EMAIL 1

Subject: Beware of New Year’s Resolutions

Dear [Name],

Are you one of the millions of people who, every year without fail, make one or more New Year’s resolutions? For many people, they begin thinking about what New Year’s resolutions they’ll make as early as October. They know that when the fall comes, there are many opportunities to overindulge in goodies.

First comes Halloween and all the candy the kids get from trick or treating. Within a month, Thanksgiving rolls around and there are treats galore to overindulge in. Finally, Christmas rolls around. However, you don’t only have to deal with cookies, candies, pies, and cakes on Christmas Day. Chances are you’ve been making these goodies all month long so they’re readily available.

Instead of making New Year resolutions, which you inevitably will break before February 1, why not decide now to do something good for yourself NOW? Make changes in your attitudes concerning food and exercise before you overindulge in the goodies of the holidays.

Think about the things most people make resolutions for – losing weight, quit smoking, exercising more, eating healthier, saving money, not getting angry, and others – these are all things that you can work on all year long, not only at the beginning of the year.

If each year’s goal is important to making life changes, it is important that you resolve to begin making changes to the way you live now, regardless if it’s January or December. Change doesn’t have to begin on the first of the year. It can happen on any given day, week, or month. Don’t allow yourself to put off making changes. Begin making tiny changes now to help you get into a routine and it won’t seem like such a shock to your system.

Make goals to change rather than a resolution that you know you’re not likely to keep. If you make goals – and write them down – you can make them specific, measurable so you’re more likely to reach them.

Begin by making a list of the things you would like to change. Be specific. Instead of saying, “I want to lose 50 pounds” write the following, “I want to lose 10 pounds a month, 2-3 pounds a week, for the next year. I will weigh myself once a week to review my progress. If I have not been successful one week, I will stop eating as many carbohydrates or exercise more.”

Since losing two to three pounds a week is more attainable than losing 50 pounds, you will be more likely to reduce the amount you eat, the time you spend exercising, or change the foods you eat to reach that goal. Part of the reason why losing small amounts is easier is because you won’t feel like you’re sacrificing so much and that you’ll never be able to eat foods that you like again.

Ask others in your family, or your friends, to help you. Chances are there are people you know who would also like to lose weight or become more active. Enlist their help. Exercise together. Cheer each other on. When you have friends and family that come along side you to help you succeed, your chances of success will sky rocket.

Are you considering a gym membership to help you reach your goals? Before you buy one, there are some things to consider. Read our next email which explains what these things are.

EMAIL 2

Subject: Things to Consider Before Buying a Gym Membership

Dear [Name],

You’re serious about getting into better shape. You’ve cut back on carbohydrates. You’re eating more fresh fruits and vegetables. You’re drinking more water. You have lost some weight and are making progress, but there’s still plenty more to go. So, you’re considering buying a gym membership to help shed the remaining weight. There are many things to consider before buying a gym membership. Read through the information below before you decide.

1. If there are two or more gyms in your area, take time to learn about each one so you’re able to make an educated decision. You may want to visit each one. Talk to people who have a membership at each gym. Are there any issues you should be aware of? Who do you speak to if you have questions or concerns?
2. Make sure you know what the costs are. You also want to find out if you can get a refund on any unused portions of your membership if you change your mind. Ask for a copy of their contract and read it thoroughly. Some gyms may have hidden fees or require a long-term membership. You want to avoid these, if it’s at all possible, and reading is the only way you find out.
3. Learn about the trainers at each gym in your area. Most gyms have ‘in-house’ trainers available to help their members out. However, not all trainers are the same. Some are available for one-on-one paid training only. Some are highly trained, and some are not. You want to find out about their certifications because using a non-certified trainer could be hazardous to your safety.
4. Is the staff trained in first aid and CPR? What are their policies if there is an injury at the gym? How close are they to medical facilities? If you’re going to place your health in their hands, it’s important to ask for proof that they are trained, and their training is up-to-date.
5. How clean is the gym? Does the carpet look worn and ragged? Are the locker rooms clean? Are wipes or sprays available at the machines so users can wipe the handles after use? See if the gym has a guest pass, which will allow you to check out the equipment. Expect the equipment to be cleaned. Note when this occurs and whether it’s done by gym members or staff. Ask a staff member what the protocol and procedure for this is.
6. Be prepared for members who are very active to give unasked for advice. If someone isn’t a professional trainer, you don’t have to take their advice. Be patient and listen to what they have to offer, but don’t feel obligated to do as they suggest.
7. Is the gym open at times to fit your schedule? If the gym is only open from 8 AM to 5 PM and you work those hours, it doesn’t make sense to buy a membership there. Many gyms are now open 24 hours a day. Find out the gym’s hours so you know you’ll be able to get in when you want.
8. Should you get a membership at a local gym or at a chain gym? If you don’t travel very often, a local gym may be the best choice. However, if you do travel quite often, you may be able to get a nationwide membership which will allow you to work out wherever you may be.

