



Making Changes is Not Just for New Year's Resolutions!

We are a month into the New Year, how are you feeling so far? If you are like some of my clients, you are mourning the loss of your resolutions and vowing to make changes. The energy from the New Year keeps us going until something else derails us. Why does this happen? There are so many expectations around the New Year, and making changes. The reality is that we have the power and ability to make changes all year long. There is no need to wait until we change calendars. So, here we are, the first week of the month of February. How do you feel about your life right now? Are there things that you want to change? Outlined below is a 5-step plan to making changes. Just like any plan, it is not foolproof and should be adjusted to fit your individual needs.

First Step: One thing at a time

If you are like many people, you want to change everything all at once. Let's say you want to lose weight. You think that in order to get on the right track, you have to change your diet and eating habits all at once. Boy, that is overwhelming. How about picking one thing to start with? For example, eating a healthy diet.

Second Step: Make a Plan

Now that you know what you want to change, make a plan on how to do it. Continuing our example from above: losing weight. The first focus is eating healthy. Think about what it would take to eat healthier and write down the action steps that you will take to achieve that goal. For example, creating a menu for the week and then build your grocery list from this menu--Great action step! What's next? Build your plan as strict as you need it to be.

Third Step: Alternative Plan

Remember to account for deviations from the plan, because no matter how solid a plan—things do happen and interfere with best laid plans.

Fourth Step: Get Started

Now that you know what you are working towards and have a plan in place—get moving! Write that menu and grocery list!

Fifth Step: Revisit Your Goals and Plan Weekly

Every week, plan some time to review your goals and plan. Assess their effectiveness and your success. Determine if you need to adjust your goals and/or your plan. Making adjustments is not failure, it is realizing what you can and cannot do. In fact, you can always increase what you want to do. For example, you can begin adding in some exercise time into your plan when you feel ready.

All along the way, be sure to congratulate yourself and reward yourself for progress. Changing is hard—give yourself the proper credit for making any size change!

The Asha Institute Mission Statement: *To inspire positive change in organizations and individuals resulting in increased productivity and life satisfaction.*