

A New Year and a new decade prove to be a good time to re-assess our lives and lifestyles, to create some goals, and resolve to improve in certain areas. In order to set yourself up for successful goal completion, limit the number of goals and create a detailed plan for how to achieve those goals. For instance, if your goal is to increase your fitness level, resolve to add an extra 10-15 minutes of activity most days. If your goal is to lower your cholesterol, consider adding a whole grain, such as oatmeal, for breakfast several days a week.

The workbook, *Small Steps to Health and Wealth* provides several ideas for reaching goals. For over a year, I have been periodically sharing tips and strategies from this workbook. One strategy is to get help and be accountable. This strategy can be captured in three parts – first, what can I do; second, how do I learn more about my goal; and third, who can help me meet my goal.

Other people in your life can help you make positive changes. In my own life, I have a friend whom I credit with part of my overall health. Because of her willingness to exercise with me on a routine basis for over a decade, I have been able to be more active than I would have been on my own. However, that relationship did not happen by accident. My friend actually considered several people to ask to be part of her fitness plan several years ago. When she called me to take up daily walking on our lunch break, we were simply acquaintances. After exercising together for an hour most days, we have been instrumental at keeping each other active and have developed a great friendship as an added bonus. You, too, may need to go out on a limb and ask someone to help you.

At work or at home, you may need to ask for people to support you in making healthy choices. Several employers offer worksite wellness programs to specifically set up a helpful environment for you to complete your goals.

Recently, I read about an informal process of helping yourself and others at the website www.operationbeautiful.com. A person who made a resolution to quit negative self-talk decided to go one better. Not only did she eliminate the negative self-talk, but she decided to purposefully leave positive messages for others to find. She would write little positive notes and stick them to mirrors in public restrooms and other public places. She has encouraged others to do the same. Think of how nice it would be to find something unexpected, positive and encouraging. We could all help someone else by spreading a little bit of positive energy. We could support someone we don't even know by leaving an anonymous positive sentiment for someone else to find.

Perhaps a few of my thoughts will send some positive energy your way as you consider ways to meet your goals this year and throughout the next decade.