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**New Year,
New Possibilities:
*Surprise Yourself!***



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JANUARY 2016



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"You're never too old to set another goal or to dream a new dream."

— C.S. Lewis

Happy New Year!

It never ceases to amaze me how time seems to go so much faster now than when I was young. Back then, summers, vacations, even the school year seemed to go on, and on, and on. Now, it feels like it was just yesterday that I finished shopping for Christmas 2014!

But a lot happened in 2015. My friend Linda and I split up our business partnership from which this magazine sprung. My son Brandon went through several months when it seemed like every time we turned around he got another concussion (try *that* for changing the way you live your life!). I took up golf again. I fell in love with playing the piano again. And I started taking dance lessons! I took the advice we always put forth here in Vital!: To age successfully, take good care of the only self you have, take good care of the ones you love, and find a passion to pursue.

This coming year is filled with all sorts of exciting plans, not the least of which is the unveiling of our new website at www.vitalmagonline.com. It's a place where you can interact with other Vital! readers, find great ideas for things to do and see, and of course there's even more of the great content you've come to expect from Vital! to help you stay healthy, wealthy and wise as you prepare for and enter retirement.

For the start of this new year, I'd like to share with you a sentiment I found by Neil Gaiman: "May your coming year be filled with magic and dreams and good madness. I hope you read some fine books and kiss someone who thinks you're wonderful, and don't forget to make some art -- write or draw or build or sing or live as only you can. And I hope, somewhere in the next year, you surprise yourself."

Happy January!

Karyn

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Choose a Plant-Based Diet for Optimal Health

By Karen Smith, RD, LDN

It's no secret that despite all the diet books, supplements, and increased media attention on Americans' growing waistlines, obesity rates have not decreased. In fact, according to the *Journal of American Medicine*, more than one third (34.9%) of U.S. adults are obese, with no decrease in sight. As a result, health care costs to treat some of the leading causes of preventable death, including obesity-related conditions such as heart disease, type 2 diabetes, and certain types of cancers, have skyrocketed.

There is hope, though. Nutrition is a (if not *the*) key factor in preventing (and in some cases reversing) chronic diseases associated with obesity. As a registered dietitian, I'm frequently asked, "What are the best foods to eat to promote weight loss?" My re-

sponse? Eat mostly plants, such as fruits, vegetables, beans, lentils, whole grains, and nuts, and limit (or altogether avoid) consumption of animal products.

In randomized trials, a plant-based diet has been clinically proven to not only reduce one's risk of obesity, type 2 diabetes, hypertension, heart disease, and certain cancers, but to reverse atherosclerosis (the build up of fats, cholesterol, and other substances on artery walls that restricts blood flow). Choosing a plant-based diet not only is a smart decision for achieving and maintaining a healthy weight and preventing disease, but unlike the slew of fad diets, diet pills, and supplements on the market, it can be easily maintained for a lifetime with positive benefits for the individual, his or her family, and the environment.

Consider the following:

1 Plants are our only source of dietary fiber, a nutrient known to have protective properties against heart disease, high blood sugar, high cholesterol, and certain types of cancer. On average, Americans consume only 15 grams of fiber daily. The Institute of Medicine recommends that women consume 21 grams and men consume 30 grams of fiber per day. Fully 97% of Americans are deficient in fiber. Meats, dairy products, and eggs contain zero fiber.

2 Plant-based diets provide ample protein minus the cholesterol associated with animal products. On average, vegetarians and vegans consume more than 70% more protein than they need daily.

3 Plants are rich in potassium, a mineral required by every cell in the body to function. The *Journal of the American College of Cardiology* published a review of studies on potassium intake in relation to heart disease and stroke, and concluded that increased potassium consumption is recommended for decreased risk of stroke. High-potassium foods include apricots, artichokes, avocados, bananas, beets, Brussels sprouts, chard, collard greens, dates, cantaloupe, nectarines, oranges, parsnips, potatoes, prunes, sweet potatoes, spinach, and tomatoes.

4 Aside from the numerous health benefits associated with a plant-based diet, there are environmental benefits as well. Cutting out meat from your diet reduces your carbon footprint and saves water and land since the production of meats and dairy products require significantly greater environmental resources than plants.



Transitioning to a plant-based diet doesn't have to be overwhelming. You don't need an all-or-nothing mentality. For instance, choose one or two days a week (to start) to be vegetarian or vegan. Find vegetarian and vegan recipes online and in vegetarian/vegan cookbooks; when dining out ask for vegetarian/vegan options. Keep grab-and-go fruits and vegetables (think apples, bananas, oranges, pears, baby carrots, and celery and bell pepper sticks) available for snacking; replace high-fat dips with hummus; or start your day with a fruit and non-dairy milk smoothie or a bowl of oatmeal topped with raisins and a handful of walnuts. If you'd like more information, both www.pcrm.org and www.nutrition-facts.org are wonderful resources.



