Setting (and Keeping) Realistic Resolutions

Each new year always seems to corner us with the same question: What New Year’s Resolutions did you make? Argh! Now we feel pressured to respond with something phenomenal, such as, “I’m going to use my child’s junior chemistry kit to find a cure for cancer,” or “I’m going to personally meet with all the world leaders to bring about peace and prosperity.” Of course, we can’t begin to keep such a resolution even if we truly wanted to. So, how do we handle that awkward question?

First of all, don’t let someone pressure you into making a resolution. No law requires that you do. And if you do make one, it should be well thought out and meaningful to you.

If you set goals for the new year, make sure they are realistic and meaningful to you.

This means that the goal should be personal and realistic. A good goal should be measurable and have a timeline attached to it. It is better to resolve to walk a mile every day than to say you’ll walk more in the new year. When something is too vague, it becomes too unimportant to attend to. When the goal is too lofty, it is too hard to live up to it.

The third week of January is the point where most resolutions die and get laid to rest. Remember that it is only the first of twelve months for the year. If you really want to attain your goal, keep working on it even if you occasionally slip off the band wagon.

Finally, accept the fact that you won’t keep some of the resolutions you make. This only confirms that you’re human. Happy New Year!

Happy New Year!
January, 2012

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Special points of interest:

● Get into the habit of setting aside some money each month for unexpected expenses.
● Increase your intake of fruits and vegetables by adding them to other foods.
● Set realistic goals for yourself; you will be more likely to achieve them.

The fourth annual OCCC Health and Wellness Fair is rapidly approaching. Mark your calendars for Thursday, February 9. The fair will run from 10 a.m. until 2 p.m. and take place in College Union Rooms 1, 2, and 3. As always, the fair will feature dozens of vendors and is free to all.

Prizes will be available each hour for students who attend and visit each of the booths.

The fair is designed to be fun and informative for everyone who attends. Mark your calendars now so that you don’t forget.
Easy Ways to Get Your 5 Servings of Fruits and Vegetables

We all know that fruits and vegetables are good for us. We also know that we often don’t eat as much of them as we should. With a little planning and creativity, we can increase our consumption of these goodies without feeling like a child being punished.

1. Add fruit to cereal, oatmeal, waffles, or pancakes. You still get to enjoy your carbs as you enjoy some fruit.
2. Add frozen vegetables to any pasta dish.
3. Add vegetables to canned or quick-serve soups.
4. Substitute berries or melons for a fatty dessert.
5. Keep bags of carrot sticks, celery sticks, apple slices, etc., in your refrigerator so that they are convenient and in sight when you want a snack.
6. When cooking vegetables, cook 2 to 3 times more than you need and store the extra for lunch the next day.
7. Love pizza? Then load it up with vegetables instead of fatty meats and cheeses.
8. Keep a bowl of fruit on the table or counter. If you see them, you will eat them.
9. Stock your freezer with frozen fruits and vegetables. Frozen items are nutritious and convenient.
10. Use frozen fruits with skim milk to whip up a tasty smoothy.

Eat Healthfully and Walk

Guest Articles by Tyler Frederickson and Dawnella Ealom (Professor Farr’s Writing Class)

Eating healthy keeps you from becoming sick prematurely. There are several benefits of eating healthy. Eat no fast food. Eat more vegetables. Vegetables are especially good because they keep you from eating other bad foods. Finally, practice portion control. Portion control keeps you from eating too much food and it keeps you healthy in your everyday life. Eating healthy keeps you strong, and it prevents you from getting sick. Everyone should eat healthy.

Walking is also very healthy for several reasons. Walking relieves stress. It also keeps your heart strong and your cholesterol low. Walking also keeps your muscles strong. Not only does walking keep your body healthy, it also helps your mind.

Lose Weight and Exercise

A Guest Article by Rodrick Gold (Professor Farr’s Writing Class)

There are many ways to stay healthy in life. To stay healthy, you have to lose weight if you are overweight. Carrying too much weight increases your risk for high blood pressure, high cholesterol, and diabetes. Exercise can help prevent heart disease. To reduce high blood pressure, try to exercise 30 to 60 minutes four to six times a week.

Also, don’t less stress get you down. Take steps to prevent stress when you can and manage it when you can’t.
**Tips for Staying Financially Healthy**

Few things remind us that we’ve just come through the holiday season quite like the stack of bills that begin to accumulate in our mailboxes in January. Whether you were one of the people who wisely purchased just what you could afford or one who succumbed to the slick advertising mantra of “buy now and pay later,” January is a good time to look over your financial situation and make any adjustments that might be needed.

The first step to financial health is to look at your assets. These include any money that you bring in on a regular basis (your paycheck, for example) and any property of value that you may own (land, a house, bonds, etc.). “Liquid” assets are money and things that can be converted into money quickly. Retirement accounts and real estate may add to your overall worth, but they cannot be quickly converted into cash if you need it.

Next, list all of your expenses. Certainly such recurring costs such as a car payment, rent, utilities, and so forth should be listed, but don’t forget about incidental expenses such as bus fare, your morning coffee if you buy it out, snacks, etc. Bringing in enough money to cover basic expenses is good, but it doesn’t allow for unexpected expenses such as an illness or car repair. Ideally, you should have enough money left over after bills are paid to set aside money for rainy day expenses and your future goals.

If your income is fixed and there is no way to bring in additional money each month, look for ways to trim your monthly expenses. Instead of eating lunch out every day, for instance, begin packing a lunch several days each week. When running errands, plan your route in advance so you don’t waste valuable time and gas criss-crossing town. Turn off the lights and electronic devices when you are not present to use them.

Set aside something for yourself each month. Even if you can only commit to twenty or twenty-five dollars at first, you are establishing an important financial cushion and the habit of saving.

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**Start Your Semester Well**

1. **Plan to be successful.** Good outcomes don’t just happen to us. We have to plan for the things we want and go after them.

2. **Be realistic.** Working 60 hours a week, taking 15 hours of college coursework, and expecting a baby in March is a recipe for disaster! Do what you can do today and save the rest for tomorrow.

3. **Communicate!** Go to class, talk to your professors, meet people in the various Student Services offices. If life takes a bad turn during the semester, you’re more likely to have allies who care.
Cider Pork Stew

- 2 pounds boneless pork shoulder roast
- 3 medium cubed potatoes (about 2 1/2 cups)
- 3 medium carrots, cut into 1/2 inch pieces (about 1 1/2 cups)
- 2 medium onions, sliced
- 1 cup coarsely chopped apple
- 1/2 cup coarsely chopped celery
- 3 tablespoons quick-cooking tapioca

- 2 cups apple juice or cider
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon caraway seeds
- 1/4 teaspoon black pepper

1. Cut meat into 1-inch cubes. In a 3 1/2 to 5 1/2 quart slow cooker, combine meat, potatoes, carrots, onions, apple, celery, and tapioca. Stir in apple juice, salt caraway seeds, and pepper.

2. Cover and cook on low-heat setting for 10 to 12 hours or high-heat setting for 5 to 6 hours. Makes 8 servings

Per serving:
- 272 calories
- 24 grams protein
- 27 grams carbohydrates
- 3 grams fiber
- 405 milligrams sodium

Mmm, mmm. Come home to a dish that’s a meal and dessert in one thanks to chunks of sweet apple.