A New Year, A More Compassionate You

Fast Fact: January is named after Janus, the god with two faces, one looking forward and one looking back.

New Year’s Resolutions: Making a Friend Out of a Potential Foe

When a new year begins, we have the opportunity to reflect on the past and look forward to the future. This is the reason why so many choose to mark the New Year with resolutions—goals they set and plan to accomplish over the year. While this is a useful tactic for many who struggle with self-motivation, often times these resolutions fall to the wayside after a few days, weeks, or months. As humans, we are creatures of habit, and it can be difficult to shift habits which are deeply ingrained. Put simply, it isn’t realistic to set goals and expect change immediately. As such, by setting resolutions, we may set ourselves up when we don’t meet our goals when we’d like. In turn, this contributes to a negative mood which may further hinder the progress we wish to make. There may be a different way to think about New Year’s resolutions. We perhaps need to start by grounding ourselves in reality and thinking of goals which we feel are reasonable to accomplish in the coming year. New habits may be most easily accomplished by first confirming that we truly value them. Once we know we are committed to the goal, we may identify reasonable steps to take in our daily routines to remember this new habit or goal. By remaining conscious of this new habit or goal, we may be more likely to work effectively towards it. In the meantime, we must be realistic and compassionate with ourselves that these new goals may not be easily accomplished. With patience, time, and self-compassion, you can do it!

Recap:
1) Identify and commit to a goal with inherent value
2) Ensure that the goal is reasonable and measurable
3) Be conscious of and track your progress
4) Reward yourself, reassure, and practice self-compassion!

If you would like to speak with a counselor about setting goals, call the Counseling & Student Development Center at 202.274.6000 to schedule an appointment.

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New Groups Offered at the Counseling & Student Development Center Starting this Semester!

The Counseling & Student Development Center is excited to offer the following two groups starting this semester.

Bounce Back Group
Are you having trouble managing your time, struggling with effective study strategies, feeling overwhelmed with expectations related to your academic career at UDC? If you answered “yes,” you may benefit from participating in an ongoing group, Bounce Back, which will be offered on a weekly basis at the Counseling and Student Development Center (Building 39, Suite 120) beginning in February, 2015. For more information, please contact Jill Fay, Psy.D. at 202.274.6991 or jill.fay@udc.edu.

International Student Support Group
This group will focus on common challenges faced by international students including cultural adjustment, homesickness, and academic pressure. The group will give students an opportunity to share their experiences and gain support in a safe, nonjudgmental, and confidential environment. For more information, please contact Jamila Allouane, L.I.C.S.W. at 202.274.5710 or jamila.allouane@udc.edu.

Quote for Thought:
A DREAM written down with a date becomes a GOAL.
A GOAL broken down into STEPS becomes a PLAN.
A PLAN backed by ACTION makes your DREAMS come true.