



How to Avoid the New Year's Resolution Pitfall

Happy New Year! If you're like me, there are things you are hoping for in 2015 and want to see come to fruition. So how do we translate our hopes into our reality? For many of you, you start by setting a New Year's resolution. Ahhh – the proverbial resolution. I find that people fall into two camps when you bring up the topic of New Year's resolutions. You either embrace them and fling yourself into them wholeheartedly (at least for a few days or weeks) or you say "bah!" to them entirely and figure why bother? They get broken anyway or your situation seems too bleak to consider a future that's different.

I'm here to tell you that no matter what your situation – whether you are dealing with a challenging disease like cancer, coping with a loss, or already flying high on a success, that it's important to have a vision of how you want your year to play out. **The key is how you approach this vast expanse of possibility that is 2015.** Read on to learn how to avoid the resolution pitfall and instead, step into 2015 intentionally and powerfully!

The #1 reason New Year's resolutions fail is that people focus solely on the finite goal and not the feeling or benefit that accomplishing the goal brings them.

This requires a bit more explanation and is best illustrated using an example. To be cliché, I'll pick one of the most common New Year's resolutions - losing weight. Let's say you want to lose 10 pounds. Losing weight is technically just a shift of numbers on the scale. My question to you is "What, in and of itself, will losing 10 pounds do for you?" Will it help you have more energy, be able to do things physically with more ease and less joint pain? Will it help you feel confident and sexy in your body, allow you to get off medication that has nasty side-effects, or be an intervention that can help you heal from a disease or prevent disease from occurring?

If you keep your mind focused on the vision of what you can create (i.e. feelings and benefits) by accomplishing your goal, you're more likely to succeed.

Here's a few more tips to transforming your resolution into something that might actually stick well into the new year.

Shift from making a New Year's resolution to an intention

What's the difference you may ask? Some may say they're the same thing and it's just a matter of semantics. But I would argue that the idea of intention is a bit gentler and kinder yet equally powerful. Setting an intention doesn't mean that you don't set goals and lack drive. It doesn't mean that you allow yourself to stagnate. Setting an intention means that you have a clear picture of what you want to create but aren't as attached to the specific outcome. If I had to come up with a simile (whoa I had to stretch really far back to English class for that term 😊) I would say **resolutions are to black and white as intentions are to shades of gray**. In other words, intentions take you out of an all-or-nothing mode of thinking and into appreciating partial progress and what you're experiencing in the present moment. Whereas resolutions tend to focus on the final outcome, intention helps you focus on the experience of working towards the goal. If you focus on how far you've come, you're much more likely to endure and keep trying.

For instance, using the previous example of losing weight, let's say you've lost 7 of the 10 pounds. If you kept to a resolution mode of thinking you might think you've failed because you only lost 7 and not 10 pounds. That 10 pounds may always seem elusive, so eventually you give up and figure it's not going to happen, thinking "nothing I do makes a difference." But let's say in that 7-pound loss you've realized you cultivated feelings of energy, ease, and confidence in your body. If that is your true intention behind the goal of weight loss, then you succeeded!

Or using another example, consider a cancer patient recovering from surgery who wants to regain strength and mobility. If she set a resolution of going to the gym 3x/week but only got to the gym 1x/week because she was still coping with the side-effects of treatment, then she might feel like she failed. On the flip side, if she focused on the fact that by going to the gym even that one time a week she had been able to accomplish more during the day because she had more energy, and was able to do a task independently that she previously required assistance to complete because she didn't have enough mobility or strength, then she fulfilled her intention.

Find an accountability partner

Human nature such as it is, we're more likely to follow through with an intention if we have to report our progress to someone else.

Clarifying goals

In closing, let me be clear in stating that setting goals is not a bad thing, in fact, it's a necessary part of moving forward towards your vision. Goals drive our actions and help us gauge our progress if they are reasonable, specific, and accompanied by an action plan. However, we never want to lose sight of our intentions that drive the goal.

If you need help seeing your New Year's intentions to fruition, I would love to provide you the accountability, inspiration, and empowerment necessary for that to happen. Contact me now

at shelly@wellfinity.com or 319-330-8382 to schedule your free wellness coaching consultation before all the slots are filled.

Wishing you wellness in 2015!

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Shelly". The signature is written in a dark color, possibly black or dark blue ink, and is centered within a light-colored rectangular area.

Live with Intention, Love Yourself, Create Balance, Fulfill Your Purpose & Thrive!