

Let's Make Those New Year Resolutions REALLY Work

By Gisela Norman

'Tis the season to be jolly -- but beware! One too many mince pies and glasses of wine or a bit more bubbly than you anticipated on New Year's Eve, and you're likely to find yourself feeling less than cheerful the day after. This is a great time of year to make new resolutions. Isn't there something desirable about a fresh start!

Time to loose weight and detox?

If you seriously want to get rid of that extra body fat then you will need to increase your metabolism to help burn away those excess stores of fat. You can do it with a little effort and motivation. By simply changing your diet and starting some form of exercise programme is a good way to start losing those extra pounds. Now is the best time to get ready for feeling great in the summer.

Follow these golden rules.....

THROW AWAY THE DIET BOOKS

Eat plenty of vegetables, soups, stews, a little meat and low fat protein. Flavour meals with gentle warming herbs, ginger and spices that enhance your digestion and increase your body metabolism. Chinese Medicine sees that overweight people need to nourish themselves and gain internal strength. This means eating warm cooked foods, little raw and no cold food or drink straight from the fridge as this causes a chill inside the body and slows down metabolism.

If you are hungry then drink a glass of water. This will help to reduce sugar or hunger cravings. Dehydration often mimics these cravings. Always take time to chew your food and enjoy every single mouthful. Leave some food on your plate and stop when you think you may be full.

Hawthorne Berry help strengthens the heart and increase blood flow. It encourages healthy blood pressure levels and maintain healthy arteries. It is useful for anaemia, circulatory disorders and lowers high cholesterol and is often used as a digestive aid.

Vegetable juices for cleansing include **garlic, celery, cucumber, lettuce** and **cabbage**. They can be used to stimulate the kidneys and deal with fluid retention. **Citrus fruits** stimulate saliva glands; with **ginger** they aid the digestive process. **Radishes, beetroot** and **dandelion** increase the flow of bile, activate the liver and improve digestion of fats. **Carrot** and **parsley** cleanse the skin from the inside outwards. **Green tea** is helpful for clearing excess fluid and reducing blood-sugar levels.

ALCOHOL DETOX

Now is a good opportunity for an alcohol detox, to cool the liver down, so abstain for a set time limited period. However, an occasional glass of wine for many is a relaxant. It stimulates the circulation of blood and helps digest heavy meals. It is warming and drives out cold from the body.

The mysterious and amazing healing power of water has been utilised for centuries. Water cleanses, it refreshes and restores all life - drink plenty of water to flush your system.

Chinese Medicine usually recommends that you begin any detox within the intestines and focus on the liver. The stored toxic substances that are released from the body tissues may become reabsorbed if the bowels are not working well to get rid of them.

Dandelion is a leading remedy for detoxing the liver. It has scientifically documented potent diuretic properties. It relieves constipation, eases bloating and swelling. Take as tea, a tincture or as coffee.

Milk Thistle is the great liver detoxer! The importance of milk thistle in cleansing your liver, may decrease your chances of developing cirrhosis, chronic fatigue, PMS, and cancer. This can also be taken in tincture form.

Essential oils recommended are **juniper, lavender, orange, rosemary, rosewood and thyme**. They stimulate the lymphatic circulation, the adrenal glands, circulatory system, the liver and calm the nerves. Use only three drops of oil in a bath, add to massage oil or inhale on a tissue.

GET THAT BODY MOVING

Exercise is vital for strengthening your metabolism and our ability to transform the food you eat. Exercise gives you energy; it stimulates the endorphins in the brain, which make you feel good. Aerobic exercise is important for increasing circulation and cleansing the skin. A greater oxygen intake rids your body of toxins and saturates your body with vital energy.

The key to getting rid of fat is burning more calories than you take in. Just make sure you enjoy whatever form of exercise you are doing and keep doing it.

STRESS SABOTAGES WEIGHT LOSS

Bills, deadlines, long working hours... everyone face stressors every day. And when the stress is enough to exhaust your nervous system, physical symptoms occur. Stress over stimulates your adrenal glands. They respond by producing a flood of fight or flight chemicals which increase heart rate and blood pressure. Your nervous system becomes exhausted. It conserves what energy it has by lowering your metabolism and boosts production of an enzyme that stores food as fat, instead of burning it for energy. This makes weight loss virtually impossible.

A few acupuncture treatments will work on relieving stress and clearing out its effects from the body. Acupuncture also improves your stomach functioning, which will increase your metabolism to get rid of excess fluid and burn fat.

How can I make those resolutions work?

- Write down your plan for the year. What you would like to achieve and why. Include how you will do things differently, how you want to rearrange your habits.
- Identify what you enjoy. It is important to find exercises that you can succeed at easily. Do some alone, within a group and some that you will have great fun doing.
- Set reasonable goals. You may decide that after your alcohol detox you may want to drink only at weekends. Or only drink champagne as it has the lowest calories of all!
- Any task can be achieved by breaking it down into smaller parts. Start with what is realistic for you and gradually increase it.
- Have a short-term coping strategy. You may have a structured exercise program that includes several activities during a week. But plan for active ways to cope immediately and quickly with unexpected changes in routine, frustrations and negative moods.
- Visualise, create a picture and really imagine how you will look and feel in six months time. Gain control over your thoughts and you will maintain control over your life.

The power of your mind and your **belief system** has everything to do with the speed and the way that you heal. Energy follows thought. Program thought to be positive and your energy will reflect it!

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