



News Column for Week of January 7, 2019

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#### A “Resolutions” Update

It’s that time of year when we’ve made ‘resolutions’. Most often those resolutions are individual habits we’d like to change. Eating more healthfully, stepping up the physical activity pace, and curbing our spending habits might be examples of such habits we may try to address with resolutions.

New Year resolutions are often made and then fall by the wayside fairly quickly, due to our busy lifestyles getting in the way. It just gets hard to meet our ideals versus what is realistic, and we would rather not deal with some of the stresses involved in the follow through. We begin to put off.

While resolutions are a result of self-evaluation, I’d like to propose a different approach to setting resolutions. It has to do with living life richer – a more holistic look at life --which calls for some assessment of our day-to-day activities.

How are you doing on the ‘happiness’ scale of life? While thinking about your level of happiness, consider these four factors that give life meaning and satisfaction: 1) A strong, trusting relationship with one or more people; 2) A healthy mind and body; 3) Enough money to live without financial concerns; and 4) Knowing oneself and how to nurture and care for oneself.

Basically, we need to ask ourselves, are our current habits likely to contribute to a long, healthy life? A lifestyle of constant busyness can foster irritability, poor decision-making, negative health consequences, and weakened relationships. Sound familiar? Before a life event or a crisis occurs, some adjustments or “resolutions” if you may, could be called for.

Following are some thoughts for reflection:

Learn to Say No – What current activities could you reduce to lighten your load? Which of those activities are satisfying and which are not?

Stop Making Excuses – What excuses do you use that get in the way of accomplishing your “wants”?

Develop Supportive Relationships – Are you encouraged by those around you to be your best self? Are you the kind of friend you want to have? Humans have an innate need to connect with others. The quality of those connections ranks first in the rating scales on happiness.

Set Goals – Write down at least three to five lifetime goals – kind of a “bucket list.” Written goals are more likely achieved. What could you do now to achieve the items on your list?

Find Work Satisfaction – Does what you are currently doing match what you want to do? What could you do to acquire or create a more desirable job?

Clarify Your Values -- Do you have values that conflict? Could you alter your expectations? Our values guide our actions. Clarifying values is key to making meaningful change.

It's never too late to make 'resolutions' when it comes to creating lifestyle changes. The changing of calendars gives us opportunity to reflect and possibly start the new year with a different outlook. Our reflections may even take us on a different course. Wherever it takes us, we need to remind ourselves there is a process in working toward goals. It most likely won't happen overnight.

More information on living a balanced lifestyle is available through K-State Research and Extension Southwind offices, and by contacting Barbara at 620-625-8620 or by email to [bstockeb@ksu.edu](mailto:bstockeb@ksu.edu).