

local sports

exercise & fitness

A Year Of Change

Jeff Thayer



How many people right next door or down the street are making the very same resolution hoping to see the very same change? Find those people and, with some buying power, get a discounted gym membership so you can start losing those last, or first, 10 pounds.

Southampton - With the idea of change being tossed around so liberally these days and many people talking about turning the country around and making a fresh start, why not get on the bandwagon? Most years you rev yourself up to make some serious changes in your life and find you're going against the tide. Well not this year. This year while you resolve to change the world, you may have some company.

This isn't to say it will be easy or that true change is for the faint of heart. While making great changes sounds like a great idea, the devil IS in the details whether you're talking about the nation, the globe, or the local coffee clutch. The wise advice usually says to keep goals and resolutions simple and attainable, to build on small successes and gain momentum. This time it's different. The tide is moving towards change right now and those caught on the sidelines will be missing out. Now is the time to dive in head first with reckless abandon and dream for something big.

Set aside those petite aspirations of quitting smoking or losing 10 pounds. Times like these call for greater vision and an invigorated sense of purpose. Move your goals for the New Year beyond yourself.

Take a second and think about how your perennial goals can be expanded to benefit more people. How many people right next door or down the street are making the very same resolution hoping to see the very same change. This is a great season of hope for a better tomorrow but the key may be to combine the hopes of individuals into a greater movement.



New Moms - make some friends and bring the kids to a swim class. Putting on that bathing suit is very motivating.

For example if you want to eat better in 2009 it's pretty easy to go to your pantry and throw away all the junk carbs and processed foods and then load up on healthy whole natural foods. If you need you can stop off and get a "healthy cooking" cookbook on your way home for work. Decide never to eat fast food again, never to eat in your car again, and to avoid everything that has hydrogenated oils or high fructose corn syrup in it and you're pretty far along to eating better and changing your life.

How much have you really changed? If you really want change take this positive action beyond yourself, think bigger. Not everyone is as thoroughly motivated and proactive as you so they may need some additional help. Check out local professionals in the area who specialize in diet planning and nutritional counseling, check your community for healthy food preparation classes or nutrition seminars, get the scoop on that funky "health food" store down the block and then take what you learn and spread it around.

Everyone knows a dozen people who want to eat better. If you don't think you can find them just walk around the store and look for people with shopping carts full of the junk you used to buy. Gather up 10 people, friends, co-workers, acquaintances, relatives, whoever, and work together. You can be a vehicle of change. Share healthy recipes, pass along information about food items or helpful supplements. You can even form your own support group. Communicate about better ways to feed the kids or the cravings you may be having. Ultimately, your efforts to bring hope and change to more people will propel your own goals forward.

This type of effort is not limited to changing eating habits. The reason that getting into shape is the most commonly broken and failed resolution is that you're not thinking big enough. Really, it's pretty easy to go join a gym and start working out. It's easy to start walking every morning on that dusty treadmill or start taking aerobic classes and lifting weights. Anybody can do that and on Jan. 3 or Jan. 4 of every year, they do. The problem is that the masses are not uniting. There is no direction to this mob. They have no common sense of purpose.

How can you be different? How can you bring about change to believe in? Think bigger! One person is too easy. Get your whole neighborhood or workplace in shape!

Go harass 10 more of your closest friends. They probably have to be different friends because the others still hate you from last year when you took them to that wacko nutritionist named "Tree Root" and had them eating sprouts and tofu for two months before they jumped ship.



Get your whole neighborhood or workplace in shape!

Gather up 10 new friends, co-workers, relatives, etc., and discuss what good condition you each want to get into. Join the gym together and make appointments to go together. You don't have to work out together, but just account for each other there. Coordinate going for walks or jogs. Decide to train for a local footrace next spring and help each other stay motivated. You don't have to be great friends or even particularly close, in fact sometimes this works to your advantage.

Generally we're more lax with very close friends or family because we know even in failure they'll still be there for us. With an acquaintance it's different, if you screw up too much, it's embarrassing and they may even think you're a jerk who's wasting their time, now that's motivation.

Having 10 people who want to get in shape also gives you some buying power. If you go to the local gyms and say, "there's 10 of us and we want a deal or we're going to the other place," you're going to get a deal. Come the New Year for the gyms, it's all about the numbers, they want bodies. Maybe you're intimidated about getting a personal trainer or don't think you can afford it.

Call three local personal trainers and present them with 10 new clients if the price is right and I guarantee they will work to get you in and make you happy.

It makes perfect sense. In years past, your little dream hasn't been powerful enough. This year we must work together. Take your goals for health and fitness and share them with the world. You can be the start of a great movement because this is a year of great hope. This is your chance to really change, start by thinking big.

Contributing writer Jeff Thayer is the president of JT Personal Fitness in Southampton. He is certified by the American Council on Exercise and is a member of the American College of Sports Medicine. He has been serving the fitness needs of the East End for over a decade. For suggestions on future articles or a consultation, Jeff can be reached at his Main Street studio by calling 631-287-5156 or via email at jt@jtpersonalfitness.com.

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