

8 common reasons why New Year's resolutions fail

In any given year, about half the U.S. population makes a New Year's Resolution, and by the end of January, almost half of the resolvers have given up. Change is not easy; there are a lot of things that can sabotage your best intentions. Our EAP counselors have studied the dynamics of change and offer some insight into common reasons resolutions fail.

- 1. Too big:** Don't be overly ambitious, focus on realistic goals. If you aren't running now, don't plan for a marathon in a few months. Run two or three days a week at set times. When that becomes a habit, add another day or two to your routine. Huge buildings are built brick by brick.
- 2. Too many:** Pick one or two changes you will stick with and break your resolution into steps that you can take over time. Plan to revisit your goals midyear and readjust or add goals then. Prioritize what in your life you most want make a change.
- 3. Too vague:** Goals that are too broad or poorly defined set you up for failure. Be concrete. "Improve my finances" is broad. Try something like "save at least \$20 a paycheck" instead.
- 4. No plan:** Setting a goal isn't enough, make a plan and pick a start date. For example, if you want to learn Spanish, research classes, books or apps; plan how much time you will devote and what goals you'd like to reach, such as "achieve basic conversation by my vacation to Spain in August."



- 5. It's a secret:** Share your goal with supportive friends or family. Consider joining a support group. If your goals are health related, take advantage of one of the Lifestyle Benefit offerings available on the EAP website.
- 6. It's someone else's goal:** Your heart must be in it. Losing weight for someone else is usually not as successful as losing weight because you want to.
- 7. Not changing risk factors:** Don't sabotage your plans. If you decide to quit drinking, you may need to rethink going to bars with your friends. Alter your routines to support the changes you want to make.
- 8. Giving up too easily:** Experts say it can take months to establish a new habit or routine. Consider daily routines in your life now that you barely have to think about. It likely took years of repetition to get to that point. Give your goals time to stick.

Your EAP has many resources to help with resolutions, from self-improvement classes to weight loss and fitness tools. Login to your website to explore options or you can call your EAP 24-7 for help, support and tools!