



# THE EAP CONNECTION

## New Year, New Take on Resolutions

Can 2020 be over any sooner? We can all agree we are ready for a new year and hoping for a better 2021. With the new year, often comes resolutions for a “new” you. If you’re like 50% of Americans, you set resolutions in the past, but there’s a good chance you’re also in the 90% that didn’t keep those resolutions for more than a few months. So, after a year of uncertainty, stress, and burnout, how can you set goals that stick and more importantly, that matter?

In the past, you probably set more traditional wellness goals like losing weight, eating right, or stopping smoking, great resolutions for sure. However, after the year we’ve had, it’s okay to not feel as energized for these goals, especially when just getting through the pressures of the day has become the norm. Perhaps this is the year to set a different type of goal focused on your mental wellness. Maybe it’s developing tools to manage stress or creating a self-care routine. It could also be finding creative ways to deepen social connections or expand your support network. When your mind is healthy and resilient, you are more motivated and able to reach for your full potential in other areas of life, too. So, whatever it might look like for you, consider the following tips as you think about your resolution.

### 1. Take a step back before you set any goals.

It can be as simple as a few moments where you stop and reflect on what it is that you really need this year. Ask yourself what has gone well and what has gone wrong in past years—especially when setting personal goals. After this stressful year, consider how you have taken care of yourself, how you have found balance in life, and what it is that you really need to change going forward. Remember, self-care or me-time may feel selfish, but it’s necessary and often neglected.

### 2. Remember what gives you joy and makes you happy.

When we are stuck in a rut, we tend to stop or forget about the things that bring us joy. If you know something that makes you happy, it’s worth resolving to do it. Making time for your favorite activities can help improve your mood and decrease stress. Plus, we are more likely to stick with something when we enjoy it! Include these happy things in your schedule and make a commitment to stick with them even when things get busy.

### 3. Be honest about why you’re setting your resolutions.

We could all name things that we want to change, but you need to know *why* it’s important to you that change is made. Motivation for goals must be internal; otherwise, it creates additional stress and decreases the probability of achievement. Why do you want to add in more mindfulness? Why do you want to start a daily yoga routine? Why do you want to eat more vegetables? Go beyond the easy answers (e.g., “I want to be healthier.”) and get to the real reasons why it’s personally important and why this change will make a difference in your well-being. Consider writing down those reasons so you can revisit them regularly.

### 4. Continue to reflect.

As the year moves forward, regularly revisit your resolutions and reasons why. Be gentle with yourself when you mess up or fall short, because beating yourself up never helps. Setbacks don’t mean you have to give up on the goal either. Get a boost from a friend or partner or see if you can break your goal down into smaller sub-goals to help you get back on track. Make 2021 an opportunity for personal healing and growth by taking care of yourself in new ways.

Remember that **ERC’s Employee Assistance Program is available** to help you address mental health concerns. Schedule an appointment with an EAP counselor by calling 1-800-222-8590.

## HOW TO USE YOUR EAP BENEFIT:

**ERC: Counselors & Consultants** is your company’s Employee Assistance Program (EAP) partner. For additional information, visit our website [ERCincorp.com](http://ERCincorp.com) or call 1-800-222-8590.