned over the years is that behavior always tells the truth. Words and intentions can fool you, but one's behavior is always truth. The measurement aspect allows us to see the truth about ourselves. Once we know the truth, the truth will set us free to grow.

So as you walk through your New Year's resolution, I strongly recommend some form of measurement of your behavior toward your goal. So if you set a parental goal to do the laundry twice a week, measure yourself. Write week one through week four on a piece of paper and tape it on the mirror or wall for a month. Write on the piece of paper what you want to accomplish so you can check off and record your progress.

If you are regularly hitting your goal of twice a week, you will know the truth of this fact. After a while, you will feel good because of your progress.

Measurement works. When you measure, you operate on facts. When you don't measure behavior and facts, you're left with your feelings. This one factor of measurement will be the difference between seeing the changes you hope for or failing one more time.

Accountability is one of the greatest strengths a Christian can utilize in their walk with the Lord. I have worked with many Christian men who struggle with sexual addiction. Sexual addiction is one of the most severe addictions a person can have. Accountability is one of the major structures that

alleviates its power and keeps it in remission for a lifetime.

With accountability you can totally maximize the success of your resolution. We all want success in various areas of our lives. I find that with accountability we improve the odds of success.

Accountability is simply bringing someone into the loop with you. You let them know what you are working on. You set up some times to get together or call each other to go over your goals and the facts of your behavior. This helps you tremendously to keep good records of your behavior. Sometimes this can turn into mutual accountability for both of your resolution goals.

An accountability person can be almost anyone of the same gender. Someone local may be better than someone far away. You will be amazed at how this can work wonders in your life.

So when you take on a New Year's resolution, please get accountable and measure yourself. You deserve to see the changes you hoped you would see this year! {eoa}

Doug Weiss, Ph.D., is a nationally known author, speaker and licensed psychologist. He is the executive director of Heart to Heart Counseling Center in Colorado Springs, Colorado, and the author of several books including, *The 7 Love Agreements*. You may contact Dr. Weiss via his website, or on his Facebook, by phone at 719-278-3708 or through email at heart2heart@.