

# LEARN TO LIVE BULLETIN

*Your guide in wellness and mental health*

## New Year, Healthier You: Rethinking Resolutions

Do you find yourself getting through the holiday season eager to start making positive changes only to run out of gas before Groundhog Day? Many of us feel excited to set life-changing resolutions at the start of each new year, but too often we find our commitment fades before we get to see those changes come to fruition. So how do we think about and plan for resolutions that will last?



## Making the Most of Your Resolution with CBT

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) has helpful tools to set and reach our physical and mental health goals. Let's discuss a few ways you can rethink your resolutions to make them last.

- **Exploring thoughts** that may be getting in the way of success is crucial in reaching your goals. What thoughts and beliefs do you hold about being able to make changes for yourself? CBT teaches us to identify something we call **ANTs** (Automatic Negative Thinking Traps). ANTs are assumptions that can cause us to ignore important information and leave us with limiting beliefs. For example, the thought "I'm a failure because I gained weight last week" is an example of an ANT called Labeling. Challenging this thought and replacing it with a more balanced thought can make achieving your goals feel more possible.
- **Creating SMART goals** can also make a big difference in achieving your goals. To create a SMART goal, you'll want to ensure your goals are:
  - **Specific:** Define your goal in clear, concrete terms.
  - **Measurable:** Identify quantifiable ways to track your progress.
  - **Achievable:** Ensure your goal is realistic given your current circumstances.
  - **Relevant:** Make sure the goal aligns with your values and changes you want to make.
  - **Time-bound:** Choose a deadline or specific timeframe for achieving the goal.
- **Turning the resolution into a habit** is going to give you the best chance of sticking with it. We build the most lasting habits when we link new actions to existing habits. An existing habit becomes a **cue**, to remind you to follow through on your **new habit**, and then you give yourself a **reward**. When broken down, it may look something like this:
  - **Cue:** Taking a shower in the morning (a habit that you already do every day)
  - **New Habit:** Doing 5 minutes of gratitude journaling (the resolution you're working into a new habit)
  - **Reward:** Enjoying a hot cup of coffee (the reward for completing your new habit)

## Get Started Today

As the new year approaches, we may be eager to set goals for improving our health and wellness. If you're looking to learn more about using the tools above to get the most out of your new year's resolutions, consider starting in our Resilience program. Or consider taking a quick mental health assessment by scanning or visiting [learntolive.com/partners](https://learntolive.com/partners) and enter access code **MMHG**. Learn to Live is available to you and your family members, ages 13 and older at no cost.