Karen Smith, RD, LDN is the Dietitian at Regal Heights and Regency Healthcare and Rehabilitation Centers, part of the Nationwide Health Care Services group of rehabilitation facilities that includes Regal Heights and Regency in Delaware, and Renaissance, Sterling and Ridgeway in Pennsylvania. For more information, call Regency (regencyhcr.com) at 302-654-8400 or Regal Heights (regalheights-healthcare.com) at 302-998-0181.



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Managing Osteoarthritis of the Knee

By Kate Maliha

Osteoarthritis is a degenerative joint disease in which the cartilage and surrounding bone of an affected joint degenerates, causing pain, stiffness and often chronic low-grade inflammation. Research on osteoarthritis has been commonly focused on the knees for good reason: we load these joints (put weight on them) in daily movement. Both repetitive and extreme positions can cause wear and tear on the joint and lead to the development of osteoarthritis. While there is no cure for this condition, exercise can reduce disability and control the pain of knee osteoarthritis. Both resistance training and aerobic exercise have been shown to help manage the symptoms and prevent further joint degeneration and even reduce the cycle of inflammation (Arthritis Society, 2015; Kravitz & Thomas, 2014). Specifically, some moderate intensity and low impact forms of exercise such as walking, biking, water exercise and strength training can be particularly effective at building strength around the knee without causing further joint damage. Research suggests that beginners should start slowly, and work to accumulating 150 minutes weekly of low impact cardiovascular activity (spread throughout the week). In addition, two weekly sessions of strengthening exercise should be performed, focusing on the lower body muscles. Those who are new to exercise should begin with exer-

cise that is not weight bearing (such as gentle cycling or swimming) and progress to weight bearing activity (walking, strength training exercises performed while standing). Stretches to reduce pressure on the knee joints should include both the calves and hamstrings. To strengthen the muscles around the knees, try these two exercises:

Straight Leg Raise

Recline on your back on the floor. Then, lift yourself up to support your upper body with your elbows. Bend your left knee and keep that foot on the floor. While keeping the right leg straight and toes pointed up, squeeze your quadriceps muscles and raise your right leg, then lower it back to the ground. If it is uncomfortable or too hard to do this exercise on the floor, try it while seated on a chair. Work up to performing two sets of 10 repetitions on each leg.

Chair Squats

Raise yourself up on the seat of a chair with pillows or cushions so that you stay higher and experience less knee flexion (bend) for this exercise. Begin by sitting on the chair with your back straight and your feet flat on the floor. Squeeze your quadriceps and buttocks while slowly standing up. Slowly lower yourself down again while contracting the leg and buttocks muscles again, until you are in a seated position. Work up to two sets of 10 repetitions.

Not all people can safely perform

these exercises, so be sure to have clearance from your doctor before you begin this or any other exercise program. This article does not constitute medical advice.



Kate Maliha, MA (HKin) has a Master's degree in Human Kinetics, is a Certified Medical Exercise Special-

ist, and has conducted aging research at the University of British Columbia. She is the Director of Love Your Age Fitness Inc. (<http://www.LoveYourAge.ca>), a fitness company specializing in the exercise needs of seniors.

Sources: Kravitz, L. & Thomas, J. (2014). "Exercise Benefits People with Osteoarthritis"; IDEA Fitness Journal 11 (4)

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The Best Time to Buy Anything

Whether you're in the market for a computer, car or a cruise, there are definitely times of the year when better deals are to be had. Particularly if you're planning on making a large purchase this year, check out the chart below before you start shopping.

First Quarter

- 01 January
- 02 February
- 03 March

Boats • Computer Monitors • Gas Grills & Air Conditioners • Wedding Supplies • Winter Coats & Clothing

Clothing • Broadway Tickets • Carpeting • Furniture • Gift Cards • Linens • Motorcycles • Suits • Video Games

Broadway Tickets • Cell Phones • Televisions & Home Theaters

Chocolate • Frozen Foods • Golf Clubs • Luggage

Second Quarter

- 04 April
- 05 May
- 06 June

Televisions & Electronics • Houses • Cookware • Digital Cameras • Thrift Stores • Vacuum Cleaners

Cruises • Sneakers

Refrigerators • Mattresses • Office Furniture

Dishware • Gym Memberships & Equipment • Tools

Third Quarter

- 07 July
- 08 August
- 09 September

Computers

Furniture • Home Décor • Video Games

Linens & Storage • Office Furniture • Kids' Clothing • Office Supplies • Swimsuits

