

## New Year, New Resolutions

By Dr. Margaret Rea

### **Happy New Year. I wish you all a year filled with adventure, laughter and good health.**

With the start of 2017, this month's theme for the Year of Health and Wellness is "Reset." The focus is on identifying where you might want to reset a goal, identify a new goal, change a habit, add a new wellness strategy or rediscover an old one. Check out the several events associated with the theme in the Events section.

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!" 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 goal. It is helpful to start with one behavior or habit 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 is 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. 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.

## Wellness Events

### **Resiliency**

1/18 12:00 pm  
Dr. Hendry Ton  
Education Building, LH 1222

### **Busy and Fit in 2017: Fitness Strategies for Busy Professionals**

1/11 12:15 pm  
Dr. Brandee Waite  
Education Building 1204

### **Financial Wellness**

1/17 12:00 pm  
Rand Erickson (Fidelity Investments)  
Education Building 1204

### **Health and Wellness Fair**

1/26 11:00-2:00 pm  
Education Building

### **Living Fit Forever Classes**

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

### **Work Life and Wellness Events**

[ucdmc.ucdavis.edu/hr/wellness/brownbags.html](http://ucdmc.ucdavis.edu/hr/wellness/brownbags.html)

### **UCDMC Yoga**

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Gz23GMJbzJDI-wzn9g8NxUnia4lFuVsHah4olav7Ow0/edit#>

# Discover Your Natural Balance

Another area where you might consider addressing change is with regard to anxiety.

Resetting how you approach the anxious mind. The exercise below comes from Elisha and Stefanie Goldstein

The mountain meditation is a wonderful way to give yourself the experience of balancing in the midst of the mind's ever-changing nature.

1. Sit in a comfortable position, close your eyes, and take a few deep breaths. Allow the breaths to be an anchor to this moment.

2. Imagine yourself as a mountain, with the forest covering the mountain and all its foliage. Do your best to get in touch with this visualization.

3. Experience the different seasons, of summer, fall, winter, and spring unfolding. The fall brings beautiful colors, the winter all the snow, ice and storms, spring brings its newfound flowers, and summer brings heat and potentially fire.

4. Now ask yourself, "Has the mountain itself actually changed?" The mountain remains the same: solid, stable, and grounded.

5. In the midst of anxiety say to yourself, "Breathing in, I imagine myself as the mountain, breathing out, I am grounded and solid." Feel the natural balance that's there.

<http://www.mindful.org/remedies-for-your-anxious-mind/>



## Monthly Recipe: Brownies

It was exciting to see that Dr. Oliveira from the UC Davis Department of Integrative Medicine provided a recipe for a healthier version of the typical brownies at a time when many of us are trying to cut down on sweets after the holidays- the Decadent Double Chocolate Brownies. The brownies are plant-based and oil-free and are made with garbanzo bean flower and dairy free chocolate chips.

<http://ucdintegrativemedicine.com/recipes/brownies/#gs.Ympes6o>

## Wellness App: Way of Life

The Way of Life App looks like it could be a helpful tool for tracking areas for behavior change. It helps you identify and track your habits using a unique color system. The app helps you see helpful and unhelpful "trends," in your lifestyle. The App also helps you set up reminders and customized messages to help you monitor your goals. <http://wayoflifeapp.com/>