

How to Set New Year's Resolutions That Stick – Part I of III

By Amy Scott Grant

If you're like approximately 90% of the American population, you firmly resolve to accomplish this or that every January, yet your interest wanes within about 3-8 weeks. Perhaps you are so saddened by past results that you lack the will to even set New Year's Resolutions at all. Well, don't despair. I've whipped up some practical hints to help you maintain your resolve all year long and finally accomplish what you've wanted to achieve for so long.

The most common New Year's Resolutions include fitness goals and smoking cessation. Many people also vow to "get organized" once and for all, as if it were a one-time event! If "getting organized" were a one-time activity, a lot more people would achieve that goal. Unfortunately, it requires a constant choice to "get" and "remain" organized. We humans are creatures of habit, and even weeks of progress can be set back by a few poor choices. That's why they call them "resolutions" -- because the "resolve" is such a key factor!

Step one in your nuts-and-bolts guide to "setting goals that stick" is to figure out exactly what you want. This may seem like an obvious step, but you'd be amazed at how many people attempt to set goals without any idea what they really want. Here's a hint: you don't want to lose weight, get out of debt or get organized. Perhaps what you really want is to look sexy, feel healthy, be in control of your finances and live life without stress. You'll get far better results when you focus on what you do want instead of what you don't want.

Figure out exactly what you want to be, do or have, and get specific about it. Do some research if you have to. If you want to win the lottery so that you can take that luxurious vacation you've always dreamed about, stop dreaming and start taking action that will get you there. Start by doing some research on the internet, at your local bookstore or library and by talking to people who've been there. For example, which countries do you want to visit? Which cities in each country? What national or historical landmarks do you have a burning desire to experience? What time of year is best for the geographic area? What documents or immunizations will you need? What languages are spoken and do you need to learn these or can you get by in English? Start getting really clear on what you want to get out of this once-in-a-lifetime vacation you've been wanting.

In Part II, we'll cover the main reason that most people don't achieve their goals. Until then, start thinking about exactly what you want to accomplish this year. Right now, you have unlimited potential and a clean slate for the year. Whether your New Year's resolutions involve weight loss, Miss America or American Idol, the next two installments will put you on track to make 2006 the best year of your life so far.

Amy Scott Grant is a writer, coach and public speaker who has assisted hundreds of people in realizing their dreams by setting powerful, meaningful goals. She has recently released The Success Method <http://TheSuccessMethod.com> and is the creator of <http://NewSuccess.org>