Appliances • Bicycles • Broadway Tickets • Cars • Lawnmowers • Holiday Attire • Office Supplies • Wine

Fourth Quarter

- 10 October
- 11 November
- 12 December

Cars • Cookware • Digital Cameras • Gas Grills & Air Conditioners • Plants • Toys & Games • Wedding Supplies

Appliances • Broadway Tickets • Jeans • Patio Furniture

Appliances • Candy • Televisions & Electronics • Tools

Champagne • Golf Clubs • Pools • Televisions & Electronics • Tools

source: lifehacker.com

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Government Budget Changes Dramatically Change Your Social Security Claiming Options

The Bipartisan Budget Act of 2015 makes significant changes to Social Security that impact the payments you will qualify for in retirement. The law eliminates several Social Security claiming strategies, which the bill refers to as “unintended loopholes,” that some married couples used to increase their benefits. Here’s how the Social Security rules have changed:

Dependents can’t claim payments if you suspend your payments. In the past, once you reached full retirement age (FRA) you could claim Social Security benefits and immediately suspend them, which allowed a spouse and sometimes dependent children to claim payments based on your work record while you continued to accrue delayed retirement credits that allowed your benefit to grow 8% per year to age 70. Retirees continue to be able to suspend their payments, and when they resume them they will

be paid going forward at a higher rate, due to the accumulation of delayed retirement credits. However, the new legislation changes the rules so that if you suspend your Social Security payments, the payments your spouse or children receive based on your work record will also be suspended until you start your payments again. This rule change applies to benefit suspensions submitted beginning in May 2016, so if you’re still eligible to use this file-and-suspend strategy and it’s part of your financial plan for retirement income, you have a short window to start. If you wait past May, the ability to claim and suspend and have a spouse collect benefits will be gone.

No more double claiming. Some dual-earner married couples who are 66 or older have been claiming Social Security benefits twice. The lower earner would first restrict their application to “spousal benefits only”

in order to collect spousal payments worth half of the higher earner’s benefit amount, and then later switch to payments based on their own work record, which would have grown due to delayed claiming bonuses. People who turn 62 in 2016 or later will no longer be able to switch between these two types of payments. If you weren’t 62 by the end of 2015 you’re not eligible for the restricted application (applying for spousal benefits only) anymore. Instead, you can either restrict your benefit to spousal payment only, or claim your benefit on your own work record, typically whichever is higher.

Anyone age 62 or older at the end of 2015 is spared this clampdown. Since the option to file a restricted application for only spousal benefits is only available under prior law at full retirement age and the rules take effect only for people who are currently

under age 62, this option is effectively phased in over a four-year period. For people born Jan. 1, 1954, or earlier, the option to file a restricted application for only spousal benefits will remain available.

Notably all of these changes concern the interaction between retirement and spousal benefits, and do not include widow benefits. Widows and widowers inherit their spouse’s benefit payment when it is higher than their existing benefit, and widow/ers will continue to have the opportunity to restrict an application to only widow or only retirement benefits and later switch to their own benefit.

Keep in mind: All workers always have the option to increase their monthly Social Security payments by delaying claiming up until age 70. The real advantage is still there, which is being patient.



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Medicare Moments

2016 Costs at a Glance	
Part A premium	Most people don't pay a monthly premium for Part A (sometimes called "premium-free Part A"). If you buy Part A, you'll pay up to \$411 in 2016).
Part A hospital inpatient deductible and coinsurance	You pay: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• \$1,288 deductible for each benefit period.• Days 1-60: \$0 coinsurance for each benefit period.• Days 61-90: \$322 coinsurance per day of each benefit period.• Days 91 and beyond: \$644 coinsurance per each "lifetime reserve day" after day 90 for each benefit period (up to 60 days over your lifetime).• Beyond lifetime reserve days: all costs.
Part B premium	Most people pay \$104.90 each month
Part B deductible and coinsurance	\$166 per year. After your deductible is met, you typically pay 20% of the Medicare-approved amount for most doctor services (including most hospital inpatient), outpatient therapy, and durable medical equipment.
Part C premium	The Part C monthly premium varies by plan.
Part D premium	The Part D monthly premium varies by plan (higher-income consumers may pay more).

If you're in a **Medicare Advantage (Medicare Part C)** plan, it's important that you know that the Medicare Advantage Disenrollment Period runs from January 1–February 14, 2016. During this period:

- If you're in a Medicare Advantage Plan, you can leave your plan and switch to Original Medicare. Your Original Medicare coverage will begin the first day of the following month.
- If you switch to Original Medicare during this period, you'll have until February 14 to also join a Medicare Prescription Drug Plan to add drug coverage. Your prescription drug

coverage will begin the first day of the month after the plan gets your enrollment form.

