

Creating Your Best Year Yet

2023 has dawned and with it the potential for an exciting and prosperous year ahead. How will you make 2023 your best year yet? Set new resolutions? Change your habits? Make goals? Maybe.

Data suggests that most new year's resolutions fall by the wayside by mid-February.

Researchers at MIT found that neurons fire at the start and end of a specific behavior, which leads to the formation of a habit. Over time these habits form patterns in behavior and because habits become hardwired in our brain it is extremely difficult to break these behaviors.

Goals can give you focus but without a plan to achieve your goal is just a wish. After all most don't plan to fail; they simply fail to plan.

To make this new year your best year yet, start by creating systems to ensure success. In his book, [Atomic Habits](#), James Clear states: "Goals are about the results you want to achieve. Systems are about the processes that lead to those results. Goals are good for setting a direction, but systems are best for making progress." A system is a set of procedures to ensure a result. You already have systems in place, often referred to as routines. You have a routine for getting ready for work each day, doing the laundry, mowing the grass, and paying your bills. Most of the actions we take are based on the routines we follow. Your current life is a result of the routines you've followed day in and day out over the previous years.



Here are a few ideas to go about setting up new processes to create your best year yet in 2023

First, schedule some time to think about and write down the answers to the following question: Imagine it is December 31st, 2023. What is the one thing, now that it is accomplished, you are most proud of achieving? With that in mind, create a system (routine) that supports you in your quest for change.

Research points out that people who make a specific plan for when and where they will perform a new routine are more likely to follow through. On a clean sheet of paper write out your achievement. Under that, describe your routine.

Next, create your tracking method. Your paper might look something like this:

By December 31st, 2023, I will

Exercise for 30 minutes a day, at least 5 days a week

To achieve this, I will

Go for an outdoor walk, weather permitting, or complete an indoor walking routine found on YouTube.

Tracking (maybe use a simple calendar and cross off or check mark the days you complete your routine).

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Jan 1	Jan 2	Jan 3	Jan 4	Jan 5	Jan 6	Jan 7
Jan 8	Jan 9	Jan 10	Jan 11	Jan 12	Jan 13	Jan 14
Jan 15	Jan 16	Jan 20	Jan 21	Jan 23	Jan 24	Jan 25
Jan 26	Jan 27	Jan 28	Jan 29	Jan 30	Jan 31	Feb 1
Feb 2	Feb 3	Feb 4	Feb 5	Feb 6	Feb 7	Feb 8

Post your tracking tool in a place where you can see it first thing each day.

Enlist another person to keep you accountable. In terms of exercise, someone to walk with or work out with can be motivating. We are more likely to follow through when we have an agreement to meet the other person at an agreed upon time and place. Or you could automate the process. Consider what an entrepreneur in Boulder, Co. did to create a habit of rising early. At 5:55 a.m. each morning his alarm rings. If he is not out of bed within 15 minutes, he has a tweet automatically scheduled that says, "it's 6:10 and I'm not up because I'm lazy! Reply to this for \$5 via Pay Pal (limit 5), assuming my alarm didn't malfunction."

As you go through your year, make sure you are also celebrating your success along the way with healthy actions to reinforce your new habits.

For more information, tools, resources, or app information, call your Life Advisor Employee Assistance Program!



Ulliance provides no cost, confidential, short-term counseling for you & your family.

Call us- we're here to help **800.448.8326**