

# >> MAKE THIS YOUR LAST NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION

Words: Jill Stoppel - Owner/Trainer of Excel Wellness Studio

Have you started thinking about your New Year's Resolution? Is it, by chance, the same resolution you made last year? Or have you become cynical and scrapped making them, not believing you'll achieve your goal?

Each year, countless people start the year eagerly wanting to redefine various aspects of their lives by means of "New Year's Resolutions". Something about the change in the calendar year encourages us to put the previous year behind us and look instead to what's ahead. With renewed hope, energy and spirit, we set goals we wish to accomplish. However, studies find that less than a fourth of people actually keep their New Year's commitments.

### What makes achieving personal goals so difficult?

One common pitfall is taking off blindly towards a goal without a map. We start out earnestly at Point A, but have no game plan to help us reach Point B. We quickly find ourselves wandering aimlessly, knowing where we want to be but unsure how to get there. When this happens, it's easy to abandon our plans and lapse back into our previous apathetic ways.

**Lack of accountability is another culprit.** January issues of magazines are full of articles advising New Year's Resolutions to create their own systems of accountability to reach their goals –

because that works for many people. We will make it to the gym if our friend is waiting for us there. We will forego the piece of cake if we know the scales at the weight loss center await us. Life creates mountains of excuses we can use if we don't have to face someone with our missteps.

**Ask Yourself...**How can we learn to keep personal aspirations alive, being accountable to ourselves? How can we set a goal and not lose focus, even if there would be no consequence for abandoning the goal? How can we commit to developing our interests and talents?

**Let this year's resolution be the last one you make.** To do this, you'll need to make one New Year's resolution. Go ahead, make it right now. Here's where the money is:

**Commit to continually better yourself.** Move towards your goals a step at a time. Celebrate the small successes. Make progress a way of life! Adopt this approach and in no time, rather than being overwhelmed and feeling defeated by goals not met, you'll be able to face your aspirations with guts and cross the finish line with glory!

## THE PLAN

**Identify your long-range goals.** In your new 2010 calendar, find a place to write out your ultimate goals, or write them on a separate piece of paper and post it next to the calendar where you can always see them.

**Relish your progress.** Pat yourself on the back as you check your mini-goals off your calendar. Keep moving! Figure out your next steps and put those on your calendar. You'll be less likely to burn out on a long-range goal by learning to find satisfaction in the pursuit. When you are motivated by your own effort, you'll be able to plod ahead towards the goal without becoming discouraged or losing interest.

**Don't be too specific with goals that are hard to calculate.** For instance, if you say "I'll lose 8 lbs this month". You may lose 8 lbs fat, but gain 5 lbs muscle, and you'll feel like you failed, even though you made significant progress. Instead, focus on steps you can measure, such as committing to working out 4x/week, and reducing calories by 500/day.

**If you pass a goal date without achieving the goal, don't quit!** Put it back on your calendar. If it's a difficult step to take, it may be beneficial to break it down into even small mini-goals. Be realistic, and allow yourself a reasonable amount of flexibility.

**Accountability works. Use it.** Find someone who can help you stay on track. Hire a coach or trainer, or sign up for a class. Subscribe to an interest magazine for periodical inspiration delivered to your mailbox. Find a mentor or join a support group. And don't forget the valuable resource of friendship! A buddy working towards the same goal, or a friend dedicated to helping you reach your goal will help keep your booty in gear!

**Break it down.** Identify mini-goals that will help you get closer to that goal. Write the first few mini-goals down on your calendar for the month of January – those are your first goal dates.

**Perform a monthly checkup at the beginning of each month.** Sit down with your list of goals and your calendar. See how far you've come, and figure out what steps you need to accomplish for the next month. Adjust if you need to. You can do this on the first day of each month, or it may be easier to pick a day you usually have a little free time, such as the first Sunday of each month.

**Make 2010 the year you commit to continually working towards a better you, one step at a time.** Put this endeavor into practice, then next year when New Year's rolls around, you won't have a list of things you want to change about yourself, you'll already be working towards and achieving those goals!

## BEST IN CLASS: CHAMPAGNES

When it comes to New Year's, a celebration isn't complete without a bottle of bubbly. No matter the budget, we've got a selection for you.

### BEST SPECIAL OCCASION CHAMPAGNE

CHARLES HEIDSIECK 1995 BLANC DES MILLENAIRES **\$100**

#### PROS

- Light-bodied yet extremely complex
- Ages well
- Quite dry and well balanced

#### CONS

- May or may not continue to improve with age
- Expensive

### BEST VALUE, SPARKLING WINE

ROEDERER ESTATE ANDERSON VALLEY BRUT NV **\$20**

#### PROS

- Value
- Crisp, full-bodied and unusually complex
- Widely Available

#### CONS

- Not as complex as fine French Champagne

### BEST INEXPENSIVE BUBBLY

GLORIA FERRER SONOMA BRUT NV **\$15**

#### PROS

- Better than other budget sparkling wine
- Well Balanced
- Widely Available

#### CONS

- Not as complex as more expensive wines
- Not as elegant as fine French Champagne

### BEST VALUE, FRENCH CHAMPAGNE

NICOLAS FEUILLATTE BRUT NV **\$30**

#### PROS

- Good value for French Champagne
- Bright, with a touch of sweetness
- Light and delicate
- Citrus and floral flavors permeate
- Complements many foods well

#### CONS

- Not as refined or complex as Vintage Champagne

