

How to make a Happy New Year ...happier.

TURKEY AND COOKIES AND HAM, OH MY!

Right up until Thanksgiving, you probably consumed plenty of water, vegetables and fiber. And then people started making you offers you couldn't refuse. Sweet, sweet, melty chocolate offers. Offers served in pie tins. Offers drenched in gravy. So step one in your recovery is to re-learn three important words: "No, thank you."

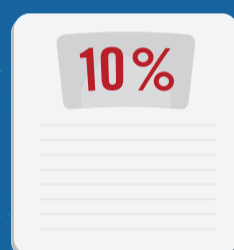


DIVIDE AND CONQUER.

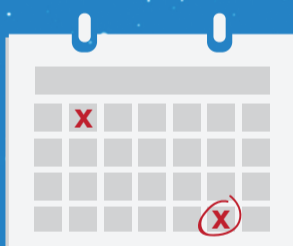
Here's a nifty trick: When you sit down to dinner, push about a third of your food off to one side. Eat the other two thirds. The leftover third is tomorrow's lunch. Portion control today, free lunch tomorrow.

THINK OF A NUMBER BETWEEN 1 AND 100.

As the holidays end, we make New Year's resolutions. Big ones. Like maybe we decide to lose 30 pounds. But we fail, because that's an intimidating amount of weight to lose, so we give up. Try this: When you decide to lose 30, focus on 10% of that. Lose three pounds. Then three more. Then three more. That's how it's done.



GETTING OUT OF SHAPE TAKES TIME.



The holidays span about five weeks. You didn't get out of shape instantly. You won't get back into it instantly, either. Generally speaking, it'll take about five weeks. Take it slow. 10 to 12 minutes of walking is a great start.

TRY TO BE FLEXIBLE.

Sign up for a yoga or gentle stretching class. Enough said.



MUSIC PUTS A SONG IN YOUR HEART.



The post-holiday blues are real. All the things you were looking forward to are suddenly behind you. Spring is a long way off. So put on some music. Neuroscientists have found that music is more than a nice diversion—it stimulates and enhances pathways in the brain that lift the spirits.

HAPPINESS IS AN ART.

Creative activities are another great way to stimulate the mind and elevate the mood. Take an art class or a music class. Try your hand at poetry or pottery. Your brain loves new things.

