

# Saving Private Resolution

By Linda Walker

If you've made any New Year's resolutions this year, statistically, you've already broken them. And unfortunately, if you've broken them, you've probably also given up ever achieving your goal and reaping the benefits of change.

I'd like to encourage you to renew your faith in your ability to change. A resolution is a decision combined with a commitment, and they are not exclusive to any particular day. Don't wait until next year; here are seven steps to help you get back on track today:

1. **Make sure your goal benefits YOU, not someone else** (it can benefit someone else, but "you're number 1!" You'll be making the effort so you should reap the benefits.
2. **Make sure the goal is compelling.** Why do you want to achieve the goal? Keep asking that question (digging deeper like an annoying four-year-old... "But why?") until you find an emotional reason. My clients often join my Maximum Productivity Makeover program to be more productive at work so they can stay out of trouble. They'll have to rely on willpower to stay motivated unless they create an emotionally compelling reason why they want to achieve better productivity, such as having more time for their family, feeling competent, or reaching their full potential. Willpower is a finite resource.
3. **Keep your eye on the benefits, not the effort.** Keep picturing yourself as having already achieved your goal. Don't focus on the sweat; focus on the new bathing suit!
4. **Write your goal in a forward-moving statement.** For example, instead of trying to lose weight; work toward a healthy weight. Studies show you're more likely to achieve forward-moving goals than avoidance goals.
5. **Set big goals but use small steps to achieve them.** Many of my clients tell me they just want to be "normal." Trying to become "normal" won't keep you motivated. You won't be excited about working hard to be just like everyone else! Be bold and set a big goal. Now, make progress using small but significant steps that move out of your "comfort zone" and into your "stretch zone," not your "stress zone." If you're trying to become physically active but haven't exercised since the Ice Age, start small; park the car at the far end of the parking lot, and take the stairs instead of the elevator. When these become too easy, select the next small but significant step that will stretch you and allow you to progress toward your goal.

6. **If you are struggling with changing a particular habit, consider the need that habit fills and find a healthier way to fill it.** If you become a couch potato and watch TV after work but want to have more fun, consider what need your TV watching fills. For example, if TV provides an escape following a tough day, registering for an art class might fill that need better. Maybe you watch TV because you're too tired for anything else. If that's the case, take a short nap or go for a rejuvenating walk around the block.
7. **Make decisions as if you were already the kind of person that achieving your goal will allow you to become.** If you want to become a healthy person, each time you're faced with a dilemma ask yourself, "What would a healthy person like me do, eat some chocolate cake or a piece of fruit?" If you want to become an organized person, ask yourself, "Would an organized person like me leave her keys just anywhere, or would she put them where she has decided they should go?"

Finally, it's important to realize that most of us, at one time or another, have tried and failed to lose weight, stop smoking, become more organized or be more productive. Often we only succeed after several attempts. That means that as long as you don't stop trying, you have an excellent chance of succeeding. If you've tried before and failed, ask yourself, "What do I now know works, or what do I know doesn't work as a result of that attempt?" What changes should you make? What help do you need? What steps do you think you should now take? What training would improve your odds of achieving your goal? See how much you've learned from this little setback? Now, get back up on that horse and make it happen!

To your Focus Action Success!

*Linda Walker is a professional ADHD Coach who helps entrepreneurs, artists, ADHD adults and other Creative Geniuses live their best life. Learn more powerful strategies to instantly boost your productivity faster than you ever dreamed possible: <http://www.productivitymythsbusted.com>.*