As you can see, there is much to consider before purchasing a gym membership.

In the next email, learn about 5 team sports that will encourage you to exercise.

EMAIL 3

Subject: Reasons to Use Team Sports to Motivate You to Exercise

Dear [Name],

Team sports can be a great activity to keep you active. Not only do you have teammates to play the sport with, you also have them to encourage you if you feel like quitting. But what team sports can help motivate you to exercise? Keep reading to learn more.

Why should you participate in a team sport rather than a solo sport when you’re lacking motivation to exercise? The following are some of the many reasons why team sports are better than ones you can do on your own.

1. They encourage cooperation and teamwork among the teammates.
2. Team members can encourage each other to keep going when they get tired, to stay active, and to do better.
3. They help the team members learn about and appreciate each player’s abilities.
4. Team sports build up the self-esteem of the athletes.
5. They help teammates develop common goals and meet them.
6. Team sports teach self-discipline, persistence, and patience.
7. They help teammates share both positive and negative experiences.

With all of these benefits one experiences when participating in team sports, you may have decided to join a team. You may wonder which team sports are right for you and how do you get involved?

The best way to start playing a team sport is by finding someone to connect you with their sports team. They can explain when they practice, when they play other teams, any rules that you would be expected to follow, and so much more. Being a part of team means you’re no longer alone, but part of a group of people who enjoy the same sport and can share all of the experiences of team sports.

Do you enjoy running but dislike being on your own? Perhaps you could try soccer or flag football. As an adult, you don’t have to worry if you’re not the fastest runner. However, being faster can be a large advantage for a team playing against another. Be sure you join in as much as your schedule allows. Your team members are depending on your participation.

If you enjoy the beach, and live nearby one, you may want to give beach volleyball a try. Chances are you can find a group of people playing a game of volleyball at most beaches during the warmer months. If they don’t have specific teams, why not ask if you can join in the game. You may enjoy the game and find that you are invited to the next one.

Ice hockey isn’t a sport for everyone, but if you have ice skates, enjoy skating, and are competitive, it may be a good choice. You may be able to find out about adult hockey teams at your local ice skating rink.

There may be additional team sports you may want to try. Do some research about this. Find the ones that are right for you.

Our next email will be about fun activities that can motivate you to exercise.

EMAIL 4

Subject: 4 Fun Activities to Motivate You to Exercise

Dear [Name],

Do you feel frustrated because you’re not motivated to exercise? It’s an all too common feeling. If you’re busy, have a family to feed, and a house to clean, you simply feel you don’t have time to devote to exercising. Many fun activities motivate you to exercise because they don’t FEEL like you’re exercising. We’ll list four of them below.

