

Health Beat



CSULB Division of Student Services
 Student Health Center
 Health Resource Center



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The "S" in Single Doesn't Stand for Sadness—You are Enough: Surviving Valentine's Day Single

By: Arianne Stamps



It's that time of year when romance, flowers and chocolates are visible wherever you go. When you turn on the television, you see endless commercials for jewelry stores and romantic gifts for that special someone. If you're single on Valentine's Day, it may seem like everyone has a special someone or date but you.

You may be single for vari-

ous reasons: a breakup, a death or simply have not found the right person for a relationship. Whatever the reason may be, don't beat yourself up and wallow in pity for being single because it will only lead you to feel worse. At this time you really need to keep your self-esteem on the up and up and your outlook positive and realistic. According to an article in *Psychology Today*, "Acting happy is likely to make you happy," says Dr. David Myers, Ph.D. He goes on to state, "Given the right disposition, in the face of difficulty, people can still find renewed happiness."¹

So what are some positive thoughts and fun things that you can do to make your single Valentine's Day as pleasant and enjoyable as possible? Here are some helpful suggestions come February 14:

- **Spoil yourself!**² Why should couples get all the treats! You are someone special and you deserve to be treated as well.
- Keep in mind that regardless of all the advertisement for Valentine's Day **it's not about couples, it's about love overall.** Express your love and appreciation to your

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Keeping the Resolutions for 2006

By: Sara Hays

Why is it so hard to keep our New Year's resolutions? If you think about it, resolutions are goals without a plan. We know what we would like to change, but we do not always think about how we are going to integrate this change into our life. It could be to change a nasty habit or to pursue something you are passionate about. One of the problems with New Year's resolutions is that they are not

always thought through, so they are less likely to be realistic.

To start, think hard about something in your life you would like to change. Take time before, or even after, New Year's Eve and give your resolution some thought. It could be to exercise more, stop smoking, eat healthier, or even incorporate more positive activities into your life. Positive resolutions may be one of the best ways to make

your 2006 better than any other year. Enroll yourself in a painting class or join a hiking club. Be realistic about your decision; do not choose a goal that will be too hard to conquer all at once. If there is a nasty habit you want to change, take a piece of paper and write down the pros and cons of the change. Write down ways the habit enhances your life and the ways it could bring negativity to your life.¹ This should help you convince your-

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Highlights in the Health Resource Center

- **Free and confidential HIV Testing** every Wednesday from 11 am-1 pm
- **Nutrition Counseling** starts February 27th. These are free, one-hour sessions.
- **Want to get on birth control? Sexual Health Awareness Workshops** on Monday & Tuesdays 2:00-4:00 pm
- **Alcoholics Anonymous** meetings on Wednesdays 12-1 pm

Surviving Valentine's Day

friends and family on this day as well – not just a spouse or lover.

- If you've lost your spouse to death, don't try to ignore the distinctiveness of this day. **Allow yourself to grieve and accept your loved ones' support.**³

- **Do an activity with friends that you can fully enjoy.** Maybe rent your favorite comedy and invite your other single friends over for a delicious meal and a fun time. Be sure not to use the added company to

REMEMBER VALENTINES IS ABOUT LOVE...SO LOVE YOURSELF ON THE 14TH!

gang up and negatively bash your single status.

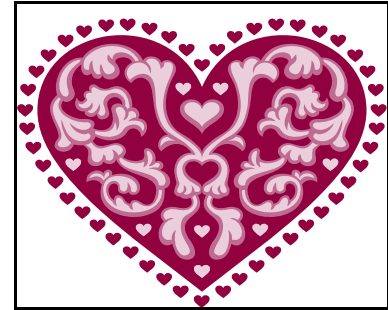
- **Remember, single or not, you are someone special and worth loving.** Your lack of a partner is only temporary as is Valentine's Day.

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Single, you are still someone special

Error Proof Resolutions

By: Kimberlee Morrison

If you feel as though you have failed to accomplish your New Year's resolution, you are certainly not alone. According to a survey done at the University of Washington, about half of all people admitted to breaking their resolutions within two weeks of making them.¹

The problem is that we live in a culture that encourages us to make drastic and immediate changes overnight and the fact is that most changes take time and effort. If your resolution is not a deep seeded commitment to something you truly want to change (as opposed to something others think you should change or society tells you is wrong) you are already setting yourself up for failure.

The worst thing you can do is make a resolution out of guilt as opposed to one made from a real desire for change. For example, instead of resolving to lose weight, one of the most common of resolutions, change your eating habits and include daily exercise to your lifestyle. According to the authors of *Living Without Dieting*, G. Ken Goodrick and John Foreyt, a leading researcher on weight loss, "most people should simply eat prudently, exercise moderately and then accept what they end up with."²

Other common resolutions are often related to improving health, financial stability, finding a new job or career, and increasing philanthropic activity. All of these goals, although noble, take time, energy and require long-term behavioral changes. Herein lies the hitch; many people make resolutions for the New Year expecting that they will make miraculous changes, but are not willing to put in the effort.

Opt for making "life lists" and crossing each item off once the task has been accomplished.

