



This Ridiculously Simple Method Will Help You Keep Your New Year's Resolution Till The End Of The Year

Declaration Of The War Against My Classmate

Every year when people start talking about New Year's Resolutions, I always remember one particular year when my stupid new year's resolution made my life a living hell every single day for about 6 months.

I was 13 years old in my first year of middle school in Japan. Everybody in the class was assigned to come up with great new year's resolution as a part of a school project, and we were all expected to share it with our classmates. I wanted it to be cool and sophisticated, difficult and inspiring, funny but dangerous – something totally different that no one would ever dare to do. It had to be something grand that would have earned me the respect of my classmates.

When it was my time to share with the class, I declared loud and clear, "I will finish my lunch faster than anyone in the classroom everyday for the rest of the year!" Everybody knew I was a pretty fast eater by then. And I was sort of known as a guy who did silly things all the time, so they all laughed. Girls dismissed

it as one of my silly jokes. But boys knew how serious I was. When I saw the grin on their faces as I was returning to my seat, I knew I was in trouble. I knew they were going to challenge me everyday. Seeing me fail at my new year's resolution just became their new year's resolution. Basically, I officially declared the war against them.

Perfect Battle Ground For Fast Eating Competition

Before I go on, I must first explain the difference between a typical American school cafeteria system and the old Japanese public school lunch system, which I loved dearly as a child simply because every meal was delicious beyond comparison. In American public school, kids have a choice to either bring their own lunch from home or buy it at school cafeteria which, according to my kids, doesn't offer many options, and the quality of the food is very poor. Kids get to pick and choose whatever they like to eat, as much or as little as they want. However, in old Japanese public schools (at least in the area where I grew up), bringing my own



Quotes of the month

"The measure of who we are is what we do with what we have."
-Vince Lombardi

"Believe you can and you're halfway there."
Theodore Roosevelt

This month in history

March 1, 1872- Yellowstone becomes the U.S.'s first national park.

March 10, 1876 - Alexander Graham Bell places the world's first telephone call, to his assistant in the next room.

March 18, 1965 - Soviet Union cosmonaut Aleksei Leonov becomes the first person to take a space walk.

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The Dangerous Side of Vitamins

Did you know we need Vitamin D to feel happy? Did you also know that it's a hormone that the body produces from sunlight through the skin? It's a popular Vitamin right about now with all of the gray, wintery weather. In the Pacific Northwest, more than half of us are deficient in Vitamin D.

There are many other important vitamins that go through cycles of popularity. Some Vitamins and Minerals are so important that many food companies "enrich" their products with things like Iron, Vitamin D, Calcium and Vitamin C to make their products seem healthier, when really they're just processed grains. The truth is that the best way for our bodies to absorb Vitamins and Minerals is through our food, and with Vitamin D, through exposure to sunlight.

The dangerous side of all these popular Vitamins is that they are only good in moderation, and some of us fall into the trap of thinking more of a Vitamin will make us stronger. Let's keep going with the example of Vitamin D. The FDA warns against a dosage of 600 IU per day if you're over the age of 4 years old. If you take a bit extra just because it sounds like a good idea, you might be surprised to hear that it's not. The FDA goes on to warn that if you exceed the recommended amount for months, you could cause calcium to build up in your blood and find yourself nauseous and have kidney problems.

Interestingly enough, you can't get too much Vitamin D by being outside in the sunshine! The reason is that our bodies adjust the amount of Vitamin D it creates from the sun. Our bodies are pretty amazing, and are capable of absorbing all of the vitamins and minerals we need from natural, fresh, raw and cooked foods. That is why it is so important to eat a healthy diet full of vegetables, fruits and good PLUS to get outside and into nature for exercise. Nature is our best medicine!

The next time you hear about a good Vitamin that your friend is taking and works wonders, remember: moderation is key, and if it can come straight from your food, it's always better.

In Wellness,
Holli Margell



Sunshine in the forest.

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lunch was not an option. All the kids were required to eat the school lunches in the classroom, not in the cafeteria which actually didn't even exist. Surprisingly, hardly anyone complained about it because the food was so good!

Everyday, a few people in charge would go down to central lunch distribution area inside the school to pick up different tubs of hot meals back to the classroom. Then everyone was served the exact same meal in the exact same amount regardless of their height or weight. It didn't matter how hungry (or not hungry) you were. You were expected to finish everything on the plate. In many cases you weren't even allowed to leave the desk until you finish. And when everyone in the classroom sat down with the meal on their desk, we would be allowed to start eating only after saying a few words of appreciation for the meal at the class leader's command.

As you can see, it was a perfect level ground for fast eating competition. Everybody ate the exact same meal in exactly the same amount at the exactly the same time. No one was allowed to leave the desk until meal was finished. It was impossible to hide or throw away the food without anyone noticing it. There was no way to cheat.

Amateurs Were No Match, but.....

As I mentioned every meal was so good, I had looked forward to lunch time everyday, and enjoyed every bit of it. But it all changed the moment I set the stupid goal of eating and finishing the lunch faster than anyone else as the new year's resolution. Now everyone's eyes were on me. Pressure was on. I could sense a tension in the air because of the determination of some of the boys trying beat me. Of course I was more determined to keep my resolution.

