



*Balancing Life's Transitions Through Help, Hope and Healing*

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## **New Years Resolutions: Make Them and Keep Them**

LINCOLN, Neb. – Tuesday, January 5, 2009 – Many people enter the new year boldly declaring a fresh start – eat healthier, exercise more, be nicer, get organized.

Whatever the resolution, there's a one-in-two chance of failure.

“The intentions are good, but the follow-through is not,” said Mary Spitsnogle, MS, marriage and family therapist with Red Tent Counseling of Lincoln. “We all want to grow and have positive life experiences but how do we successfully follow through with our commitments?”

There are obstacles that keep us from reaching our goals:

1. **We are human.** According to personality profiling only one quarter of the population has internal self-motivation, self-drive and discipline. The rest of us struggle and need help and support.
2. **We want too much too soon.** Our dreams and goals are big; we want drastic change and we want it now. Most of us are not realistic in what can be accomplished in a reasonable time.
3. **We have great ideas and no plan.** We want to make a change without making an effort. There's no plan in place for accountability, which sets us up for failure or creates an easy escape route.

4. **We become impatient.** It takes six to eight weeks to form a new habit and we want to get it down in six to eight attempts.

The new year can mean a new you if you follow these steps:

1. **Make fulfilling resolutions.** Make a choice for a change whose end result will bring you great satisfaction.
2. **Name that goal.** Come up with a slogan or motto to keep in the forefront of your mind to help stay focused. Write it, say it, share it and sing it out loud.
3. **Don't go it alone.** Find a person or group that will support you in your commitment and also hold you accountable. It helps if they have the same or similar goal.
4. **Celebrate small successes.** Set sub-goals or mile markers to keep track of the small achievement that will lead you to the ultimate goal.
5. **Log your journey.** Keep track of your successes and failures in writing. It helps you monitor your strengths and weaknesses so you can make adjustments along the way.
6. **Stick with it.** Set a reasonable timetable and persevere.
7. **Replace negatives with positives.** Replacement works and deprivation does not. If your goal is to eliminate a negative behavior, replace it with one that's positive.

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