- Note: During this period, you can't:
- Switch from Original Medicare to a Medicare Advantage Plan.
 - Switch from one Medicare Advantage Plan to another.
 - Switch from one Medicare Prescription Drug Plan to another.
 - Join, switch, or drop a Medicare Medical Savings Account Plan.

For more information, visit <https://www.medicare.gov/Publications/Pubs/pdf/11219.pdf>.

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Your Winter Safety Checklist

'Tis the season for flus, slips on icy streets, and other dangers that can be especially traumatic for older adults. A simple fall can have devastating effects. A minor cold can escalate into a bronchial episode (make sure to get flu and pneumonia inoculations annually). And older adults are more susceptible to adverse reactions to cold temperatures than younger counterparts. To stay healthy this winter:

■ **Hydrate, Hydrate, Hydrate!** Drink at least four or five glasses of water every day. Water intake shouldn't decrease just because it's winter.

■ **Make sure indoor temperatures are not too low.** When using a portable heater exercise caution.

Unattended heaters can be a fire hazard.

■ **Check lighting.** Make sure there are no great contrasts from one room to another. As we age it becomes more difficult for our eyes to adjust to changes in light, so high contrasts increase the risk of slips and falls. Use night lights.

■ **Avoid trips.** Pick up loose extension cords. Make sure rugs are not wrinkled or torn in a way that may cause someone to trip. Use padding or special tape underneath to prevent them from sliding.

■ In the bathroom **use mats inside and outside the tub** to prevent slipping on wet surfaces. If warranted, install grab bars inside the tub. Regulate water temperature.

■ Make sure **smoke and carbon monoxide alarms** are working.

■ **Program the phone with emergency numbers and make sure it's always charged.** Consider use of a personal emergency response system—a device worn around the neck or on a bracelet, which can summon help if needed. This device should be worn at all times.

■ **Prepare for power outages.** Make sure you have easy access to flashlights and a battery-powered radio. Stock up on non-perishable food items and bottled water. Set up a "phone chain" with family and friends to check in on each other.

■ When venturing outside be sure to **dress in layers.** According to the NIA the following can be signs of hypothermia: slowed or slurred speech; sleepiness or confusion; shivering or stiffness in the arms and legs; poor body control; slow

reactions or a weak pulse.

■ **Avoid falls outside by wearing appropriate footwear.** Wearing comfortable shoes with anti-slip soles and replacing worn walking cane tips will help to navigate in icy conditions.

■ **Keep a small survival kit in the car** with food and water in case you slide off the road or get stuck in a pileup.

■ **Don't drive in hazardous conditions.** Find grocery stores, dining establishments and pharmacies that deliver and keep the list handy.

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Tips for Long-Distance Caregivers

By Robyn Mooney

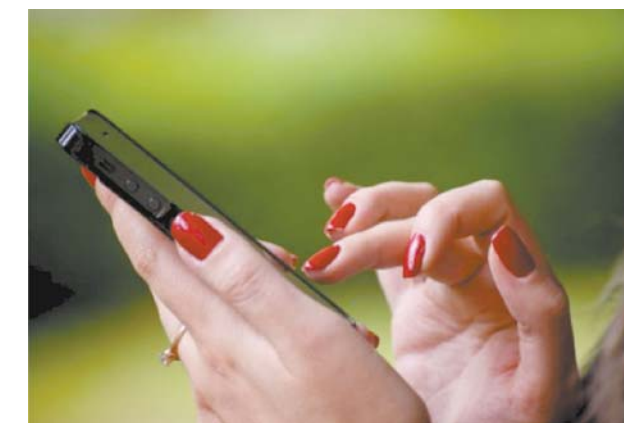
If you're a family caregiver living far from your loved one, you're not alone. It can be difficult to connect and communicate with your hired caregiver from a distance. Of course, the way you navigate the situation will vary depending on your loved one's state of health, independence and situation, but here are five general tips that will help.

1 **Choose the Right Caregiver**—Each home care company is different and each caregiver is different. Your loved one will feel comfortable around some caregivers and not around others. Spend the time up front choosing the right caregiver for your loved one to avoid any hardship as you move forward.

2 **Get a Trusted Individual Involved**—When you can't be nearby to be a part of the caregiving process, it's important that you have someone you know and trust to help. This could be one of your loved one's neighbors, a friend or a fam-

ily member. Ask them to periodically check in on your loved one and to get to know your hired caregiver face-to-face.

