

New Year, New You

A New Year gives everyone the chance to set new goals for the year ahead. Whether you do New Year's resolutions or not, January is the start of a New Year and may feel like a new beginning. It can be a good time to think about what you would like to achieve in the year ahead and to any changes that you would like to make from the previous year.

Care first produced an article "Reflecting on 2020" which you can find in the previous weekly calendar for Week 40. You may find this article helpful in reflecting on last year, which may then help you to think about goals that you would like to achieve this year. A lot of the goals that we set ourselves for the New Year tend to be around making positive changes to our health and wellbeing.

Here are some tips to keep in mind when setting goals for the New Year:

- **Set realistic goals** – You are much more likely to achieve your goals if they are achievable. When setting goals it is important that they challenge you but that they are also achievable for you. For example you may set yourself the goal to do a 10 mile run by the end of 2021. This may be achievable for you if you spend the year working towards it. However if you set yourself a goal of running 10 miles in the first week this may be unrealistic for you to achieve.
- **Set smaller targets to help you achieve your actual goal** – You may have set your goal for the year but it is likely to take you time and hard work to achieve this goal. Set yourself smaller targets throughout the year which will help you achieve your overall goal. To refer back to the running example; if your goal is to run 10 miles by the end of the year, you may like to set yourself smaller targets in order to achieve this such as; running 1 mile by the end of month one, two miles by the end of month two and so on.
- **Create a list with the "pro's" and "con's" of why you are trying to achieve your goal** – By creating this list it may act as a positive reminder when you are lacking motivation. You can look at the list and see the reasons why you are trying to achieve that particular goal.
- **Track your progress** – It is important to note down your progress so you can see what you have achieved so far. Sometimes it is very easy to feel so far away from your overall goal, especially near the beginning. However by tracking your progress you will be able to see how well you're doing, which may help you to keep motivated.
- **Reward yourself** – Celebrate your success. Plan rewards for yourself when you reach smaller milestones, just be sure that the treats do not contradict your overall goal! If your goal was to eat healthily and you have been sticking to it, treat yourself to some new exercise clothing for example.
- **Try not to do everything at once** – It is challenging enough to change one behaviour such as eating healthier for example. However, if you have lots of goals at the same time such as; eating healthily, doing more exercise, improving hydration, limiting caffeine and alcohol intake and many more, it may be unrealistic to achieve all of these at once - so try not to do too much all at one time.

- **Don't be too hard on yourself** – We all have good days and bad days. Try to use your own resolve to overcome any setbacks to recover and progress towards your overall goal. Use the list you created for your “pro’s” and “con’s” to help you. Do your best and keep trying.
- **Stick at it** – It can take time for your new activity to become part of your normal routine. Give it time and do not expect to be perfect at the start. The more you do it the better you should get and it will become part of your normal routine overtime. So keep at it.
- **Keep trying** – You may run out of steam after a few months of trying. If you do then start over again. Focus day by day and do not think too far ahead.

How can Care first help?

If you feel you may need some emotional or practical support, you can contact Care first on the Freephone number. Care first is a leading provider of confidential, professional counselling, information and advice services. Whilst our BACP accredited Counsellors are available 24/7 to provide support with emotional issues, our expertly trained Information Specialists are available 8am-8pm Monday-Friday to provide advice on any practical issues that may be causing you a stress or worry and help you feel more in control of a situation.

All employees are eligible to use Care first, our services include; telephone counselling, information services and online support. Call Care first on the Freephone number provided by your organisation and you can speak to a professional in confidence.

If you would like to view the Webinar on **‘New Year, New You’** this is being delivered live on **Thursday 31st December at 12pm**, please use the below link to register for this session –

<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/3720878601476173840>

If you are unable to join the webinar live, a recording of the session can be accessed using the same link above after the webinar has taken place.