A few weeks went by without a hitch, I was still undefeated. Amateurs were no match for a Pro like me. I quickly established a reputation as the fastest eater in the class, probably in the school too. I was proud of myself. I thought that they would simply give up and stop challenging me. How wrong I was. They were like

a persistent pack of hyenas circling around a lone lion with a fresh kill, waiting for a moment to snatch a meal. They were annoying but did not pose any threat to me yet.

A month passed by. The constant pressure to perform like a champion was not a easy task. Lunch was no longer enjoyable. I was still the fastest, but it was like a running a 100 meter dash at the Olympics every single day. The pressure was becoming too great to handle for me, yet I still pressed on. They never gave up either. In some days, they were only a few seconds behind me. They were quickly closing in on me.

A few more months went by. The constant pressure began to take a toll on me both mentally and physically. I was tense and nervous at all times. My abused digestive system began to give me stomach pain. I dreaded the lunch time every day. I was exhausted almost to the point of depression. I was still undefeated, but I started to lose the will to continue.



Typical school lunch similar to the one I really enjoyed eating during my childhood

The Aging Lion Decides To Leave His Pride...

All of a sudden, the pack of hyenas started look like a gang of young lions ready to attack an aging lion at the sign of weakness. The old lion appeared strong and healthy outside, but inside he was battered and injured from the months of battle. I had to decide whether I should continue to defend my throne, or simply give up and walk away. Knowing defeat was inevitable, I chose the latter. I told my classmates I could no longer stick to my New Year's Resolution. I was like an undefeated, but tired heavy weight boxing champion suddenly announcing the retirement at the height of his career.

Was I embarrassed? Did I feel like a loser? No. It was quite the opposite. Even though I couldn't make it through the year, I was pretty proud of myself for keeping at it for 6 months. It was very stupid, but it was one of the toughest and the most challenging New Year's Resolutions I had ever set. I think I was even able to earn a little respect from my classmates.

So what drove me to continue when I could sim-

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ply choose to quit after a week? After all, it was a totally meaningless, silly New Year's resolution that no one really cared about. I was even aware it was damaging to my health. Yet I pressed on because:

"...I told everyone what I was going to do, and they were monitoring me every single day. And some of them even wanted me to fail..."

Let The World Know Your Plan

So, I simply could not back out. I just had to continue, otherwise I thought I would be the laughingstock of the class. I didn't want anyone to look down on me for not keeping my words. I didn't want to be embarrassed.

You see, avoiding the pain of embarrassment is the one of the most powerful motivators. People often never make promises just because they don't want to be laughed at when the promises are not kept. So it is far easier not to promise. Setting a New Year's Resolution and keeping it works the same way. If you don't set it, you don't even have to worry about keeping it. If you ever set it, but never tell anyone, no one would ever laugh at you even if you don't keep it. But imagine if you were to announce your New Year's Resolution on national TV network, you would do anything to keep it no matter what, wouldn't you? Because you know everyone would laugh at you if you failed.

So, just like how I told my classmates what I was going to do, tell everyone you know about your New Year's Resolution. Tell them what you going to do. Tell the whole world. Find someone who will hold you accountable for your actions. Your spouse, a mentor or best friend can monitor your progress or accomplishment. They might even help you through encouragement. Or even better, find an enemy - (anyone who could be mean to you) who couldn't wait to see you fail. Then you would do anything to prove them wrong. That's how you keep your New Year's Resolution. This is by far the best method you can employ when your iron will is not strong enough.

Kaz Isogai

Thank you for your referral!

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Juli's Healthy Living Corner



Inexperienced healers do not realize that their qi always weakens through the interaction with sick patients. This results in the gradual loss of their health. On the other hand true professional healers always work to restore the "purity and vitality" of their qi before they become ill. It's called "clearing out the negative qi ." My greatest teaching taught by my father goes something like this: "Life is like a roller coaster. it goes up and down. When you are down, you can't see anything. Get yourself up and see the beautiful world."

Qigong pronounced "Chee Gong" is a form of exercise or healing system that help you maintain the perfect state of mind and body through the use of meditation, conscious breathing, gentle movement and posture. **Qi means the life force or vital-energy that flows through all things in the universe.** The second word, Gong, means accomplishment, or skill that is cultivated through steady practice.

Qi has the ability to "analyze" what's good for you and what's bad. If you doubt, try the following familiar experiment. Get two identical containers. Put a cigarett in one container and healthy food in the other. While blindfolded, have someone shuffle them hand them to you. Hold a container in each and hand extend both arms out horizontally while someone tries to pull your arms down. You will find that the arm with a cigarette is much weaker than the other. What this teaches us is that your body knows what's good (or bad) for you. Try not to analyze with your 'brain'. Instead listen to your 'heart' (or body).

Learn to hold firm straight posture. It reflects your mood and confidence level. More importantly it help the flow of your 'qi'. Your health largely depends the vitality of 'qi'. If you want learn 'Qigong' I would strongly recommend a great Shaolin Kungfu Master, Lei Zhou in Bellevue, WA. He has a great "Qigong" class for adults. Check out the website: www.usshaolinclub.com.

Breathe and enjoy life.
Love, juli