

# HOW TO MAKE IT CLICK

## Ways to stay on track with your health goals

By Kelli Robinson  
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The New Year is one month old and one question begs asking: How are your New Year's resolutions going? Remember the goals you happily set on Jan. 1 to exercise more, eat less, quit smoking or get out of debt? Unfortunately, the resolution list is often as endless as the reasons people break them.

Congratulations if you're still sticking to the "new you" plan. But if you've had some setbacks — or abandoned the resolutions altogether — you aren't alone. According to a 2007 survey by the Franklin Covey time management firm, a third of those who make New Year's resolutions don't make it to the end of January. Reasons cited include lack of time and lack of commitment. The bottom line, however, is that resolutions are difficult.

"Making changes is hard!" says Amy Bernstein, owner of Lakeside Counseling & Hypnotherapy Center in Davidson. "It takes determination and motivation to make changes in your life."

Bernstein opened her practice in 2000 and uses a variety of techniques including counseling and hypnosis to help clients with a variety of topics such as stress relief, smoking, weight loss, confidence and self-esteem. Many clients benefit from hypnosis sessions, which Bernstein says unlock the subconscious mind to help achieve goals.

"It's so easy to resort back to negative patterns because relying on willpower uses only 10 percent of your mind," she said. "Hypnosis reaches the other 90 percent, your subconscious mind, so you have 100 percent of your mind helping you reach your goals."

January and September are the busiest months for the center: People make resolutions at the beginning of the year, and parents take the initiative to do something positive for themselves when the kids return to school in the fall. However, Bernstein believes limiting goal-setting to specific times of the year can be detrimental to keeping them.

### TIPS FOR KEEPING RESOLUTIONS

- 1. Don't think in "all-or-nothing" terms**  
Losing 30 pounds might be your goal; but, don't view losing 10 pounds as a failure.
- 2. Set realistic goals:**  
Is it realistic to quit drinking soda entirely? Perhaps you could resolve to cut back the amount you drink in a week or month.
- 3. Avoid resolution overload:**  
Prioritize your goals. Trying to achieve too many at once will more likely lead to abandoning all of them.
- 4. Establish a support group:**  
Don't keep your goals to yourself. Let family and friends know your goals.
- 5. Keep trying:**  
Just because you had a setback doesn't mean you have to wait until January 2012 to try again. Start over tomorrow.

"I call anytime you're inspired to make changes in your life 'the click,'" she said. "When you hear that 'click' message, even if it's in April or May, listen to it: It means the time is right for you to make a change."

Bernstein also advises working on one goal at a time. Making one change in your life leads to other positive differences. Someone who makes the decision to stop smoking might find themselves heading to the gym, and thus losing weight and gaining confidence are also achieved. "It starts with an initial goal and often the others take care of themselves," she offers.

Another obstacle to keeping resolutions is not allowing enough time for change.

"Whether it's flossing your teeth daily or committing to an exercise program, it takes three weeks for any habit to take effect," Bernstein said. "Sometimes people can change their habits instantly, but on average most of us need three weeks for new routines to stick."

As you head into February revisit, renew and readjust the resolutions you made. It's never the wrong time to start doing things right.



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**It takes at least three weeks to form a new routine — so no excuses skipping your next trip to the gym.**

## Bring a healthy taste of Hawaii into your home

Now home from a trip to Honolulu, I return with a renewed sense of fresh foods. Everything I tasted in Hawaii — from the ahi tuna sashimi to the acai smoothies and fresh guava juice — was sublime. Fresh fruit took on a whole new meaning, the minute I stepped into the tropical paradise.

I knew I was in for a treat — and a healthy one at that — when the first thing the hotel did was welcome us with chilled hibiscus tea, sweetened with lemon, acai and vanilla. Wouldn't life be grand if every day we could all arrive home to a refreshing, antioxidant-packed tea drink?

If you live on the islands, you certainly know the meaning of high quality, fresh ingredients. Whether it is the delicate tea leaves, aromatic Kona coffee beans or sweet pineapples, Hawaii knows the importance of

full flavored, nutrient-rich foods and drinks.

So, as I return to North Carolina, I bring back the memories of beautiful Hawaii and also some new ideas as to how to incorporate more nutritious, flavorful and fresh ingredients into the cold winter days on the East Coast. Maybe it is in hopes of bringing a taste of the tropics home, but it certainly will also continue to emphasize the importance of eating good quality, fresh foods every day.

■ Try a breakfast smoothie for a change. Look for frozen fruits (since they are picked at peak ripeness and will offer more variety this time of the year) in combination with readily available fruit like bananas.

■ Make fresh squeezed juice sometimes. It is amazing how much better freshly squeezed juice tastes. Seek citrus fruit for winter cost-effectiveness and



Eating Smart

everything! If you have a sandwich, have fruit on the side. Serving eggs or cereal for breakfast? It's easy to add fruit. At dinner, try fruit-based sauces and toppings.

■ Add fresh fruit or vegetables to a pitcher of water in the fridge to encourage more water consumption. Strawberries and oranges in the water taste great. You can also try cucumbers, lemons and limes or fresh herbs like basil or mint.

■ If you make it look festive, your children may eat more fruit

freshness. To make exotic juices, you would likely need a juicer and a good fruit supplier to ensure quality fruits.

■ Serve fruit on the side — of

or vegetables. Kabobs or fruit slices on the side of beverages always look enticing!

■ Put fruits or vegetables into pancake, waffle or muffin batter. Strawberry or banana nut muffins are great, as are zucchini or spinach pancakes (for breakfast or dinner).

■ Try other ways to eat more vegetables at breakfast. Sautéed spinach instead of hash browns would make a nutritious swap. Broiled tomatoes on the side of egg dishes adds a healthy dose of lycopene.

■ Toss more veggies and fruits into your salad. Besides the usual cucumbers and tomatoes on your salad, try tropical additions like diced pineapple or papaya (look for canned or dried versions, too), chopped dates, shredded coconut, fresh baby greens and herbs.

■ Consider your fats. Opt for the healthful fats from fish, nuts,

nut oils, seeds and seed oils. Try a handful of macadamia nuts for a tropical flare. They make a nutritious and satisfying alternative to snacks like chips and crackers. Six nuts have about 100 calories.

■ Consume fish at least twice per week. Ideally, grill, broil or bake fish. If you can get high-quality sashimi grade fish, raw fish (such as in sushi) is a nutritious option. Avoid raw fish if you are pregnant, a child or have a compromised immune system due to the risk of food borne illness.

■ Consider coconut water as a healthy, natural electrolyte replenishment beverage.

Enjoy a taste of the tropics! Aloha!

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