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## Goal Setting

### *Start the Year Off Right and Set a Successful Goal*

At the beginning of every year people get excited about making changes for their New Year Resolutions such as going to the gym, losing weight or eating healthier. The problem is that we do not always follow through or stick to them. In order to be successful in attaining our goals, we first need to be realistic in how we set them.

Goal setting is essential for making changes in our behavior. We need to break our goals down into short and long-term goals. Successful goals need to be personal, realistic, specific and measurable. Short-term goals are tools that will help us obtain our long-term goals; they serve as practice sessions or training for the big goal.

The most important thing with setting a goal is to make it **personal!** If the goal is something someone else wants us to achieve, it is not personal, and we will not be successful. Keep your goal **realistic.** If you have never really walked much, do not set yourself up for failure by setting your goal as running the Boilermaker. Be **specific** in your goal setting. You will be more successful if you do not allow yourself too much wiggle room. You can do this by making goals **measurable,** and as we said before, specific. Here is an example of a successful goal:

*My goal is to walk more. My short- term goal is to add 100 steps every week. I will use my pedometer to record my steps. My long- term goal is to reach 1000 steps a day by March 1.*

This may not sound like much of a challenge to some people, but remember everyone is at a different level. What is important is that we take that first step!

For additional information on successful Goal Setting, consider taking an "Active Living Every Day" class.

Call 315-798-5456 for the Living Healthy NY Program.

*Article submitted by Carol Nettleton, OFA/OCC Aging Services Program Coordinator-Health Promotion Program*