

Should You Set Ambitious Goals for 2023?

At this time of year, it's common to come across various tips on how to set and achieve goals. After all, many people spend at least some time in December pondering their plans for the new year.

But, do you need to set ambitious goals? Many experts say it may not be necessary.

Say you'd like to run a 10K this spring. If you're already jogging regularly and doing the occasional "long run," then you're already on track to accomplish that feat. You don't need to put any new plans in place. If you just keep doing what you're doing, you'll own that 10K finish line!

However, if you're not jogging regularly, then 10K is going to be a stretch. You'll need to put in extra effort, step up your jogging routine, and perhaps even sign up for a 10K training program. In other words, you'll need to set that ambitious goal and then pull out all the stops to achieve it.

Most people only have the bandwidth for two or three ambitious goals a year. So, it's important to choose wisely. If you pick a goal that



doesn't require you to change what you're doing, learn something new, or grow in some way – it's not really an ambitious goal.

And, research in goal setting indicates that pursuing goals that aren't much of a stretch can weaken your ability to achieve ambitious goals in other areas.

So, when you're thinking about your plans for the new year, think of *goal setting* as a tool, not a necessity. You might need to use that tool. But, then again, you might not.



Secrets to a Trouble-Free Spring Renovation

Are you planning on making some home improvements next year? Whether it's a minor project such as painting, or a major renovation like a new kitchen, you want the project to go smoothly.

There's a lot you can do to make sure that happens. For example:

- **Start the planning process now.** That will enable you to discover any challenges and roadblocks early, giving you plenty of time to deal with them. You don't want to find out at the last minute that the materials needed are backordered everywhere.
- **Hire the contractor early.** Spring is a popular time for renovations. As a result, contractors often get booked early. If you wait until the last minute, you might scramble to find someone. Or, worse, you might be forced to hire a contractor who's less than ideal.
- **Make your decisions in advance.** Choosing styles, colours, options, sizes, etc., can take longer than you might expect. So, start making those decisions as early as possible. That way, project materials can be ordered well in advance of the start date.
- **Plan for the realities.** Even when projects are well managed, things happen. So, make contingency plans. For example, have a trusted pet daycare on hand if you find that your dog and the renovators aren't getting along!

Did you notice the theme that emerges from these tips? Start planning your project now. If you do, there's a much better chance the work will go smoothly this spring.

Fitness Tips for Busy People

Are you thinking of stepping up your fitness game next year? For most people, the main obstacle isn't a lack of motivation. It's a lack of time. If you're on a tight schedule, you might find it difficult to get to the gym regularly or adhere to any kind of fitness regime.

Fortunately, there are plenty of practical strategies for getting fit even when your days are jam-packed.

You may want to start with one of the many wearable fitness apps — watches, bands, etc. These apps can motivate you to take advantage of fitness opportunities as they arise. For example, if you use the stairs in a building rather than the elevator, the app will calculate the calories burned and even give you a virtual "high five"!

But, you don't need an app to do this. As you go about your day, look for ways to be active. Walk to the store. Climb the stairs. Do a few sit-ups between meetings.

Another way to schedule fitness on a busy schedule is to join a gym or fitness club with extended hours. Some gyms are open 24/7. That allows you to schedule a workout anytime you can fit one in.

Finally, there are plenty of ways to get fit that don't require a gym. Walking, jogging, yoga, and strength-building are examples of exercises easily done without specialized facilities or equipment.

And, remember, you don't need to block off an hour to workout. Five to ten-minute sessions can produce results.



So, even on a busy schedule, there's no excuse not to reach your fitness goals in 2023. As Nike famously says, "Just do it!"