

A New Year for Older Adults

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A new year allows time to reflect on the past year and plan for the upcoming year. Many resolutions are made and often forgotten within the first few months. A new year can be a great time to make positive changes in your life. This should not be a list of “shoulds”, but a list of “wants”. What would you like to see happen in the next year? It could be health-related, like improving cholesterol, losing weight, exercising more, or eating better. It could also be about engaging more in the community, like joining a club or group, volunteering, or becoming more active in church. Whatever you feel is missing from this year is what you should seek out in the new year.

When setting goals for the year, the key is to be specific in what you want to achieve. A clearly defined goal is necessary to ensure you know if you met it or not. Also, make sure you make an attainable goal. You do not want to set a goal this is nearly impossible to tackle, as that will leave you disappointed and frustrated. Set a goal that will challenge you, but be something within your capabilities of achieving.

Once you have selected your goal, break it down into steps. This allows you to approach the goal gradually and prepare yourself for fully achieving the desired outcome. To improve your chance for success, let others know your goal. You should report your progress to others along the way. This makes you feel accountable and allows you to share in your victories with others. Lastly, find a buddy. There is strength in numbers, but also the power of social support and encouragement in making changes is very important. Whether it is meeting someone to walk in the morning or getting a ride to church or the senior center to eat lunch, having someone else take part in your journey will be helpful.

If you are not sure what your goals are, that is perfectly normal. Many people do not know what they want to spend their time doing. The new year is a great time to try new things. Go to your local senior center and ask about new activities. Take a class in something new, read different types of books, join an online social group, or volunteer to help others. You can get ideas by contacting your local senior center or calling our office to talk with the Retired Senior Volunteer Program. A new year can find a new sense of purpose and meaning. Take care of yourself in the new year and be open to new things. Contact Egyptian Area Agency on Aging at 618-985-8311 for more information about new programs for seniors.