

Lifestyles

New Year's resolutions should be treated more like well-planned goals, says local social worker

By FANNIE SUNSHINE
The Champion

With the new year just around the corner, it's time to start thinking of those New Year's resolutions.

Social worker Elayne Tanner said in theory resolutions are good ideas, but often people set themselves up for failure.

"Often there is not a lot of thought that goes into it. People have to measure where they are at along the way and set realistic goals. Say within the first week that will happen, within two weeks this will happen. You need to take steps along the way."

Ms Tanner said the most common New Year's resolutions are quitting smoking, losing weight, exercising more frequently and eating healthy.

"If it's a realistic goal, you have to plan it with timelines and define milestones along the way. People can quit smoking cold turkey but you have to be ready and serious to do it. If you don't want to quit cold turkey, you have to think, am I just going to stop buying packs, am I going to use the patch or try hypnosis?"

She said it's important to find ways to motivate yourself to achieve resolutions.



Elayne Tanner

"Find friends or family you can rely on to help you through. The goals have to be realistic and defined."

Ms Tanner recommends setting goals instead of resolutions because the latter tends to be frivolous.

"A lot of people tend to make resolutions instead of goals. I think with goals you have a far better chance at succeeding."

Miltonian Terry Hues said each year he makes the same resolution — to quit smoking.

"I've been making that resolution for the past five years or so. It usually starts out okay, I'd say for the first three weeks in January I don't touch cigarettes. But somehow the cigarettes end up back on my lips."

His wife, Melody, said this year she hopes to lose several pounds, and has already started walking four times a week.

"I'll be joining a gym, but I figured I'd start out light. Losing weight sounds cliché, but it's the one thing I've been meaning to



do since last year."

But local resident Jim Craig said he doesn't believe in making New Year's resolutions for one reason — he's never been able to keep one.

"Why set yourself up for disappointment? So you make a list of things you want to accomplish over the year. You figure you have a lot of time to get cracking, but before you know it it's already time to count down to midnight again. I think people should set goals throughout the entire year and not just for the new year."

This year I'll try anti-resolutions

It was a couple years ago when I gave my expert advice on how to keep your New Year's resolutions. I suggested you needed to face some consequences in order to keep yourself focused on your goal.

My expert advice resulted in me having to walk down Main Street in my underwear.

I don't keep my New Year's resolutions. Never have, and I've come to realize, never will.

So, I have a new plan. I'm going to make anti-resolutions. That's right. This way, if I keep them I've accomplished something.



with MURRAY TOWNSEND

On the loose

If I don't, then it will be even better. I can't lose.

- I am going to eat and eat and eat until I

end up on the Dr. Phil show, crying about how nobody likes me because I'm too fat.

- I'm never going to take back my library books on time. I feel good about helping pay to buy new books.

- I'm going to try to make as little money as possible this year. Love is all we need.

- I'm going to procrastinate as much as possible. Don't do today what you can put off until tomorrow.

- I'm going to get married again. Too much freedom and happiness isn't good for you.


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