

## Happy New Year!

By Dr. Margaret Rea

I hope you all had a wonderful break. As cliché as it might sound, many of us do ponder our goals as we head into a new year- those age old “New Year’s Resolutions!” Thus, I revisit this theme each New Year. When it comes to wellness goals, we can often fall into the unhealthy trap of setting too high a goal or asking for change from ourselves in too many areas. “For this year, I will eat better, exercise regularly, connect more with family and be more disciplined with my studying.” If that sounds like you, please stop right there. You are setting yourself up for disappointment and self-criticism. It is important to be very specific and realistic about your goals. It is helpful to start with one behavior you might want to change. Start with a small goal and a realistic objective. If including more physical exercise is a goal, for example, asking yourself to go to the gym every day could be too extreme a goal. If you instead try to incorporate one physical activity a week and build from there, you might be more likely to reach your goal. Focus on **SMART goals**: specific, measurable, attainable, relevant and timely. Most certainly maintain self-compassion. If you don’t reach the goal, pause and ponder how to modify and reset again.

The American Psychological Association offers some helpful strategies that promote good behavior change.

**Make a plan that will stick.** Your plan is a map that will guide you on this journey of change. You can even think of it as an adventure. When making your plan, be specific. Want to exercise more? Detail the time of day when you can take walks and how long you’ll walk. Write everything down, and ask yourself if you’re confident that these activities and goals are realistic for you. If not, start with smaller steps. Post your plan where you’ll most often see it as a reminder.

**Start small.** After you’ve identified realistic short-term and long-term goals, break down your goals into small, manageable steps that are specifically defined and can be measured. Is your long-term goal to lose 20 pounds within the next five months? A good weekly goal would be to lose one pound a week. If you would like to eat healthier, consider as a goal for the week replacing

dessert with a healthier option, like fruit or yogurt. At the end of the week, you’ll feel successful knowing you met your goal.

**Change one behavior at a time.** Unhealthy behaviors develop over the course of time, so replacing unhealthy behaviors with healthy ones requires time. Many people run into problems when they try to change too much too fast. To improve your success, focus on one goal or change at a time. As new healthy behaviors become a habit, try to add another goal that works toward the overall change you’re striving for.

**Involve a buddy.** Whether it be a friend, co-worker or family member, someone else on your journey will keep you motivated and accountable. Perhaps it can be someone who will go to the gym with you or someone who is also trying to stop smoking. Talk about what you are doing. Consider joining a support group. Having someone with whom to share your struggles and successes makes the work easier and the mission less intimidating.

**Ask for support.** Accepting help from those who care about you and will listen strengthens your resilience and commitment. If you feel overwhelmed or unable to meet your goals on your own, consider seeking help from a psychologist. Psychologists are uniquely trained to understand the connection between the mind and body, as well as the factors that promote behavior change. Asking for help doesn’t mean a lifetime of therapy; even just a few sessions can help you examine and set attainable goals or address the emotional issues that may be getting in your way.

<http://www.apa.org/helpcenter/lifestyle-changes.aspx>



### Wellness Events

#### Work Life and Wellness Events

<http://www.ucdmc.ucdavis.edu/hr/wellness/index.html>

#### UC Living Fit Forever

[http://intranet.ucdmc.ucdavis.edu/clinops/resources/living\\_fit\\_forever.shtml](http://intranet.ucdmc.ucdavis.edu/clinops/resources/living_fit_forever.shtml)

#### Strategies for Managing Stress Around Step Studying: A Four Session Series

Stephen Simonson, Psy.D.  
Jan. 9th, Jan. 23rd, Jan. 30th,  
and Feb. 13th 5:30-6:30,  
Education Building Room 3202.  
Space is limited to the first 30 students so please RSVP



# Wellness Tip: Reestablish your Commitment to your Goals!



The New Year is a good time to reestablish your commitment to your goals. Reengaging with the mission that lead you to becoming a health science student might provide you with the emotional fuel needed as you embark on the next phase of the school year. A wonderful way to reconnect to your goals is to write a mission statement. Consider answering the following questions: What is the personal values that are driving my goals? What is the difference I hope to make by achieving my goals? What is the legacy I want to leave? Also consider the exercise in the link below, another tool to help you reconnect to your mission by Imagining your future and where all this hard work can take you.

[http://ggia.berkeley.edu/practice/best\\_possible\\_self#](http://ggia.berkeley.edu/practice/best_possible_self#)

### Wellness Resources:

The start of the new year is also a to reflect and remember the various mental health and wellness resources:

### Crisis Services:

Margaret Rea, Ph.D., Director Student Wellness;  
mrea@ucdavis.edu; (916)703-9355  
Counseling Services: medschoolcounseling@ucdavis.edu  
Counseling Services on Davis Campus: (530) 752-0871  
Psychiatric Services: costerhout@ucdavis.edu  
Wellness Website: [https://www.ucdmc.ucdavis.edu/mdprogram/student\\_wellness/](https://www.ucdmc.ucdavis.edu/mdprogram/student_wellness/)

- 911
- Student Health Counseling Services After Hours 530 752-2300
- Suicide Prevention 1 800- 273-TALK (8255)
- Crisis Text Line Text RELATE to 741741
- Sutter Center for Psychiatry- (916)386-3620
- UC Davis Police, Sacramento (916) 734-2555
- Campus Violence Prevention Program (CARE) 530 752-3299

All students, staff and faculty are encouraged to contribute wellness stories, tips or recipes to the newsletter.

### Monthly Recipe from the UC Davis Community

This month’s recipe is from Sarah Arsenoff, M.S., Advisor, Office of Medical Education, School of Medicine

“Hi All, I’m one of the staff advisors for the School of Medicine. When I’m not in the office, you can find me in the hiking the great outdoors, walking around Midtown, or working part time at a local gym. I also love food but after the holiday season the last thing I want to do is put a lot of effort into my cooking, but I do think about staying pretty healthy with easy recipes. January is the season for soup and being lazy. Here’s a white chicken chili recipe that you can set and forget in a crockpot, or simmer on the stove. Pro tip: I often replace the fresh oregano with half as much in dried oregano. If you’re not a fan of one ingredient, swap it out for one of your favorites. Eat it all week, or freeze some for later, you really can’t go wrong. Just about all of this stuff is at Trader Joes, making it student budget friendly.”

[https://health.ucdavis.edu/mdprogram/student\\_wellness/recipes.html](https://health.ucdavis.edu/mdprogram/student_wellness/recipes.html)



### Wellness App: Relax

Take a moment to check out the “relax,” app. This app and other apps and stress management tools can be found at the Healthy UC Davis webpage. I encourage you to review the many resources and consider integrating some of the techniques into your well-being plan for 2019. There is information on such topic as: [Building Resilience](#); [General Stress Management](#); [Managing Moods and Emotions](#); [Breathing](#); [Meditation](#); [Sleep](#); [Mindfulness](#); [Gratitude](#); [Keeping Mentally Healthy and Practicing Emotional First Aid](#); [Work/Life Balance and Time Management](#).

<https://healthy.sf.ucdavis.edu/mental-emotional-wellbeing>

The relax app can help provide “Effective and rapid stress relief in 5 minutes...with guided breathing and meditation exercises that use calming music to promote relaxation. It’s an ideal stress management tool, being simple and intuitive.”



<https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/relax-lite-stress-and-anxiety-relief/id409665681?mt=8>