
OLDER AND WISER: Simple resolutions key to completing new year's goals

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JANUARY 3, 2018 08:35 AM



file photo Cindy Goodman, North Shore News

It's the time of year for renewal, making resolutions for the new year and for some, changing their lives.

But all the advice out there suggests that the resolutions we make for the new year should be achievable if we want to be successful. Instead of taking on too much, taking small steps for success means that we will have a better chance to meet our goals.

Maybe instead of resolving to run a marathon this year, perhaps we should just get off the couch and move more. A 10-minute walk around the block, at the local mall or even around your home gets you moving. As Health Canada says, physical activity is positively linked with physical and mental health, disease prevention and

management, emotional and social well-being, and autonomy and independence. Physical activity is also linked with maintaining or losing weight, enhancing mobility, flexibility and balance, improving sleep and boosting mood and self-confidence. Exercise programs have been found to reduce the risk of falls, the number one cause of injury for seniors.

Perhaps resolve to get to Keep Well exercise classes which are held across the North Shore. They are a fun way to get your body limber and strong. For a list of classes phone North Shore Keep Well at 604-988-7115.

Resolving to eat well this year is at the top of my list of resolutions. Not changing our diets drastically but making a few changes will be good for our overall health and well-being. Never mind trying the super foods that trendy advocates prescribe, just add a few more vegetables and fruits to your diet and perhaps eat less fat and calories. Instead of eating the admittedly yummy piece of chocolate cake, try a fruit salad once in a while. Good nutrition, no matter what age you are, is essential for good health and good health is linked to aging well.

If you have trouble getting your nutritional needs met try visiting the HealthLinkBC website (healthlinkbc.ca/dietitian-services) or call HealthLink BC at 8-1-1 to speak to a registered dietitian free of charge from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday to Friday.

Cooking for just one is sometimes difficult. Getting out to a seniors centre that serves meals is a good option. Silver Harbour and West Vancouver Seniors Activity Centres each have lunch services five days a week. But if you aren't that interested in eating out, or you are not that mobile, having a delivery service bring you a meal is good as well. On the North Shore you can try Meals on Wheels by calling them at 604-922-3414. For other food service choices check out the 2017 Seniors Directory put together by the North Shore Community Resources Society and published by the North Shore News.

Exercising our brain and staying connected to the community is also a key to good health for seniors. Many programs exist across the North Shore that can be good for our brains and increase our socialization. Resolve to try playing bridge at Parkgate or North Shore Neighbourhood House or try a language class at Silver Harbour. If you want a fun way to socialize and do something different try a day trip on a bus run by Mollie Nye House.

Sometimes resolutions can be about others. Maybe resolve to volunteer this year. It is a good way to get connected to the community and do something for someone else. Most organizations are always looking for people to assist with their programs. You could volunteer to drive people to the cancer clinic, work on a board or committee, sit on a Seniors Action Table (call Lionsview to check a SAT out), help with the Seniors Hub program at Capilano Services Society, give information and advice to a senior at Senior's One Stop or assist seniors through the Better at Homes program. Volunteering reduces isolation and depression and gives many of us something to do when we retire from a busy work life.

There are many other resolutions we could make: drinking less alcohol, quitting smoking, losing weight, putting our end of life affairs in order, having more fun, and so on. But as advisers suggest: pick one or two resolutions and take small steps to get to your goals.

Happy new year everyone!

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