



January 2023

New Resolutions for a New Year

The New Year's resolution tradition can be one of annual failed attempts of being a better person. This year, instead of falling into the old pattern of resolving to look better, be thinner, stronger, more successful, more powerful, more in control, maybe we could give up our typical New Year's resolutions and try a kinder approach.

As Brene Brown says, "Perfectionism is a self-destructive and addictive belief system that fuels this primary thought: If I look perfect, and do everything perfectly, I can avoid or minimize the painful feelings of shame, judgment, and blame. Shame is the most powerful, master emotion. It's the fear that we're not good enough."²

Instead of setting a self-improvement goal that focuses on what's wrong with us (and likely, a goal that will not last beyond the end of January), let's consider looking at what *is* right and what *is* real! This year, perhaps we can resolve to try the following:

Collect gold: Catch yourself or those you love, or those who scare you or those who make it hard --doing it right, doing good, doing something brave. Even if you don't agree with it.

Give credit: Acknowledge the places you have risen to the challenge. Where have you made a mistake and tried again? We can tell the truth about where we sail and where we fall. Because... we all do. When we stand up again... there in that moment is the real story.

Notice your mindset in action: What I say to myself matters. Become more aware of mindset by asking-

- What do I say to myself about this?
- What do I say to others about it?
- What do I say I'm going to do about it?

Acceptance: Like any skill, acceptance takes practice. And, even after years of practicing, it still takes effort. Acceptance isn't a magical fix; it won't take the pain away immediately, but over time the feelings will change.

Ask how I want to be: Not what do I want, but **how** do I want to be in this situation, meeting, relationship – kind, open, brave, gracious, curious?

End the day with reflection:

- What inspired me today? Inspiration is a key to creativity and an antidote to being overwhelmed.
- What surprised me today? This is about flexibility and resilience in response to whatever comes your way.
- What challenged me today? Challenge opens the door to mastery and reaching beyond the knowable.

By practicing resolutions in this kinder way perhaps we will do the things we really intend to do and be the person we really intend to be in this New Year.

If you would like to talk with someone to help you create realistic and sustainable goals, contact AAH EAP at 800.236.3231.

References:

Brene Brown, *The Gifts of Imperfection*. (Minnesota: Hazelden 2010).



February 2023

Sometimes “Love” Hurts

Sometimes “love” can get complicated. Love is not the same as happiness. While love is associated with a host of positive emotions, it can also be accompanied by negative feelings as well. Romantic partnerships can be challenging even under the best of circumstances. A good relationship provides valuable social support during difficult times, whereas a bad relationship can worsen negative symptoms, particularly in cases of depression or other mental health struggles. Some of the potential pitfalls of experiencing the negative side of a romantic partnership can include:

- Anxiety
- Depression
- Increased stress
- Jealousy
- Obsessiveness
- Possessiveness
- Sadness

If you’re experiencing relationship challenges, know that you are not alone. Feelings of hardships in love can be extra complicated if someone struggles with mental health issues or has been through traumatic experiences in the past. Childhood trauma can impact adult relationships because we learn about emotional bonds early in life. So, when people we depend on for survival hurt us or aren’t present, it can impact how we view human connection. More specifically, someone who has been abused or has been in traumatic relationships may experience some or many of the following:

1. Sudden or dramatic mood swings
2. Lack of or reluctance toward intimacy
3. Lack of trust
4. Emotional outbursts
5. Emotional distance - feeling isolated and misunderstood

Understanding how to provide support for someone who is suffering from a mental illness can be overwhelming and emotionally exhausting. If you or someone you love struggles with emotional trauma and it’s negatively impacting your relationship or family, it is important to get help from a mental health professional. Even though it may feel challenging at times, healing is within reach and, along with it, better relationships, and a higher quality of life. Individual and couples counseling can get you the support that you need as you move toward recovery.

Reaching out the AAH EAP is a great first step to getting the help that you may need. Our counselors can provide counseling and guidance, as well as help you get to the treatment that you need if a higher level of care is indicated.

Please remember, if you are concerned that you or your loved one are suicidal, please seek immediate professional help.

To access AAH EAP online resources for challenging relationships, visit www.aah.org/eap or [Click Here](#).

If you would like additional support for your relationship, please call us at **800.236.3231**.

References:

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<https://michaelgquirke.com/complex-ptsd-and-romantic-relationships-5-signs-trauma-is-compromising-your-relationship/>

<https://thinkaloud.net/why-is-love-so-complicated/>
<https://www.nami.org/Personal-Stories/How-To-Love-Someone-With-A-Mental-Illness>
<https://psychcentral.com/blog/how-childhood-trauma-affects-adult-relationships#what-is-childhood-trauma>



March 2023

THINK Twice about Workplace Gossip

One of the most destructive activities for a healthy workforce is gossip.

Some negative consequences of workplace gossip are:

- ❖ Erosion of trust and morale.
- ❖ Lost productivity and wasted time.
- ❖ Increased anxiety among team members as rumors circulate without clear information as to what may be true.
- ❖ Divisiveness among teams as people take sides.
- ❖ Hurt feelings and reputations.
- ❖ Loss of good employees leaving the company because of an unhealthy work environment.

[Society of Human Resource Management](#)

THINK through these 5 questions before speaking:

1. Is what I'm about to say **TTrue**?
2. Is what I'm about to say **HHelpful**?
3. Is what I'm about to say **IImportant** (or Inspiring)?
4. Is what I'm about to say **NNecessary**?
5. Is what I'm about to say **KKind**?

**To access AAH EAP online resources, visit
www.aah.org/eap.**

**If you would like additional support for healthy
workplace communication, please call us at
800.236.3231.**