

Tips for a Healthier 2023: Moving with the flow of change

Do a Google search on 'tips for a healthier 2023' and you will quickly find every suggestion you need in order to get into the best shape of your life: Exercise regularly! Eat right! Protect yourself from COVID-19 and the flu!

If everybody actually followed all those tips, that would be great - but we don't. It's usually just a matter of time before we are right back into the old habits, fighting the same fights. Sure, we start out pumped and enthusiastic as hell, but as time goes on, our gung-ho drive seems to dribble away. If you want to succeed in 2023, you need to understand what you are up against.

Every system's natural instinct is to maintain stasis and resist change. When you try to make a change, no matter how positive this change could be, there is going to be more than one part of your own system that will try to undermine you.

This is not just some flaw in you, it happens to everyone. There are no straight lines in nature and no one has ever set their sights on a goal and walked straight to it. Philosopher P. D. Ouspensky characterized this phenomena as an example of The Law of Seven. An extremely simple illustration of this complex axiom is the octave. Within the notes of the standard octave, there are two definite intervals: one between mi and fa, and one between si and the new do, where the ascending vibrations naturally slow down.

This slowing down of movement and intent also occurs naturally when we try to go from where we are to where we want to be. When that happens we lose energy and focus - and if we succumb to natural impulse this is where we veer off of our intended path.

That's why your best chance for success is to have a support group, proven system, or an experienced counselor to help you keep heading towards your goal. This is true for weight loss but especially true for quitting smoking and kicking drugs or alcohol. Do not kid yourself that you can do it on your own. You can't. Your system will constantly try to revert to stasis, and that means going back to your substance of choice.

Another problem that comes with change is that your best friends can turn into your worst enemies.

In every group of friends and in every family, there is a sort of balance. Everyone has their place and their accustomed role, and one of the major factors in keeping groups together is this tacit agreement that exists between members. When one member changes, the others often try to pull the changeling back into place.

One of the reasons that couples therapy is always suggested when there are problems in a relationship is that if only one partner starts therapy and the other one doesn't, the differences between them tend to just become greater.

If your friends and your family aren't supportive of a positive change you are trying to make, don't let it stop you. This is not a sign that you are doing the wrong thing. It could even be a sign that what you are

doing is working. But also don't hold it against them. You'd probably have the same instinct if they began to change and you didn't.

Just remember that whatever change you are trying to make, whatever diet you are trying to follow, or whatever 12 step program you are hanging your future on, it's not going to be a one shot deal. You've got to make it a permanent part of your life.

If the idea of forever seems overwhelming, you've got one aspect of human nature working in your favor - once formed, a good habit is as hard to break as a bad habit. And here's the best news: if you can keep a change for two months, chances are you've got enough of a habit formed that continuing won't be as hard as when you first started. Hold on for 6 months, and you've practically got yourself a new normal.

The urge will come to sneak back to your old ways. You may think that "just once" won't hurt anything but once you open a door, it's nearly impossible to close it again. Your struggle will just resume where it left off. This is where a support group and a system really helps. You may weaken - your support group will not. This is the time to trust them instead of your own instincts.

Change is not impossible, but it's like going through childbirth. If you don't understand what's happening, you end up screaming your head off and everything just takes longer. We could all use the equivalent of Lamaze classes for the soul.

Interesting idea for a Google search. I'll let you know what I find.