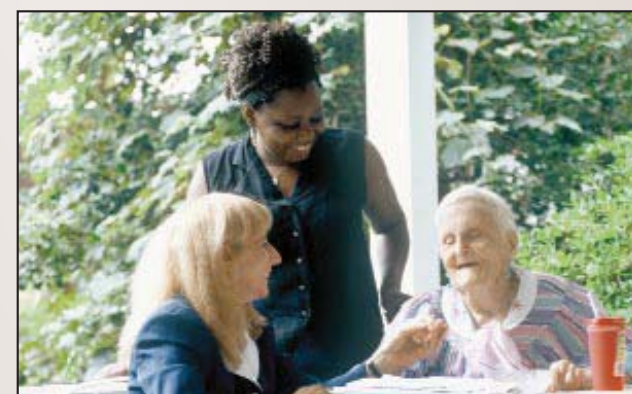
3 **Keep in Touch With Your Hired Caregiver**—Whether via phone, email, text or otherwise, it's important that you consistently communicate with the caregiver. You'll inspire better care while helping to avoid misunderstandings and miscommunications.



4 **Show Your Gratitude**—It is so important to have a caregiver that you can trust, especially when you can't be close to your loved one. If you've found a caregiver who's doing a great job, make sure you show your appreciation. Send a card with a few kind words explaining how much they mean to you. They'll want to keep up the good work, plus it keeps you involved in a deeper way.

5 **Stay Organized**—Put your mind at ease and reduce stress by having a plan in place and a way to track medications, doctor's appointments, bills, and other important pieces of information, as well as knowing who to count on for certain tasks.

Robyn Mooney is president of CarpeVITA Home Care. For more great caregiving tips, if you have questions, or if you'd like to schedule an appointment, call her at 302-482-4305, call toll-free 888-541-VITA, or email CVDE@cvhomecare.com. CarpeVITA Home Care is located at 240 N. James St., Suite 107, Newport, DE 19804.



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GREAT WAYS TO GIVE BACK

Is one of your New Year's resolutions to give back to your community? Let us help you get started!

Invention Convention Assistants needed Saturday, January 16, 2016 from 9:30 a.m.-4:00 p.m., Hagley Museum and Library, Wilmington, www.hagley.org

Invention Convention allows children and their parents to celebrate the secrets and solutions of inventions with a variety of hands-on science activities. Volunteer positions are 3-4 hours in length. Choose from: check-in station, admission greeter, science activity room, create an invention, tinkering room, recycling green team, videographer/photographer, Hagley store table, patent officer, membership promotion, and catering assistants. For more information contact Angela Williamson, 302-658-2400, ext. 257, or awilliamson@hagley.org.

Habitat for Humanity, Dover, DE, <http://centraldelawarehabitat.org>
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building; at ReStore, which sells home improvement items; or at fundraising activities throughout the year. For more information contact Jocelyn McBride, 302-526-2366.

Beebe Healthcare, Lewes, DE, www.beebehealthcare.org/volunteer-beebe

There are two distinct ways you can volunteer at Beebe Healthcare. One is to be part of the Hospital Volunteer program, which is directed toward patient interaction and support services. Hospital volunteers assume many and varied roles within the Medical Center. Or you can become an Auxiliary Volunteer. The mission of the Auxiliary, the medical center's oldest fundraising organization, is to raise resources to support the programs and projects of Beebe Healthcare. Contact Lee Halloran, Manager of Volunteer Services, at 302-645-3531, lhalloran@beebehealthcare.org.

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DART Offers Flexible Bus Service in Sussex County!

For the past year, DART has been offering a "Flex Service" to the residents of Sussex County. Flex Service is a blend between a traditional bus route that has established bus stops along a designated route on a set schedule, and a Demand Response Service (a scheduled bus service with off-route trips). At DART, the demand response option is available to all, and requires customers to call DART and schedule an off-route trip, allowing the bus to deviate off the route up to 1 mile to pick up or drop off passengers. All Flex buses are wheelchair accessible, provide stop announcements, and include seatbelts, lighted destination signs, as well as bike racks. Three Flex bus routes operate weekdays, every hour from 6:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Flex Route 901 Georgetown—loops around Georgetown and connects to Route 206 to Lewes and Rehoboth; Route 212 to Bridgeville, Seaford, Laurel and Delmar; Route 303 to Milford and Dover; and the Flex Route 902 to Millsboro.

Flex Route 902 Georgetown-Millsboro—provides service between Georgetown and Millsboro with transfer connections to Routes 206, 212, 303 and 901 in Georgetown.

Flex Route 903 Seaford—loops around Seaford with connections to Route 212 southbound serving Laurel and Delmar and Route 212 northbound serving Bridgeville and Georgetown.

