

Leyla Weighs In: Start 2024 with a winning mindset

written by Leyla Muedin MS, RD, CDN | January 4, 2024



As humans, when it comes to changing a behavior (such as an attempt at self-improvement or establishing a healthy habit) we often start off all gung ho with an “all or nothing” attitude—especially at the start of a new year.

“This is it! I will achieve ___(fill in desired goal)___ no matter what!”

It’s terrific to have the will and intestinal fortitude to make the changes necessary to meet goals. And it’s a great mental attitude with which to start any self-improvement endeavor.

But we must remember, as with any journey, there can be hiccups and detours, or downright stumbles along the way. We may fall off course for a bit before we find our compass back to “the program.” For every three steps forward, there may be one or two steps back. And although it may not feel like it when we’re taking those backward steps, we’re still making progress.

We should be mindful of any self-inflicted and undue pressure to follow the straight and narrow at all times on our respective programs. We have to discard, “do it perfectly, or don’t do it at all.”

Why? Because it’s not a winning mindset. Indeed, it’s a recipe for resentment and subsequent failure. It feels more like punishment than a potentially exciting path to health and wellness, and I believe that kind of rigidity only increases the reward value of the food/behavior you’re missing. I’ve witnessed this far too many times in my practice.

In life, we don’t live in extremes—it’s not all black or white. There’s a huge grey area where most of life happens. Embrace it and let your optimism wash all over it.

We all experience ups and downs in life. Your journey to reaching your health/weight goals are no different. In 2024, decide to develop some healthy and necessary self-compassion. Resolve to persevere, not punish. Instead of saying ‘I have to do this’, say... *I get to do this!*

To your health!

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