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Did your New Years' Resolution Include you? by Dr. Brian S. Seaman, DC, FCCSS(C), FICC

Another year has come and gone – can you believe it! Many of my friends, family and patients have commented on how quickly last Summer passed us by, although the high temperatures did prove to be a challenge for many of us. Thank goodness for air conditioning!.

When we get to the New Year, many of us come up with a few 'New Years' Resolutions' – have you?

You have heard them all before – I hear them every year:

- Stop Smoking,
- Lose a few pounds,
- Watch my diet,
- Start exercising regularly...

For the most part, the focus is on our physical health and well being. Less frequently, I hear such resolutions as:

- I want to set aside more free time,
- I want to spend more time on my hobbies,
- I want to spend more time relaxing and reading,
- I want to spend more time with the kids or grandchildren (although this one is becoming more frequent – and rightfully so!).

It is always important to strike that balance between physical and mental well-being. Life is very busy these days, even if you are retired. Quite often, my retired patients comment that they are "so busy" that they wonder how they ever managed to work! .

The electronic world has sped up our lives and communication significantly. As an example, when we used to send written cards and letters to one another (remember that activity called "writing"?), you may have expected a response within 1-2 months – oh – that was the pony express! With Canada Post it became 1-2 weeks.

Faxes became more common, and then all of a sudden, a response was expected in one or two days. Nowadays, with e-mail, the world expects responses within one or two hours! Ever watch the young people on their cell phones? They send 'text' messages as quickly as we speak! This is an excellent reflection of how our lives are nowadays in the 21st Century.

Admittedly, it is often easier said than done – slowing down and taking time for yourself. In other words, 'stopping to smell the roses'. Based on what I have been told, I am not sure if gets any easier when one retires.

Having said that, there are things you can do – set aside some time for yourself – put it right in your scheduled, mark it on your day timer or put it on the kitchen calendar. The kitchen calendar

seems to be the most common means in which to schedule things – it certainly has been used in many households over the years.. The family calendar is a ‘clearing house’ of information about who is where, when to pick up who and whose car-pooling with what family on a particular day. No wonder there are licences and key chains denoting ‘Grampa’s/Grandma’s taxi’ and ‘Mom/Dad’s taxi’.

Getting into the habit is the hardest thing to do. Be persistent and give it a good try – it doesn’t hurt to try to schedule time for yourself!

Ideas

- Walk every night after supper rather than sitting down on the couch and dozing off or falling asleep (which we have all done sometimes – right?).
- Set aside some time for reading a good book or flipping through that magazine that has been sitting on the coffee table for the past week.
- Select one evening a week to pamper yourself – a relaxing hot bath, have a candlelit dinner or just listening to some good music.
- Try a different supper dish – something which you have been meaning to try for some time but just never got around to it.
- Learn to say “**NO**” – we all want to help out or be involved. Sometimes our interest overloads our available time. Better to over-estimate the time needed for a certain project or commitment, than underestimate it, and regret it later.

As we get into 2011, one thing is for sure – the warm weather of Spring and Summer will be here shortly – at least we hope! And remember the days are starting to get alittle longer!
Have a happy, healthy and prosperous New Year!!

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