Mary Mitchell, writer for the *Seattle Times*, suggests that people should avoid making New Year's resolutions and opt for making "life lists" and crossing things off the list as they are accomplished. Mitchell believes that by creating a list of things you want to accomplish sometime in your life, you are more likely to feel a sense of accom-

plishment as you cross things off the list.³

If you insist on making future resolutions in upcoming years here are some suggestions for successfully accomplishing your goal(s):

- Have a strong commitment to make a change.
- Have coping strategies should any problems arise.
- Keep track of your progress, which will encourage you to maintain the change.
- Avoid making last minute resolutions based on what is bothering you or on your mind on New Year's Eve.¹

References:

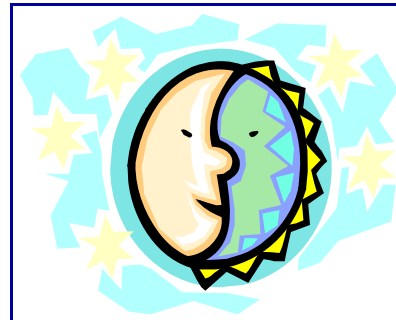
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3. Michell, Mary. (2006). "Instead of resolutions, try a 'life list'; Nice Matters." *Seattle Times*. January 7, 2006.

self that breaking the habit is worth the sacrifice and hard work.

After you have thought your resolution through, write it down. Putting your plan into words will help you focus and really change.² On that same sheet of paper write down barriers that could hinder your plan and how to defeat them. For example, if your resolution is to go to the gym four times a week, a barrier might be schoolwork. Think of ways you can conquer that problem, such as planning ahead for assignments and tests. You could bring your study guide along and read while riding the bicycle. That is why you want your goal to be reasonable, so you can overcome those barriers with positive solutions. You might even want to have a friend or family member read your plan and sign the bottom as a witness. This signature will indicate you are serious about making the change and their support will help you carry through

on your goal. Do not go through this alone, making a change in your life is hard and having others to lean on is good.

Reward yourself if you are following through with your plan! Keep a daily activity log that tracks your progress. This log will be fun to fill out when you have succeeded in your goal for the day, or it will show you that you need to work harder and focus. Every week or every two that you keep up with your goal, reward yourself. If your plan was to quit smoking and you have kept on track all week, buy yourself a new shirt with the money you would have spent on cigarettes.



Putting your plan into words will help you focus and really change.

The whole point of making goals is to improve your life in some way. So think about how you want this year to be different and make the plan to change. Have fun with your resolution, make these changes for the better and improve your quality of life.

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New Year's Resolution: Smoking Cessation

By: Dannie Allen

For 2006, many students have a laundry list of New Year resolutions. For most, these resolutions include goals for health and personal well-being. Many students attempt to quit smoking each year, but struggle with the process and end up not being able to kick the habit. If this is the year that you are determined to quit, then keep in mind these ideas to help you and to keep you motivated.

It's hard when cigarettes are everywhere, but try not to be susceptible to promotions.

With cigarettes being given away at campuses, college bars, and campus social events, students who take advantage of them are three times more likely to keep the habit going, or to pick it up in the first place.¹ Companies clearly target the college-crowd, because many initiations occur during these years and many in the peer crowd do it. It can seem hard to quit when it looks as though everyone around you is smoking. Parties

seem to be a place where people enjoy smoking, so realize this in advance and have some alternative plans of action prepared. Students who say that parties are "important" to them, nearly double the risk of being current smokers.² This is because many people light-up at these parties. If you know that this is the case with your current crowd, go to events where you know smoking is prohibited, or stay indoors when your buddies head to the porch or balcony to smoke. This way, you won't have the clouds of smoke in your face and be tempted to give-in.

Doctors are standing by, ready to help and prescribe.

In trying to kick the habit, you should talk to your doctor or healthcare provider for some advice, and possibly a prescription. While some nicotine patches are available at local drug stores or grocery stores, they are also available at pharmacies, and perhaps your doctor



Keep reminding yourself of the benefits of *not* lighting-up.

can tell you which ones might be best for you. By using a nicotine patch, your body is able to help fight off cravings gradually until the point where wearing a nicotine patch is no longer necessary. It is very hard for most people to quit smoking "cold turkey" and this is a good option for easing yourself away from the cravings.

Keep reminding yourself of the benefits of *not* lighting-up.

Even with steering clear of smoking crowds which can tempt you, trying your options with the nicotine patch, and consulting with your doctor, there will be some challenging times where

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Smoking Cessation

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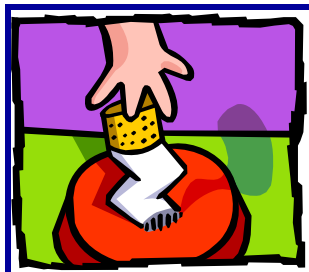
you will want to forget your New Year resolution and give in. In moments of weakness such as these, remind yourself of the benefits of quitting:

- 1) You will be healthier.
- 2) Your healthy lungs will allow you to exercise without shortness of breath.
- 3) You will save a lot of money on packs that you would have bought.
- 4) You can use the money you've saved from not buying cigarettes and buy something fun for yourself!

**Good luck in your endeavors,
and don't give up!**

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*In moments of
weakness, remind
yourself of the*

Quitting for good...

If you are interested in quitting smoking come to the Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drugs (ATOD) Program Office in the Student Health Services, Room 268. We have free packets of information about how to quit and locations of support groups in your area.

See one of the CSULB Student Health Services clinicians to get a prescription for nicotine replacement. All appointments are free.