These three routes provide regular bus service to designated bus stops,

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— Carl Brad

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Letting Go of Perfection

Set Yourself Free

The start of a new year is a natural time to take stock of where we are and what we want to strive for in the months ahead. Many people, however, put undue pressure on themselves to “overachieve.” Are you one of them?

By Madisyn Taylor

It is good to remember that one of our goals in life is to not be perfect. We often lose track of this aspiration. When we make mistakes, we think that we are failing or not measuring up. But if life is about experimenting, experiencing, and learning, then to be imperfect is a prerequisite. Life becomes much more interesting once we let go of our quest for perfection and aspire for imperfection instead.

This doesn't mean that we don't strive to be our best. We simply accept that there is no such thing as perfection—especially in life. All living things are in a ceaseless state of movement. Even as you read this, your hair is growing, your cells are dying and being reborn, and your blood is moving through your veins. Your life changes more than it stays the same. Perfection may happen in a mo-

Life becomes much more interesting once we let go of our quest for perfection and aspire for imperfection instead.

ment, but it will not last because it is an impermanent state. Trying to hold on to perfection or forcing it to happen causes frustration and unhappiness.

In spite of this, many of us are in the habit of trying to be perfect. One way to nudge ourselves out of this tendency is to look at our lives and notice that no one is judging us to see whether or not we are perfect. Sometimes, perfectionism is a holdover from our childhood—an ideal we inherited from a demanding parent. We are adults now, and we can choose to let go of the need to perform for someone else's approval. Similarly, we can choose to experience the universe as a loving place where we are free to be imperfect. Once we realize this, we can begin to take ourselves less seriously and have more fun. Imperfection is inherent to being human. By embracing your imperfections, you embrace yourself.



9	5	4	7	2	6	8	3	1
8	2	1	9	5	3	6	4	7
3	7	6	8	1	4	9	5	2
7	6	9	2	8	5	3	1	4
1	3	5	6	4	7	2	9	8
4	8	2	1	3	9	7	6	5
6	9	8	5	7	1	4	2	3
2	1	3	4	9	8	5	7	6
5	4	7	3	6	2	1	8	9



11 Easy Ways To Keep Your New Year's Resolutions



By Laura Gaskill

We've all been there. We're carried away by the promise of a clean slate and jump into the new year with a running start... only to burn out by February. Whether you're hoping to spruce up and organize your home, get healthy, save money or learn something new, the key to success is in your approach.

Instead of making a long list of resolutions on January 1 and leaving it at that, take it a few steps further. From high-tech solutions like automating your goals and getting mobile reminders, to refreshingly low-tech methods like resolution charts and sticky notes, here are a host of ideas to make keeping your resolutions as painless as possible. Happy new year! Let's make this the best one yet.

1 Keep a resolutions chart. This method is old school, but since Gretchen Rubin swears by it in her popular book *The Happiness Project*, I am convinced it's worth a shot. The idea is to hold yourself accountable each day through the habit of checking boxes in a chart—low tech but effective.

2 Use the 10-minute rule. Resolutions have this funny way of overwhelming us before we even begin. Instead of trying to find large chunks of time to devote to your goal, take a few moments now and list as many resolution-related tasks as you can think of that can be accomplished in 10 minutes or less. Making a phone call, checking a website, sending an email and doing a few sets of crunches all would fit in that time frame.

3 Make it something you love. Why must we always make resolutions that we dread? Instead of (or in addition to) the usual “eat healthier” and “exercise more,” why not add something you are really aching to do but never make time for? Make it a resolution to cut

and arrange more flowers from your garden, read one fun novel each month or throw more parties.

4 Set up mobile reminders. Most web-based calendars, such as Google Calendar, allow you to set up recurring events with email or text reminders, making those trips to the gym a little harder to “forget.” Or, if optimum health is your goal, try My Healthy Habits, a free app for the iPhone.

5 Break it into steps. If your resolution is a large project, like organizing your home from top to bottom, it would be wise to break it down into baby steps. Try mapping out a rough schedule for the year in advance, covering one part of your goal each month—bedrooms in January, living room in February and so on.

6 Create visual reminders. Taping up notes and placing necessary tools where you won't miss them can help, especially when you are first trying to adopt a new habit. For instance, if you want to start a no-shoes policy at home, try keeping a pair of slippers near the door and a bench and boot tray at hand for leaving outdoor shoes behind.

7 Join a group. The social atmosphere and firm time commitment make joining a group a winning strategy for nearly any resolution. Can't find a group that fits your needs? Why not poll your friends and see if anyone is interested in starting one with you? Crafting, interior design, hiking—the sky is the limit.

