

Talkin' 'Bout a Resolution

The ball has dropped, and 2022 has arrived, feeling more like Groundhog Day than New Year's Day as covid surges once again. Despite the feeling of déjà vu, it is, in fact, a new year and the traditional time to resolve to do better—for a few weeks at least. Last year, I hung in there until April, when I stepped off my Peloton to depart for Spring Break and somehow lost all motivation to step back on. I do stare lovingly at the bike from my bed, wondering how Ben Alldis is getting along without me.

If you're wondering, like me, how to achieve our goals in 2022, a simple google search will shower you with advice. Much of it, like this [article in the New York Times](#), instructs New Year's resolution enthusiasts to choose small, attainable goals—baby steps, including a suggestion to put on your running clothes but not actually leave the house. Yes! This is advice I can follow. I'll just clomp around in my bike shoes, maybe clip in with a bag of chips—I'll choose baked ones in the spirit of good health—and turn on Ted Lasso instead of Sam Yo. Next week, I might even start to pedal.

Of course, many of you already bike Paris Mountain and run marathons, but surely you have a habit in mind that you'd like to break. The *Times* author suggests that you carefully consider this habit in its three parts: the cue, the routine, and the reward. Then you can plan a way to make an effective change. For example:

Bad habit: You hit the snooze button until you're late.

Cue: It's a pandemic, and you work in the ED. You're exhausted.

Routine: Your alarm goes off at any given time during the 24-hour period, and you cry out in anguish and knock several things off your bedside table trying to silence it. Is it AM or PM? You're not even sure.

Reward: You get five precious minutes of additional sleep.

Way to change the behavior: Is it fair to ask those who staff the ED right now to kick this habit? Maybe another year.

Bad habit: You eat junk food late at night.

Cue: It's a pandemic, and you work in the ED. You're starving after you leave your shift two hours late.

Routine: You head straight to your kitchen, where your head says leftover brussels sprouts, but your heart says Ben and Jerry's Phish Food. You devour half the carton as you think about the charts left in your Epic in basket.

Reward: It tastes way better than the ED saltines you had for dinner.

Way to change the behavior: Is it fair to ask those who staff the ED right now to kick this habit? Maybe another year.

You might want to read [the article](#) rather than listen to me, as I am clearly unmotivated here in the throes of the vertical upswing of covid wave number four. Let's just skip to the self-love and forgiveness part of the article, where the author implores us to be kind to ourselves when we stumble and reminds us that we don't have to wait until next New Year's Day to start fresh. Any old

day will do. If you're feeling ready to start over a few weeks from now, you might pick February 27th, World Sword Swallowers Day—although I don't think our GI colleagues will appreciate it if we go on record promoting that behavior. There's March 18th, National Awkward Moments Day—this one was invented for me, I think. If you need more time, you might decide that July 18th, National Get Out of the Doghouse Day, is a fitting day to try again. And July 27th is National Take Your Pants for a Walk Day, which seems like a logical place to start and then maybe just keep on walking. Or you may choose to stay clipped into your Peloton with a bag of chips, binge-watching TV in this, year three of covid. Whatever you decide, have a fabulous new year.