

# CELEBRATE GOOD TIMES

## CELEBRATE THE YEAR BEHIND AND THE YEAR AHEAD

Every week, like clockwork, Sunday becomes Monday, and Tuesday becomes Wednesday. But somehow, the difference between 11:59 pm on December 31<sup>st</sup> and 12:00 am on January 1<sup>st</sup> is transformative. In an unsettled world, we all share a universal desire to control our future. We look forward by creating resolutions – promises to ourselves to be better, do better. It is on New Year's Day that we see health and happiness as achievable. While well-intentioned, studies show that 80% of those who make new year's resolutions will fall short of their goals by mid-February.



We set ourselves up for failure right from the start. We create big dreams and unachievable goals. Rather than looking at what we need to give up, we should look at what we can add to create positive behavioural change. For example: Is it realistic – in the long-term – to eliminate all sources of sugar from your diet? Likely not. Why not increase your vegetable intake and add 2 servings of greens to your day instead? Greens will help to balance the acidity of sugar, add valuable nutrients to your diet, and help to control cravings. How do you know what to add or to change? The answers lie in the year you left behind.

*"If I could lose weight, I would be happier."  
"If I had more money, I would be happier."  
"If I could stop smoking, I would be healthier."  
"If I went to the gym, I would be healthier."*

## AULD LANG SYNE ...

The song's title translates into "Old Long Since" or days gone by. The lyrics celebrate feelings of nostalgia and treasured relationships. They are a cheer to the past. The end of a year signals a time to reflect on the year past.

Instead of looking ahead and getting frustrated with unrealistic goals, how about looking back at the past year? Recognize accomplishments, note positive changes, but also assess areas that need improvement.

To prepare for the year ahead, look at the year behind.

- Do you take the time to assess your year?
- Do you plan for the 365 days that await you?

Effective new year planning means allowing yourself the time and space to reflect on the past year. We have created a reflection exercise to share with family or friends. Don't get trapped by lofty goals. Feel hopeful and refreshed by past memories, experiences, and new beginnings.

*Step  
by  
Step*



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### MOVE AHEAD BY LOOKING BEHIND

Taking some time to pause and reflect on the year you've had can help to shape the year ahead. Establishing a growth mindset where we acknowledge our mistakes, weaknesses, and failures as part of the journey, provides a valuable opportunity to build new tools and strategies for personal growth. Use this New Year's Eve reflection exercise to celebrate what has gone right and recognize growth and where changes can be made. Print onto cardstock, cut and place cards into a jar. Draw cards by yourself or with a partner, friends, or family and see where the year ahead can take you!



<b>An unexpected event this year and a skill you developed because of it</b>	<b>Biggest challenge and what it taught you</b>	<b>Happiest moment of the year</b>	<b>Best memory of the year</b>
<b>Theme to describe the year</b>	<b>Theme you would like to describe the year ahead</b>	<b>Your biggest time-waster and what you can do instead</b>	<b>A weakness you will work harder on in the new year</b>
<b>Best movie this year</b>	<b>Something new you want to try</b>	<b>Greatest strength this year</b>	<b>Most embarrassing moment</b>
<b>One thing that isn't working anymore and how you will change it</b>	<b>Your biggest regret and a personal goal because of it</b>	<b>Most grateful for this year</b>	<b>Thing you are most proud of</b>

Sources: <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/newfoundland-labrador/new-years-resolution-janine-hubbard-1.5412777>  
<https://bigcheese coaching.com/2016/12/look-behind-to-plan-ahead-12-year-end-reflection-questions/>