8 Make it automatic. Technology can be your friend when it comes to remembering daily habits. Trying to slash energy bills this year? Install a thermostat you can control through the gadget itself or via your smart phone. Want to save money for that designer chair you have your eye on? Have cash automatically deposited into an earmarked savings account.

9 Make it pleasant. Working out is more appealing when you can lace up cute new sneakers, and keeping up with the weeding can be helped along with good tools and a yummy smelling bar of gardener's soap for washing up afterward. Go ahead and treat yourself!

10 Garner support from loved ones. Having emotional support from the important people in your life can make or break your resolve. From giving you gentle nudges

and reminders (kids are surprisingly good at this), to celebrating with you when you've reached a goal, sharing your goals with supportive family members and friends can only help. However, don't bother enlisting support from those you know tend to be pessimistic or judgmental—you don't need that negativity.

11 Limit yourself to one goal. Even if you have many goals you would like to tackle this year, if you can narrow it down to only one to focus on first, your chances of success will be much higher. Multitasking is difficult on the best of days, and trying to keep up with too many resolutions is bound to result in a ball dropped somewhere. Instead, choose to focus with laser-like precision on one thing—and be sure to reward yourself amply when you succeed!

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ROASTED BRUSSELS
SPROUTS, CINNAMON
BUTTERNUT SQUASH,
PECANS, & CRANBERRIES

Bursting with flavor (Cinnamon! Maple syrup!), this delicious take on a winter standard is also gluten free, vegetarian, and packed with fiber.

INGREDIENTS:
Roasted Brussels Sprouts:
3 cups Brussels sprouts, ends trimmed, yellow leaves removed
3 tablespoons olive oil
Salt, to taste



Roasted Butternut Squash:
One 1½ -pound butternut squash, peeled, seeded, and cubed into 1-inch cubes (Yields about 4 cups of uncooked cubes)
2 Tablespoons olive oil
3 Tablespoons maple syrup
½ teaspoon ground cinnamon

Other Ingredients:
2 cups pecan halves
1 cup dried cranberries
2-4 Tablespoons maple syrup (optional)

INSTRUCTIONS:
Roasted Brussels Sprouts:
Preheat oven to 400 F. Lightly grease a foil-lined baking sheet with 1 tablespoon of olive oil.

Slice trimmed Brussels sprouts in half. In a medium bowl, combine halved Brussels sprouts, 2 tablespoons of olive oil and salt to taste; toss to combine. Place on foil-lined baking sheet, cut side down, and roast for about 20-25 minutes. During the last 5-10 minutes of roasting, turn them over for even browning. The cut sides should be partially charred but not blackened.

Roasted Butternut Squash:
Preheat oven to 400 F. Lightly grease a foil-lined baking sheet with 1 tablespoon of olive oil.

In a medium bowl, combine cubed butternut squash (peeled and seeded), 1 tablespoon of olive oil, maple syrup, and cinnamon; toss to mix.

Place butternut squash in a single layer on the baking sheet. Bake for 20-25 minutes, turning once half-way through baking, until soft.

Note: You can roast the Brussels sprouts and butternut squash on 2 separate baking sheets at the same time.

Assembly:
In a large bowl, combine roasted Brussels sprouts, roasted butternut squash, pecans, and cranberries. Mix to combine. (OPTIONAL): For more sweetness, add 2 to 4 tablespoons of maple syrup. Do not add all the maple syrup at once; instead, start with 2 tablespoons, then add more as desired. Toss to combine.

Sudoku

Fill in the blank squares so that each row, each column and each 3-by-3 block contain all of the digits 1 thru 9.

	5		7				3	1
8								7
		6	8			9	5	
7			2				1	
				4				
	8				9			5
	9	8			1	4		
2								6
5	4				2		8	

Answers on page 12 (courtesy of KrazyDad.com)

THE FUNNY BONE

All I need to know about life I learned from a snowman:

It's okay if you're a little bottom-heavy.

Hold your ground, even when the heat is on.

Wearing white is always appropriate.

Winter is the best of the four seasons.

It takes a few extra rolls to make a good midsection.

There's nothing better than a foul-weather friend.

The key to life is to be a jolly, happy soul.

We're all made up of mostly water.

You know you've made it when they write a song about you.

Accessorize! Accessorize! Accessorize!

Avoid yellow snow.

Don't get too much sun.

Don't be embarrassed when you can't look down and see your feet.

It's fun to hang out in your front yard.

There's no stopping you once you're on a roll.



