



Operation 2018 Fitness Resolution

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According to a recent article in The Washington Post, approximately forty percent of Americans make New Year's resolutions. Many of my clients have good intentions when they set their goals, but experience roadblocks and challenges while trying to accomplish them. Let's take a look at how we can help ensure our goals become reality:

Take inventory of your "Present Self"

It's very common to overreach when setting goals, especially fitness goals. Folks are often surprised to find they are more out of shape than they realized. Be honest with yourself. Take an honest inventory of your health and fitness level. Set a goal that is realistic and sensible. Listen to your body. I have had male clients in their 60's who envision themselves still playing on the high school football team. But, their bodies- specifically, their joints- can't handle the same level of exercise intensity that they did when they were younger.

Link resolutions to behaviors

Try this! Create a 2-column chart. Title column one 'resolution/goal' and column two 'behaviors.' Focusing on behaviors is key to reaching goals. For instance, if your goal is weight loss (and, by the way, define how many pounds you want to lose- the more specific, the better), the behavior column could include: determine how many calories I eat a day; determine how many calories I burn with my exercise; determine how many

calories I need to cut back on to lose one pound a week; go to the gym on Wednesdays and Fridays; purchase vegetables for salads. If your goal is to improve muscle tone, the behavior column could include: add 5 pounds to my bench press (and other exercises) and add more progressively each week; do 10 more push-ups and add more progressively each week; do 10 more crunches and add more progressively each week; do 1 minute of the plank each morning before I go to work.

K.I.S.S.

The classic 'Keep It Simple Stupid' ideology is applicable in all facets of life, but in the exercise world, it's one that is often ignored. Whether a funky marketing gimmick or an as-seen-on-TV product or fitness fad, many of these often fail to keep things simple. Keeping things simple and following safety protocols will up your chances of maintaining your active lifestyle for the long run. The approach of progressively increasing intensity following safe protocols is considered the gold standard. Check out [Top Fitness Trends for 2018](#). And mobility exercises that make your body more limber are important to long term fitness as well.

There need not be anything fancy or complicated about designing a plan and accomplishing it. Have fun, engage a friend or colleague, and don't be afraid to push yourselves a little bit.



Certified through the National Strength and Conditioning Association as a personal trainer (NSCA-CPT), Paul Connolly possesses a degree in Exercise Science from UMASS-Boston where he graduated Magna Cum Laude. He has served as an exercise consultant for MIIA for over a decade and is the founder/owner of [PC Conditioning](#). He can be reached via [email](#).