

## Buzz Worthy

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### The 411 on NYRs

*Ellen C. Wells*



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I've written about New Year's resolutions in this column before. If you're keeping count (which I am not) you'll recall that I am for them—and against them the next year—and for them the year after. What is my stance for 2018? I'm for them.

Now, let me throw out a qualification just so I'm clear on this. I use the term "New Year" loosely. For example, October 23 could be a perfectly suitable date to start your "New Year" of whatever resolution. That's the date I happened to start a regimen to increase core strength ("Do this every day, twice a day, for the rest of your life," my yoga teacher says). The goal of a resolution is to form a commitment. January 1 is just a convenient day to remember. I can't tell you if October 23 is the actual day I started my latest resolution, quite frankly, but it's the day I am stating publicly. New Year's Day is not all that hard to forget.

I started 2017 with a bunch of resolutions. As of early December I still have one going. I won't tell you the ones that I've shed along the way, but the resolution I'm (so far) successful with is reading the New York Times' 10 best books of 2016. There are just 300-some pages standing between me and the successful completion of a New Year's resolution, and I'm feeling pretty good about that. Going forward, reading the 10 best books of the previous year will just be something I do, not a resolution.

Here's what I wonder: Why do we choose for our NYRs things that have some element we dislike or find grueling, taxing, annoying, time-sucking or just downright hard? Choose your own adjective of course, but I bet it's not a nice one. How am I going to find time to run 10 miles a week? Why would I want to commit to 52 Meatless Mondays? Where will I get the money to finish my degree? We put ourselves in these situations because we know these things with a hint of distaste or annoyance or difficulty are actually good for us, that's why. We're already comfortably committed to our daily lives. Committing to \_\_\_\_\_ (fill in the blank with your own goal) takes us out of that zone of comfort. And that zone of discomfort? That's where some really good change happens.

Just for kicks, here's a random list of potential NYRs to try on for size:

- Write a thank you note to someone every day (it's harder than it seems!).
- Try not saying "I'm sorry." If you need to apologize, then apologize. Use an alternative word.
- Find a list of books and read them!

- Meatless Mondays are a thing—and it's not going to kill you.
- Run/walk/pedal/practice yoga (my fave) X times per week. Whatever it is, get moving! And by "X" I mean pick a number. I didn't go all Roman numerals on you all of a sudden.
- Grow or sell something you've never grown or sold before. I'm trying mushrooms this year.
- Read the online version of another town's weekly newspaper, changing locations each week, maybe one from each state plus two from Texas and California to fill out all 52 weeks.
- Switch to decaf. (Ack!)
- Go to the "ethnic foods" section of your grocery store and pick something random from the shelves each time you shop.
- No cell phone use when you are dining with others. Yes, really.

Okay, so it's likely past New Year's Day when you read this, but you can enter that Discomfort Zone any day. And you may just find you like what happens there. **GP**