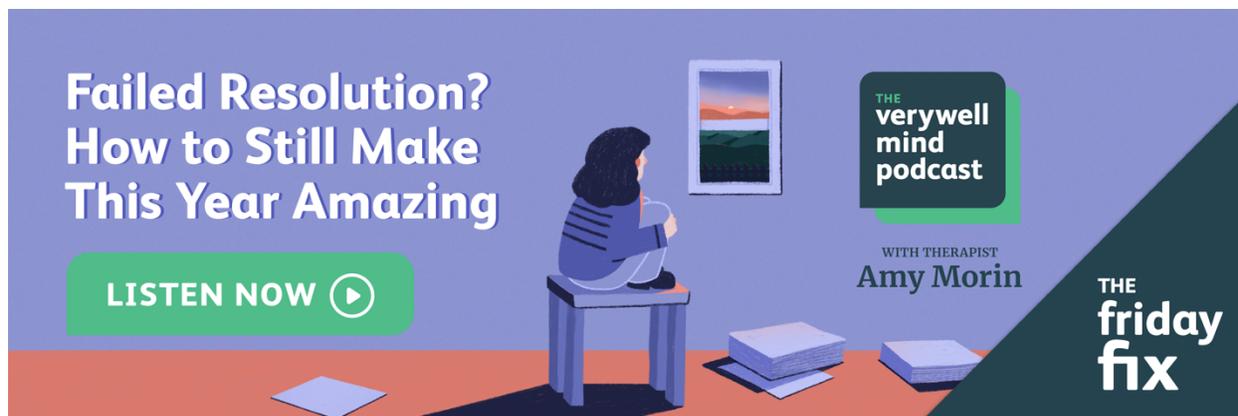




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231 — Friday Fix: Failed Resolution? How to Still Make This Year Amazing

Welcome to *The Verywell Mind Podcast*! I'm Amy Morin, the editor-in-chief of Verywell Mind. I'm also a psychotherapist and a best-selling author of four (soon to be five) books on mental strength.

My newest book is the *13 Things Mentally Strong People Don't Do Workbook*, and it hits the shelves on February 28th. But you can pre-order it now to make sure you're one of the first people to get a copy! It's filled with mental strength-building exercises straight from my therapy office that can help you think, feel, and do your best in life.

You're listening to The Friday Fix! Every Friday, I share a quick mental strength strategy that can help fix the thoughts, feelings, and actions that can hold you back in life.

And the fun part is we record the show from a sailboat in the Florida Keys!

Don't forget to subscribe to us on your favorite platform so you can get mental strength tips delivered to you every single week.

Now let's dive into today's episode!

Today, I'm talking about what to do if your resolution has already fallen by the wayside and how you can make 2023 an amazing year!

If your resolution is slipping already — or you've completely given up — don't feel bad. The fitness app Strava conducted research on when people abandon their goals, and they found that by January 19th most people give up.

That's one of the problems with resolutions. They often have an all-or-nothing approach. The truth is most change is gradual, and progress doesn't come in a straight line.

So I know there was a lot of chatter on social media and in other places discouraging people from setting resolutions this year saying they don't work at all. And I know a lot of you probably skipped setting them this year because you've found they haven't been helpful in the past.

But whether you set a resolution and it's already slipping, you didn't create a resolution at all, or you're crushing your goals so far, stay tuned. I'm going to share how to make this an amazing year.

Let's start by talking about what to do if your resolution is slipping already. Here are some things that can help you get back on track.

1. Reword your resolution.

The way you word your resolution makes a huge difference.

I hear a lot of people say things like, "I want to be healthier, happier, or get in better shape." But, what does that really look like?

Like if you eat vegetables more often, does that mean you accomplished your resolution to get healthier? Or if you smile a few more times, does that mean you accomplished your goal to be a happier person?

You're better off setting a goal that describes the action steps you are going to take. Create a goal that is measurable – like I'm going to go for a walk for 30 minutes five times per week.

2. Focus on what you can control.

Make sure your goal is within your control. So rather than say, “I’m going to get a promotion this year,” set out to do two things every week that will sharpen your skills or expand your network. You can control how much you learn, but you can’t control if your boss promotes you.

So make sure your goal is one that you can control. And focus on short-term objectives you can start working on today. So instead of saying you’re going to pay off \$5,000 in debt this year, decide you’re going to pay off \$100 per week.