1. Dancing – If you’ve ever been to a club and danced the night away, you know your heart rate increases, your muscles begin to feel sore, you may be out of breath, and you may perspire. All of these are commonly associated with exercising. Thankfully, dancing doesn’t feel like exercising, it just feels like fun. What is your favorite dance style – hip hop, jazz, salsa, samba, or waltz? If you don’t feel like leaving the house, it’s okay. You can put on your favorite songs to dance to and have a dance party with your partner and kids.
2. Play with the kiddos – Children are so active . . . and they have so much fun while they’re doing it. Instead of sending your child outside to burn off some of their energy, put on your coat and shoes and go with them. A snowball fight can be a great break to your day and help you get active. Remember, you have to bend to pick up snow. Then, you use your arms and hands to pack it into a ball, and finally tossing it with all your might. If a snowball fight isn’t something that interests you, build a snowman with the kids. Not only will they enjoy having you help them, you’ll have wonderful decorations for your yard, too.
3. Take the dog for an extended walk. – If you have a puppy or dog, you know they need exercise and to use the restroom outdoors. Take your pooch on a walk that is longer than the time it takes them to do their business. Hook the pooch up on their leash, pull on your coat and gloves, and walk around the block a time or two more than usual. Not only will this help your dog stay active and healthy, it will help with your weight loss and health goals, as well.
4. Get physical with your partner – Sex can be a wonderful ‘exercise’ that you can enjoy and don’t feel like you’re exercising. Women, according to recent studies, generally burn around 70 calories during love-making. Men will burn around 100 calories. And, as an added benefit, it will help you and your partner remain close. If you have kids in the house, however, you may want to make sure you lock your bedroom door, so you don’t have any interruptions.

These are just a few of the activities that can get your body moving, pump up the heart rate, and make you sweat. If these don’t appeal to you, perhaps you could volunteer to work in a local garden, go horseback riding, take up swimming, or learn to rock climb. The choice is yours.

Keep an eye out for our next email about exercises that are effective but don’t take much time.

EMAIL 5

Subject: Exercises That Are Effective but Don't Take Much Time

Dear [Name],

Chances are you live a busy life – family, work, community involvement, kids’ school, and more. You feel you don’t have the time to exercise. There are many effective exercises you can do but won’t take hours to see or feel some results. We’ll go into them here.

* Walking – What is something you do every day? Walk. You put two feet on the ground when you get out of bed, take a few steps to the bathroom or kitchen, and you’re exercising. What can you do without special equipment? Walk – all you need is a pair of shoes and a place to do it.

Going on a brisk walk each day can burn up to 500 calories if you walk for an hour. And, since you need to burn 3,500 to lose a pound of weight, you can easily lose a pound a week. You can enjoy walking as one beginning to exercise or if you are very fit. Walking is an activity that provides a good workout.

Be sure to be careful not to do too much too quickly. Start out by walking five to ten minutes and slowly move up to 30 minutes each time you go walking. You will also want to extend how long you walk prior to increasing the incline of your walk or the speed at which you walk.

* Interval training – Use interval training to your cardiovascular exercises. Doing so, can help increase how quickly you lose weight as well as boost your fitness level. While walking, rather than staying at the same pace, you can begin jogging to increase the intensity of your work out. After you have jogged for a minute or two, slow back down to your previous pace. After five to ten minutes, begin jogging again. Continue this switch between walking and jogging during your workout, be sure to end by walking so your body has a chance to cool down.
* Squatting – You may not realize that the more muscle you have, the more calories you may be able to burn. While doing squats, you work a number of muscles groups at once – quadriceps, hamstrings, and glutes. Be sure to use the correct technique or you could injure your knees. The correct form is to try sitting in a chair, but it’s taken away before you touch it. You can put an actual chair there, but barely touch it.
* Lunges – Similar to doing squats, doing lunges works all of the muscle groups below the waist. Doing lunges is similar to walking only that the movements are exaggerated. Along with working out the muscles, you’ll also improve your balance.
* Push-ups – Where lunges and squats work out the lower body, push-ups work out the chest, shoulders, triceps, and trunk muscles at the same time. Of course, if you’ve never done push-ups, you won’t start out on the floor. Instead, begin by pushing off from the kitchen counter, moving to a desk, chair, and the floor with bent knees. Then, and only then, you can do the push-ups on the floor.

Each of these exercises are effective and do not require hours to do.

Watch for the next email about exercises you can do at home.

