

Wellness Wednesday



January 25, 2023

LifeAdvisor.com

Ulliance
Enhancing People. Improving Business.



Find your path to total well-being!

Forget New Year's Resolutions. Try This Goal-Setting Method Instead.

Monthly themes are less stressful, more adaptable and probably even easier to reach. Here's how to do it.

The mantra “new year, new me” is long gone thanks to the realization that it puts a huge amount of pressure on individuals, and it also insinuates that you need to be “new” (for the record, you don’t). But New Year’s resolutions still exist for many — whether you’re hoping to eat healthier or get a hold of your finances.

Unfortunately, far-reaching goals can be unattainable and can make people feel bad about themselves if and when they fail — and more than half of these yearlong resolutions will fail, according to Emma Mahony, a therapist at Better Life Therapy in Philadelphia and a mental health content creator on TikTok.

“People end up failing because [of] the intense, concrete, absolute goals that are so far off from where we are now,” Mahony said.

Bottom line: It’s hard to stick to a strict and lofty goal. Instead, consider a different approach: Tackle smaller, monthly themes instead of one big resolution.

These themes can be part of a larger goal, like improving your mental or physical health, or they can just be self-improvement themes that resonate with you. For example, maybe in January your theme is “cook more at home” rather than a resolution of “lose weight.” If your bigger goal is to improve your mental well-being, you may want spend one month doing a mindfulness exercise every day, Mahony said. The key is to pick something actionable and small rather than stumbling toward a vague ambition.

Setting monthly themes can be exciting and easier than a resolution, all while fueling some positive change in your life. Here’s how and why to set a monthly theme for each month in 2023, plus some more examples to try:

Monthly themes take away some pressure.

According to Tasha Bailey, a psychotherapist in London and a mental health content creator on Instagram, having monthly goals instead of a yearlong resolution helps ease the pressure that can come with a big New Year’s Day resolution. “Having to sit down and decide ‘what do I want for this whole year’ can feel like a really big task,” Bailey said.

Your life could look really different in just a few months, which could make goals established for the entire year unattainable. Instead, take the pressure off. Since monthly themes are a shorter ask, they can feel less scary.

They allow for flexibility.

“Change is one of the only things we are promised in life,” Mahony said. Therefore, making themes for your months instead of a large 2023 resolution allows you more of a flexible framework to work within those life changes.

So, if you find that a month’s theme didn’t go as planned, you can try it again a few months later. Or, if you don’t know what you want your theme to be six months from now, you can leave it blank and address that month’s theme when the date gets closer.

Mahony said you can add to this flexibility by checking in on your theme once a week to see if you need to make any adjustments. For example, if your theme is dating more and you find that the number of dates you’re going on is exhausting, you can alter your actions to give yourself a break — like texting with someone you’re interested in instead of going out for dinner. This theme is still more actionable than “get into a relationship” or “find love,” which might be what a lofty resolution would sound like instead.



They keep your goals exciting.

Rather than churning on the same resolution all year, you’re keeping your goals fresh by adjusting them monthly, Bailey said. You’ll be less likely to get bored with a resolution if it changes 12 times in the year.

What’s more, you’re able to stay more innovative, Bailey added. Shorter-term goals allow you to feel more accomplished and help you move on to other pursuits, allowing you to search your brain for new goals you may have never otherwise tried.

So, how do you set your monthly themes? Here’s some expert advice.

Bailey suggested that you look at your calendar for the new year and write in certain challenges that you expect will come up, such as big life events or struggles that affect you annually (like seasonal depression).

“From there, [plan] a word, theme or something that you need during that month to get you through or help you with those moments,” Bailey said. So, if April is your busiest time at work, you may want to prioritize “rest” as your month’s theme.

Bailey also added that you should think about what you want to do more or less of in the new year and use these ideas to plan out your monthly themes effectively. An example could be that if you want to spend more time with loved ones, you can establish monthly themes around community, family and friendship. For example, January’s theme might be reconnection, where you try to get in touch with long-distance friends more regularly. In February, your goal might be intimacy, where you focus more on spicing things up with your partner through spontaneous dates or such.

Mahony said you can also think about what went well (or not so well) for you last year and use those things as a jumping-off point for your monthly themes. If you struggled with anxiety last year, you can establish some themes that can address this — whether that’s starting therapy or listening to a podcast by someone certified in mental health.

Take stock of how your monthly themes are going.

“Make a calendar reminder every two weeks [and] check in with yourself for five minutes,” Mahony said. Ask yourself how your monthly theme is going and determine how you can contribute to the theme through activities or practices that week, she said.

You could even use a friend, family member or therapist as an accountability partner, Mahony added.

And use other tools to hold yourself accountable, too.

Bailey recommended that you read books or listen to podcasts that relate to your monthly theme, which can help you work toward your theme or learn more about the subject.

This could mean reading a book on rest if that’s your monthly theme or listening to a podcast about anti-productivity. You’ll be less likely to lose sight of your theme if you curate the material you’re taking in to go along with the topic, too.

