

## *What About Those New Year Resolutions????*

It's a classic scenario: our New Year's resolutions often fade, and fast.

With a new year comes a "sense of renewal," says psychologist Mariana Strongin, PsyD. That makes us think about what we want to improve or change.

"The New Year serves as a cyclical marker of time during which we reevaluate and take inventory on our lives," says clinical psychologist Sabrina Romanoff, PsyD, clinical psychologist. The drive for making resolutions is motivated by this punctuation in time. This activates hope and expectations for what we want to achieve going forward.

People love to set goals, and setting objectives can lead to meaningful change, whether it's quitting smoking, cutting back on alcohol, or getting fit or more organized. But sticking to goals is often much harder than jotting them down. One study found that about 64% (nearly two-thirds) of people abandon their New Year's resolutions within a month. It's practically part of the tradition.

What will help make this year different? Think About How, Not Just What!! Imagining change can be exciting. But it's going to need some structure to last. "Often people do not map out or think about what it will take to accomplish a goal or make a resolution and instead rely on the excitement of the new year as the thing that will push them to accomplish their goal," says Amanda E. White, clinical therapist.

Then it wears off. Or perhaps your goals were too rigid, or you didn't allow enough time to reach it. "Make sure that your goals have a synergistic effect so that working on one does not lead to the detriment of another." (Sabrina Romanoff) For instance, if you set a goal to save money and another to travel more, those goals could collide.

SMART is an acronym that you can use to guide your goal setting. To make sure your goals are clear and reachable, each one should be:

*Specific* (simple, sensible, significant).

*Measurable* (meaningful, motivating).

*Achievable* (agreed, attainable).

*Relevant* (reasonable, realistic, and resourced, results-based).

*Time bound* (time-based, time limited, time/cost limited, timely, time-sensitive).

**All the Best for 2024**

<https://www.webmd.com/balance/features/psychology-of-new-year-resolutions>

<https://www.webmd.com/balance/features/psychology-of-new-year-resolutions>

<https://www.mindtools.com/a4wo118/smart-goals>