EMAIL 6

Subject: 10 Great Exercises to Do at Home

Dear [Name],

If bundling up to go to the gym doesn’t appeal to you, but you still want to get in a good workout, you can do your exercises at home. Below are ten exercises that can be done from the comforts of your own home.

1. Squats can be done with or without the use of a couch or chair. Using your hips first, bend from the knee and squat to touch the couch. This can be a good warmup exercise after you’ve become comfortable doing them.
2. Overhead squats are similar to the squats above. However, instead of holding your hands to your sides, you hold a broom or something similar. If you want to increase your benefit, hold onto something relatively heavy over your head as you squat.
3. Side lunges are similar to regular lunges, which provide a great stretch for the groin and the abductors. Rather than stepping forward, step to the side and go down. If you feel pain in the knees, stop. As your muscles get stronger, you should be able to go down into the lunge further. You can also use weights but it’s great without them, as well.
4. Calf raises are great for building up your calf muscles. Stand with your feet shoulder width apart and slowly rise up on your toes. If you find that doing this exercise becomes to easy, raise up on one leg.
5. Pushups are great for building up arm muscles. With your arms slightly shoulder width apart, keep your body straight. Lower your body but don’t go all the way to the floor. There are many alternatives from which to choose – using a wall instead of the floor, inclined, declined, with weights on your back.
6. Lying pullups can also help build your arm muscles. You can do the exercise alone, pulling up on a heavy, stable object like a table. Or, you can enlist the help of a friend or family member.
7. Tricep dips are best done using a chair. With your hands on the front of the chair, and feet in front of the chair. Raise and lower your body. If you would like to progress, do the exercise with your feet up in another chair.
8. Prone holds are done lying face down on the floor with your arms bent. Lift your body off the floor and rest on your elbows and toes. This will work out your core and help if you have back issues.
9. Supermans start out the same way as prone holds but instead of lifting your body off the ground, you lift alternate arms and legs. Switch to the others. If you want to increase the difficulty, lift your body off the ground and then lift the alternate arm and leg as before.
10. Dead bug is one exercise done while on your back. Bend your legs. A great abdominal and core stability workout. Lay on the floor with your arms and legs up as shown in the picture. From here, you need to drop your arm and leg on the same side. Make sure your leg doesn’t touch the floor. Bring them slowly back up and repeat.

If you’d rather get outdoors to exercise, and get some fresh air, follow our steps in the next email to learn to motivate yourself to walk.

EMAIL 7

Subject: How to Motivate Yourself to Keep Walking

Dear [Name],

Even though the weather is colder, you can still get a great workout by walking. It’s the cheapest exercise because you only need a pair of shoes and the great outdoors. But how do you motivate yourself to walk when it’s frigid and you want to stay inside where it’s warm?

Start by thinking about your reasons for wanting to exercise in the first place. Do you want to lose weight? Have you been told you need to make life changes by a doctor? Are you dreading the big wedding in the spring because you look flabby in the dress? Your reason can be one of a million things. When you know WHY you want to exercise and your reason it important enough, you may find that getting up, lacing your shoes, and walking out the door is much easier.

Nearly everyone is guilty of negative self-talk from time to time. Instead of listening to the internal voices saying how you don’t want to go out in the cold or you want to stay in bed, tell yourself something along these lines: You need to exercise because it will make you healthier. You need to exercise so you can fit into your bridesmaid dress. Exercising improves your mental state and you’ll feel better after you’re done.

Write down your plan of when you will walk. If you work outside of the home, you may want to wait until it’s later in the day to walk rather than getting up bright and early. Or perhaps you can walk during your lunch break. Whatever time meets best with your schedule, write it in your calendar just like you would a doctor’s appointment or a child’s band recital. You don’t want to miss them, so you write them down.

Take some inspiration with you in the form of music. You can listen to anything that gets you moving. Maybe some of your favorite worship music will give you the energy you need to keep walking. You may want to have more than one set of music or use the shuffle button on your mp3 player, so the next song is a surprise. This will also help you from becoming bored with your workout music.