And, no, you don’t have to plan your monthly themes all at once.

“It’s such a unique thing [and] it’s such a personal thing — there’s no wrong or right way” to set monthly themes, Bailey said.

She added that if you don’t feel like setting your themes for the upcoming months at the start of the year, that’s OK. You can create your themes on whatever day feels right for you, whether that is an upcoming birthday or a random day in March.

Also, Bailey said, if yearly resolutions work for you instead, there is nothing wrong with that. “Try to let go of the pressure to follow what everybody else is doing, and do what feels right for you,” Bailey added.

Mahony noted that your goals don’t have to be a huge shift in your life. She said you should commit to something that feels sustainable, something you want to cultivate and something that is important to you. You’ll be more likely to stick to your monthly themes if you actually enjoy what you’re working toward.



CHICKEN STUFFED PEPPERS WITH WHITE BEANS



304 Calories | PREP TIME: 5 mins | COOK TIME: 40 mins | TOTAL TIME: 45 mins
YIELD: 5 | COURSE: Dinner | CUISINE: American

INGREDIENTS

- 2 tsp olive oil
- 1 onion, chopped
- 4 cloves garlic, chopped
- 1/2 red bell pepper, minced
- 1/4 cup cilantro, or parsley
- 5 bell peppers, red, orange, yellow or green
- 14 oz shredded cooked chicken breast*, from rotisserie chicken or leftovers
- 3/4 teaspoon cumin
- 1/2 teaspoon adobo seasoning salt, or salt to taste
- 15.5 oz can white beans, not drained
- 1/2 cup reduced fat shredded cheddar

HOW TO MAKE SLOW COOKER CHICKEN BREASTS

To make shredded chicken in the slow cooker, take 16 ounces chicken breast and place them in the slow cooker with enough water or chicken broth to cover. Cover and cook low 4 hours, then shred with 2 forks.

CHICKEN STUFFED PEPPERS SIDE DISH IDEAS

Serve this with a big garden salad. Serve them with Latin yellow rice or cilantro lime rice. For a veggie side this Mexican Cauliflower Rice would be tasty.

Nutrition Information

Serving: 2 halves, Calories: 304 kcal, Carbohydrates: 35 g, Protein: 30 g, Fat: 6 g, Saturated Fat: 2 g, Fiber: 6.5 g
Source: Skinnytaste.com



INSTRUCTIONS

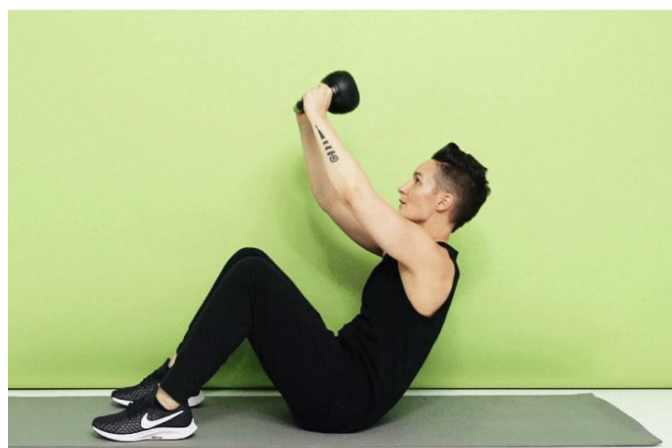


- Preheat oven to 350F.
- In a medium skillet, heat oil on medium heat. Add the chopped onions, garlic, cilantro or parsley and red pepper, saute until soft, about a minute.
- Add the chicken and season with cumin and adobo. Add beans and 1 to 1-1/2 cups of water and simmer for about 5-10 minutes, until it thickens and the liquid reduces.
- Cut the peppers in half removing seeds and stem.
- Place peppers in an oven-proof dish. Fill each pepper with 1/3 cup of chicken and bean mixture.
- Pour about 1/3 cup water or chicken broth in the bottom of the baking dish. (This helps them steam and soften.)
- Cover tight with foil. Bake 30 minutes, until the peppers are soft.
- Remove foil, top with cheese and bake uncovered another 5 minutes, until the cheese melts.

FEATURED EXERCISE

https://www.self.com/gallery/kettlebell-exercises-that-strengthen-stabilize-core?intcid=inline_ampFeatured Exercise ► **Sit-up to Press-up** ✓» **Do it:**

- Lie faceup with your knees bent and feet flat, holding a kettlebell with both hands at your chest. This is the starting position.
- Using your abs, lift your body up until you are sitting upright, back straight. At the same time, press the weight overhead, extending both arms until your elbows are straight.
- Slowly lower back to the starting position. This is 1 rep.
- Targets the core, pecs, deltoids, biceps, and triceps.

[Click here to view online!](#)

Regular exercise can help you control your weight, reduce your risk of heart disease, and strengthen your bones and muscles. But if it's been awhile since you've exercised and you have health issues or concerns, it's a good idea to talk to your doctor before starting a new exercise routine.



Meet Ulliance Senior
Wellness Account Manager

