

NEW YEAR RESOLUTION DIET - FAIL???

MAYBE YOU ARE ON THE WRONG DIET!

You thought you should go on a diet for the New Year. Why not! After all you have done so for the past ten years. It is a tradition. You believe it is good to start the year with something to work on. Isn't it? With great intentions you researched a new diet plan and went to the grocery store to stock up on all the ingredients to prepare the healthiest food you have ever eaten. It began well on January 1st but by the middle of the month it had all gone awry and you are back to the same old, same old. Dang! What happened?

Have you ever wondered if you might be on the wrong diet? No, I do not mean the low fat diet or the high fat diet. Nor am I referring to counting calories or embarking on detoxifying fasts. I am talking about something entirely different. **YOUR DIET IS NOT ONLY WHAT YOU EAT. IT IS WHAT YOU WATCH, WHAT YOU LISTEN TO, WHAT YOU READ, WHO YOU ASSOCIATE WITH, HOW YOU SPEND YOUR TIME, AND SO MANY MORE THINGS.**

When any of those elements have a strong negative impact upon your life it can affect how you achieve your goals and what you accomplish. It may mean you depend upon food as a coping device to deal with those other areas. Taking that comfort away in the form of a diet will only create more stress, which will inevitably lead to an even stronger drive to do what helps you cope. Over eating food may offer you temporary comfort but will not enable you to lose weight. Finally,

stress eating will not change the destructive impact of those negatives in your life.

Rather than starting the year with a resolution to diet, consider becoming aware of the things you put into your body emotionally, spiritually, as well as physically. Of course, awareness is NOT bliss and it is only part of a change strategy. However, if you give the following framework a try you might find there are some patterns, behaviors, people and situations in your life you can alter to help you feel happier with yourself.

Try to break the year into smaller segments and concentrate on accomplishing a step in each segment. For example, spend time for the first six weeks of the year and begin a self-assessment, sometimes called a wellness inventory.

1. Examine your physical self-care: How you live and move. Look at how you eat and exercise and think about how close you are to your desired way of relating to your body. Also, scan your physical space - your home, your work place and how you feel in it. Is it a mess, dirty or sparse and cold? Face how you feel when you are in it and how you spend your time there.

2. Next, concentrate on your emotional self-care: How you love and are loved in return. Look at your closest relationships: your partner, your family and friends. Do you and those you love nourish and inspire each other? Or, are you drained and find yourself

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feeling sad, angry, or considering negative behaviors to cope?

3. Third, look at your psychological health. Take time for personal reflection. Are you moving in a positive direction in your life? Pay attention to your inner thoughts, feelings and experiences. Do you know what is meaningful in your life or are you existing rather than living?

By beginning your year with this exercise, you may discover there are parts of your life you are pleased with and some that make you feel uncomfortable. Diets often fail because we take away comforting ingredients from our life when we already feel deprived or empty. Consider changing the physical, emotional and psychological patterns in your life in ways that help you feel nourished and fulfilled. That is a "diet" guaranteed to work. Continue to break the year into several week segments and concentrate on a small change during each period.

If you find this exploration difficult or overwhelming, the therapists at Affiliated Clinical Services, Inc. have training and experience to help you successfully begin this life-enriching transition. They have recipes to help you find a diet that works for you.