Crossword

By Dave Fisher

Answers on page 12

1	2	2	3	4		6	7	8	9		10	11	12	13
14						15					16			
17						18					19			
20					21						22			
				23				24	25					
26	27	28	29			30	31							
32					33						34	35	36	
37					38						39			
40				41					42					
			43					44						
	45	46					47							
48					49	50	51				52	53	54	55
56					57					58				
59					60					61				
62					63					64				

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ACROSS

- Bright thoughts
- Nonclerical
- Agreement
- Type of wheat
- Annul
- Protagonist
- Overact
- Cease
- Angers
- Utterly
- Untruths
- Attempt
- Murmured
- Rouse
- Chews
- Hermit
- Free
- Debatable
- Feelings
- Urgent request
- Streetwalkers
- Startles
- Connections
- No particular person
- Loamy deposit
- Ribonucleic acid
- 36 inches
- Widely circulated
- Arab chieftain
- Modify
- Plaster
- Place
- Winglike
- Follow as a result
- Inside of your hand
- Depend
- Rituals

DOWN

- Notion
- Lacking intellectual acuity
- God of love
- Car
- Ore refinery
- Vigorously passionate
- Kitty (poker)
- False god
- Imitators
- School of thought
- Eagle's nest
- Belief system
- Throw
- A large vase
- A wise bird
- Charity
- It comes from sheep
- Dwarf buffalo
- Tympani
- Thugs
- Gestures of assent
- Not a spoon
- Hodgepodge
- Observed
- Leisure
- Haberdashery
- “___ the season to be jolly”
- Australian food fish
- Autonomic nervous system
- Female demon
- Bay window
- Attempt again
- Cry of pain
- Doing nothing
- Found on rotary phones
- Hindu princess
- At one time (archaic)
- Chills and fever
- DDDD

Improve Your Life
with Books in 2016!

It's that time of year when people make resolutions, set goals, and start the new year with a fresh perspective. Whether your goals focus on organization, your home, or your self, here are some books to inspire you!

The Life-Changing Magic of Tidying Up: the Japanese Art of Decluttering and Organizing by Marie Kondo—This little book has spent many months on the *New York Times Bestseller List*. Clear out your stuff and change your life!

How To Wake Up: A Buddhist-Inspired Guide to Navigating Joy and Sorrow by Toni Bernhard—Applies the tenets of Buddhism to everyday life in order to be more peaceful, deal with challenges, and have more joy in your life.

Time Management from the Inside Out: The Foolproof System for Taking Control of Your Schedule—and Your Life by Julie Morgenstern—Covers organization, clutter, setting goals, and more. I liked it so much after reading a library copy that I bought my own, now filled with dog-eared pages!

Better Than Before: What I Learned About Making and Breaking Habits—to Sleep More, Quit Sugar, Procrastinate Less, and Generally Build a Happier Life by Gretchen Rubin—The renowned author of *The Happiness Project* is back with a book about habits: how we make the good ones and break the bad ones.

If the Oceans Were Ink: An Unlikely Friendship and a Journey to the Heart of the Quran by Carla Power—To understand real Muslims—instead of the terrorists in the news—join Carla on her enlightening journey to learn about the Quran. Timely and perfect for book groups.

Suzan Jackson is a freelance writer who lives in Delaware with her husband and two sons. She writes a blog about books, featuring reviews, book news, and more at www.bookby-book.blogspot.com. You can find reviews of most of the books listed here on the blog.

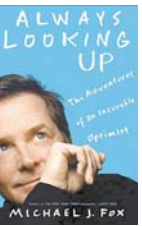
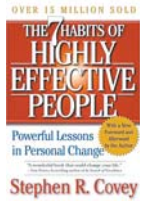
The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People: Powerful Lessons in Personal Change by Stephen Covey—A classic that changed my life—not just about effectiveness but about being a better person, with chapters like *Seek First to Understand, Then to Be Understood* and *Be Kind to Those Not in Your Presence*.

The Anatomy of Hope: How People Prevail in the Face of Illness by Dr. Jerome Groopman—Another book that changed my life, all about what real hope is and its power. Many examples are about cancer patients, but it is equally applicable to any health issues.

The Year of Yes: How To Dance It Out, Stand in the Sun and Be Your Own Person by Shonda Rhimes—The famed creator of TV shows like *Grey's Anatomy* and *Scandal* shares her inspiring year-long journey to come out of her shell and say yes to things that made her uncomfortable.

168 Hours: You Have More Time Than You Think by Laura Vanderkam—We all have plenty of time—we just need to use it wisely. She explains how to analyze your time, set goals, and learn to use your time to meet those goals.

Always Looking Up: The Adventures of an Incurable Optimist by Michael J. Fox—Inspiring and heartwarming—and often hilariously funny, Fox expresses universal truths about family, marriage, being a parent, losing someone, and chronic illness. Especially good on audio, read by the author.



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