Hello everyone! Today I’d like to discuss New Year’s Resolutions.

Did you know that New Year’s resolutions are typically made for five consecutive years or more before long-lasting change is made? How crazy is that?! You know, when we’re talking about New Year’s Resolutions we are really talking about commitment; making a commitment to take responsibility for your health. So, if we make a commitment to change our unhealthy ways and we really want these changes to happen, then why do so many resolutions fail?

Premature Action

Is it willpower? A lack of desire? The short is answer: No. The reason so many of us fail at keeping our New Year’s resolutions is because of something called “Premature Action.” Premature action is exactly what it sounds like. We take action to make changes before we have really prepared ourselves enough to be successful. New Year comes with an immense amount of pressure to take action; we are “supposed to change” and so we jump in with both feet whether we are ready or not. Full steam ahead! Then in a few weeks or even days, our motivations begin to wane. We lose our focus and slip back into our unhealthy habits and behaviors. Once again, we fail, which reinforces our belief that we couldn’t really do it in the first place! It creates a vicious cycle.
So, how can we overcome our self-defeating beliefs and behaviors? How can we make a commitment and stick to it?! The answer lies in making the necessary preparations in order to be successful.

Preparations for Success

Our first preparation is to identify “our reasons”, or our “why?” Why do we want to make these changes? This is going to be our Motivation for change. If you look in Dr. A’s Habits of Health, in Chapter 3 on page 19, he discusses Conflict-Driven vs. Desired Outcome motivation. This is an incredibly important concept to understand when developing our own motivations. When we use FEAR and emotional conflict as motivation for change, we are trying to solve a problem. We tell ourselves “I have to lose weight so I don’t become diabetic like my Mother” or “I have completely lost my self-disciple, I have to do this” or “I feel so horrible, things have to change”? These motivators are based on our internal conflicts or fears. We are trying to get rid of something. Instead of being for us, we are against us! We take premature action and start to feel some relief. As our fear and conflict diminish, so does our motivation for change. When we replace our fears with our DESIRES as motivation we empower ourselves. “I am taking responsibility for my health because it feels so good to accomplish my goals and I like all the compliments I’m getting” or “I am eating healthier so that I become a better role model for my children” or “I am losing weight to feel better, gain confidence and have fun!” In other words, “I am doing this to gain health.” It’s being for you instead of against you! To create your Desired Outcome and Motivations for change, you can talk to your health coach! Write them down and keep them where you can see them every day. Take a picture and keep it on your cell phone. This is especially important when your motivation is in question. Positive motivators strengthen your commitment to yourself.

Our next step is to identify “How”. How will you make these changes”? This will be your action plan. There will be challenges on your health journey. Many of you have probably faced these challenges before. How will this time be different? Identify and write down what your challengers are with your health coach. Together you will create strategies for each situation so you know what actions to take to or if you need to completely avoid specific situations. This way when you do come across a tough situation, you have your action plan to lean into and are not caught completely off-guard. It helps you strengthen your commitment.

Support

The final step in making our necessary preparations is to identify “Who?” Who can I count on to support me and help me remain accountable to make these healthy changes? Your health coach of course Take Shape For Life, makes it as simple as possible to be successful. You don’t want to do this on your own. You will need help! Along with your health coach, we need our families to support us, we need our friends to encourage us, we need our coworkers to give us compliments, and we need our health care providers to give us a pat on the back. Without support, it’s very difficult to be successful. Again, you want to write down your support system. Put your health coaches’ phone number, and email in your cell phone. All the support call numbers are in your Quick Start Guide on page 19 as well as the email for nutritional support. Take a picture with your cell phone so you have it when you need it. Put the days and times for
all the support calls on your calendar each week so you can tune in. These are the people who will help you and strengthen your commitment.

Okay, so let’s recap. Many times we will fail to make the healthy changes we want to make in our lives because we jump into taking action before properly preparing ourselves. Therefore, in order to be successful, we need to identify our “why, how, and who” so that we can strengthen our commitment to our health. We need to identify our Desired Outcome Motivators, which is the why. We need to identify our Challenges and Strategies to overcome those challenges, which is the how. And finally, we need to identify our Helpers or Sources of Support, which is the who. With all of those things in place, we will have a much better chance to be successful with our New Year’s Resolutions!

Happy healthy 2016 to everyone!