If you don’t have time to read, why not take an audio book with you? You can listen to the book you’ve been dying to read and exercise at the same time! You don’t have to turn the pages and you don’t have to worry about paper cuts. However, if your time is limited, you may want to set a timer, so you don’t get engrossed in the book and forget to go to work.

Plan to walk for a minimum of five minutes. If you really don’t feel like continuing after that time is up, it’s okay if you stop. However, in most cases, you’ll most likely keep walking and finish the workout. If you do stop, don’t berate yourself. Walking, or any exercise you do, if you do it for five minutes, that’s five minutes of activity you may not have done otherwise.

Do you have a family member, friend, or neighbor who h wants to get into shape? Ask them to come walking with you. Not only will you have a chance to catch up on what’s going on, you’ll also have a reason to get outside when the weather is cold or snowy.

If these suggestions aren’t enough, look for our next email which discusses items that can help motivate you.

EMAIL 8

Subject: Items That Can Help Motivate You to Exercise

Dear [Name],

You’ve made up your mind. You’re going to get fit. You’re going to exercise a minimum of three days a week. You tell yourself nothing is going to hold you back. And then one day you don’t feel like being active. You simply want to stay inside where it’s warm and read a book. Here are some items that can help motivate you to exercise.

Buy yourself a couple of new workout outfits. Having new clothes to wear can be a great motivation. You want to wear your new clothes. And, while you’re at it, you might as well work out since you’re in them. Go ahead and put them on. You may feel silly taking them off again without working out, so you’ll be one step closer to getting a move on.

Get a nice notebook or journal that you can write down important things each day. Each day, after you’ve exercised, write down how you feel. Generally, what you write will be about how good you feel. If you’re not feeling so motivated one day, read back through what you’ve written. You may decide that you want to get up and exercise after all.

Place post-it notes or motivational sayings around your home. Where would you place them? On the refrigerator door is one place a saying could go. How about on your bathroom mirror? Hang a motivational saying from your rearview mirror or on your dashboard in your vehicle. Put one anywhere you will see it and read it.

Another thing you can hang up is your goals. If you want to lose 15 pounds, hang a list of the things you need to do to reach that goal. If you want to tighten your glutes, add a list of the exercises, with how many you have to do, or how long you need to hold them. Check them off each day you do those exercises.

Find some audio books that you can listen to only when you’re working out. If you’re listening to a book, and you want to know how the story works itself out, you’ll need to exercise the next day, and the next, and the next to find out.

If you enjoy listening to podcasts but don’t have the time, load up some podcasts onto your mp3 player and listen to those as you exercise. Of course, if you generally take notes while you listen, this might be difficult if you’re walking, running, or using exercise equipment.

Keep track of your successes. In the notebook or journal you use to write down how you feel after working out, create a calendar that shows your progress. If you’re trying to lose weight, weigh once a week and write it down. If you’re trying to lose inches, write your measurements down. Seeing your progress can be very motivating.

Finally, if you want to fit into a specific dress for a special date, buy the dress and hang it where you can see it each day. You know you don’t want to waste the money, so you’ll need to exercise to get into it.

Do you have online tools or apps you use to motivate you? If not, read our next email which goes into some of these.

EMAIL 9

Subject: Online Tools and Apps to Help Motivate You to Exercise

Dear [Name],

Many people take their smartphones with them to bed and it’s the last thing they look at before closing their eyes. They’ll pick it up and check the weather or email before getting started on their day. It’s likely they’ll check, throughout the day, to see if they missed anything. Look at these online tools and apps to discover which ones can help motivate you to exercise.

Online tools can be either used on a computer, laptop, tablet, or smartphone. Apps are generally usable only on tablets or smartphones. Depending upon which you have, you should be able to find tools you can use online to motivate you.

The Happiness Project is an online toolkit which will help you verbalize your goals and help you be sure they are specific. Not only will the Happiness Project help you establish your goals, it will also help you document how you feel as you move toward your goal and how you’re doing by tracking your progress. The toolkit can be set to private or public. If you set it to public, you may feel more inspired to keep working out.

