



Healthy food

How to find New Year's resolve

Losing weight is one of the most common New Year's resolutions. One of the reasons is because people often fail so miserably at it that they need to keep repeating the process year after year. **Sally Symonds**, weight loss coach, author, motivational speaker and author of *50 Ways To Weight Loss That Actually Work*, shares her insights

THIS year, instead of a New Year's resolution, why not have a New Year's revolution? According to the

Australian Dieticians Association, 96 per cent of people who lose weight put it all back on again – and more – within two years.

Think about what you've done to try to lose weight previously, recognise that those methods didn't work, and vow to completely overhaul your weight loss approach . . . and your level of weight loss success.

One of the most common mistakes people make when trying to lose weight is not thinking long term.

Quick-fix/lose-fat-fast schemes aren't just bad for your wallet – they can also cause long-term damage to your metabolism, making it

more and more difficult for you to lose weight in the future.

A very low calorie/detox diet, for example, is the equivalent to your body as a hit of heroin is to your brain

You can only take so much before you start to see major long-term damage that can be difficult to rectify.

However even popular weight loss concepts such as 12-week challenges have their downsides.

There's nothing particularly magical about 12 weeks (or eight weeks or six weeks).

Consider how long it took to gain your excess weight – do you really think that 12 weeks is going to be the magic number that makes it all come off?

Successful weight loss is not just about losing fat fast, it's about losing fat forever, and few, if any, of us can maintain the intensity of a 12-week challenge for our

entire lives. Thus most people who do lose weight following these kinds of programs inevitably regain it all again.

Another really common mistake is thinking that weight loss is all about deprivation and discomfort (the old "living on rabbit food" and "feel the burn" mentalities).

The secret to successfully keeping weight off once you've lost it lies in how you lose it in the first place.

If you hate the changes that you have to make in your life when you are losing weight, there's just no way that you will continue to keep those changed habits in your life once you've reached your desired weight.

You've got to love the process, or you won't lose the weight . . . and keep it off.

Successful weight loss is very much about unleashing your inner Goldilocks and making changes that are not

too hard, not too easy, but just right (or comfortably challenging).

North Queenslanders are especially lucky to live in a place where fresh, healthy food abounds.

Fresh seafood (minus the crumbs, batter and buttery sauces) and tropical fruits (minus the cream, ice cream and chocolate topping) are all fantastic choices when it comes to weight loss.

Indeed, they fulfil three of the most important criteria for healthy eating without hefty effort: they are delicious, nutritious and expeditious.

So apart from not falling victim to some of the most common weight loss mistakes, what can you do differently this year to ensure that your weight loss equals revolution rather than (another) resolution?

Further information:
www.sallysymonds.com.au

3 tips to change it up

1. Forget the reward system. The reward is the weight loss. To tell yourself that you need some other kind of reward devalues the weight loss itself.

2. Recognise that willpower is a muscle too. Recent studies reveal that a stepped-up approach to weight loss may be just as effective over the long term as the "all or nothing" approach. Certainly a stepped-up approach is one that's a lot easier psychologically – our willpower is like a muscle than needs to be exercised and strengthened over time. Push your willpower too hard and too fast and you'll soon confront the equivalent of a pulled muscle – one that you won't be able to use until it heals.

3. Realise that the only expert in your life is you! Weight loss theory works . . . in theory. But only you know what is going to work for you in your life on a practical and psychological level, as well as just physical one. Don't try to take control of an area of your life by handing that control over to someone. The weight loss industry is one of the few industries whose success is actually based on failure.