I’ll share a little psychological trick that works really well when it comes to goal setting too. If your goal is to save \$100 a week, set a goal to save between \$80 and \$120. Having that range might motivate you to do more. When you reach \$80, you’ll feel good about yourself and that can motivate you to keep going and you’ll actually be more likely to save \$120. There’s a ton of research on this—but just know you if you can, set a goal range and you’ll increase your chances of success.

3. Practice self-compassion.

Progress rarely comes in a straight line and there are going to be plenty of obstacles that will stand between you and your goal. Some weeks are going to be tougher than others and you might not be able to work on your goal.

The way you respond to obstacles and mistakes is what makes all the difference. So even if you hit a rough patch and miss a day or a week or even a month, don’t declare yourself a failure and give up. Instead, treat yourself with some self-compassion.

Talk to yourself the same way you’d talk to a good friend. That may mean holding yourself accountable but doing it with kindness. Remind yourself you made a mistake, it’s OK and you can learn from it and move on.

Calling yourself names or beating yourself up won’t motivate you to do better. Instead, it will keep you stuck.

So those are some things that can help if your resolutions are already slipping. But what if you just want to make 2023 your best year yet? What can you do?

Well, the first thing you should do is stop saying 2023 is going to be the best year of your life. Not because I think saying that will jinx you or anything like that.

I hope that is true for you. I hope great things happen.

But there may be some tough things that happen to you this year. You might endure a natural disaster, a health issue, a relationship problem, or a financial crisis this year. And what you go through might be really hard—and it might not be the best year of your life.

Of course there are plenty of wonderful things that may happen this year. You might get the job of your dreams, meet some wonderful people, visit incredible places, and connect with your friends and family in a way that you never have before.

It's likely that you're going to have a pretty solid mix—maybe some really good things and some really bad things that happen throughout the year.

But, no matter what you go through this year, you can still make it an amazing year by deciding you're going to be at your best—not that it's going to be the best year ever. You can make the decision that you're going to manage whatever life throws your way in a manner that will help you think, feel, and do your best.

A slight change in wording but it can make a huge difference.

It empowers you to stay focused on what you can control—and pay a little less attention to the things you can't control.

You can commit to becoming mentally stronger this year, no matter what life throws your way.

Now, I know a whole bunch of you just thought to yourselves, "Wait, I don't want to say this is going to be the year I grow mentally stronger," because you're afraid that almost

sounds like you're daring the universe or your higher power to put obstacles in your way just to see if you can rise to the challenge.

But, I promise that's an irrational fear. Deciding you're going to be your best this year won't invite horrible things to happen.

But what it will do is keep you from declaring the entire year a disaster when something bad happens.

We've talked before on the show about how you can grow stronger by asking yourself one question at the end of every day; what did I do today to grow mentally stronger? Your answer to that question can help you stay focused on the things you can control.

Answering that question every day might help you be your best this year.

So this is what I'm going to recommend if you want 2023 to be an amazing year. Make it your goal to be your best this year. And check in with yourself every day by asking, "What did I do today to grow mentally stronger?"

Your answer might be that you said no to someone—that's a great strategy if you need to work on setting better boundaries. Someone else's evidence of mental strength might be that they said yes to something that feels scary—like going to an event where they might not know many people.

Or maybe you managed your emotions well during a heated conversation. Perhaps you didn't say all the things you wished you would have said, but not losing your temper might be a sign of strength. Or maybe you made a huge mistake today and you practiced some self-compassion. That's a sign of strength too—and all of these things will help you grow mentally stronger.

So those are my tips for creating a good life. Revisit your resolution if it's not working out so far. Commit to being your best this year no matter what life throws your way. And check in with yourself every day to remind yourself of the evidence that you're growing mentally stronger.

If you know someone who could benefit from support as they build mental strength, share this show with them! Simply sharing a link to this episode could help someone feel better and grow stronger.

Do you want free access to my online course? It's called "10 Mental Strength Exercises That Will Help You Reach Your Greatest Potential." To get your free pass, all you have to do is leave us a review on Apple Podcasts or Spotify. Then, send us a screenshot of your review. Our email address is podcast@verywell.com. We'll reply with your all-access pass to the course.

Thank you for hanging out with me today and listening to *The Verywell Mind Podcast!* And as always, a big thank you to my show's producer (who does not set resolutions for himself), Nick Valentin.