SparkPeople is one of the largest online communities for people who are trying to lose weight. It has over 8 million people. Not only are the members working toward their own personal goals, they’re also active in helping encourage others to reach their own goals. The community has videos, articles, and stores of other’s success which will help you keep moving forward and not allow you to make excuses not to exercise or watch what you eat.

There are many other online services or websites which offer membership sites, but these two are ones that so much going for them. Check them out and see if they appeal to you.

If you’re only interested in apps that you can download to your smartphone, there are tons of them out there. Below is a list of some of the better known apps for helping to motivate you.

MyFitnessPal is more than simply a motivator for exercise. It also has a diet tracker and a calorie counter included on the app. Get personalized goals based on the foods you eat and your body type.

Yoga Wake Up is great for people who are interested in doing yoga. The app can be set to your wake up time and encourages you to begin stretching each morning. The app plays soothing audio sequences which lead you into stretching.

Qinetic provides on-demand exercise videos on a variety of different exercise programs. No matter which type of exercise you’re interested in, chances are you’ll find an expert leading you through a workout whenever you want it.

Sworkit is another fitness app that offers you a variety of exercises to choose from. You also set a time for the length of time you have to exercise, as well as video demonstrations for beginners.

Keeping track of your progress is important when exercising or trying to lose weight. Our final email will about ways to record your progress.

EMAIL 10

Subject: 5 Ways to Record Your Progress

Dear [Name],

You’ve set your goals using the S.M.A.R.T acronym. They are specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and time-oriented. How do you know if you’ve reached them? Here are five ways you can record your progress, so you know how you’re doing.

1. When lifting weights at a gym, it’s important to keep track of how much you’re lifting each day as well as how many repetitions you’re doing. If you’re not keeping track in some way, do you know if you’re making progress? Chances are you don’t have a clue. Take a small notebook with you to the gym, write down the date, the equipment you use, what weight you use, and how may reps you do. Over time, you will notice that the weight you’ve been pumping feels light, so you can add a little more. Keeping track of what you’re doing will also let you know if you’re overtraining any of your muscles.
2. If you’re simply trying to drop some excess weight, one of the best ways to track how you’re doing is to write your weight on a calendar each time you weigh. However, since muscle weighs more than fat, you may feel like you’ve slimmed down. In this case, it is also good to take your measurements, so you can see if your muscles are getting bigger.
3. You can find free logs online to help you keep track of just about everything. If you want to increase the water you drink each day, there’s a log for it. If you want to track how many sit ups you do, how many steps you take, how many miles you run, you can probably find a log to download and use from the internet.
4. Your mirror is one tool you can use that can tell you how you’re doing – it doesn’t lie. Take your clothes off and look at yourself in the mirror. If you’re losing weight, you’ll be able to see it. You’ll also be able to notice if your muscles are tighter. Using a mirror will help you see your progress without having to get on a scale.
5. Take pictures of yourself when you begin an exercise routine. Then, as you continue exercising over a period, take photos wearing the same clothes each time. You will be able to see how your clothes fit, whether they are loser or not, and muscle tone.

A good log will have three sections: Training, Diet, and Status.

* The Training section will list all of the exercises you’re doing, how often, how many reps, what body part you’re concentrating on each day, and what weight you’re using if you’re lifting weights. It is also a good idea to write down how you feel before you exercise and then again afterwards.
* The Diet section is where you keep track of what you eat and drink each day. If you’re not eating as many carbs, you’ll want to know how many carbs you’re eating. Track your calories, too. Knowing how much water you drink, as well as how much sodium you’ve eaten, can also be important.
* The Status section can be broken down into weekly sections. Write in your measurements each week. Add your weight. If you’re keeping track of body fat percentage, add that, too. Finally, add in the pictures you took before you began exercising and each one to use as a comparison along the way.

Keeping track of what you’re doing while trying to start an exercise program or lose weight doesn’t have to be difficult. Decide what items you want to track and then create a log to do just that. If you feel like you’re not progressing, you can go back through the log and see the actual progress you’ve made which will encourage you to continue.