

New Year's resolutions

by BRIAN LOCKHART

It's that time again where party hats and noise makers are the attire de rigueur ? at least for one night.

Although I've never actually been to a New Year's Eve party where people were wearing festive coloured cone hats, but I guess it happens.

At least it does in the movies.

It's a night for revelry and drinking champagne cocktails and possibly dancing on a table top if you're at a really good late night bash.

Yes, there's nothing like over imbibing and waking up the next morning with a head that feels like a football for good old fashioned alcohol induced fun. Well, for some people.

It's also the time of year when it is traditional to make one or several New Year's resolutions.

I'm not sure how that tradition started but I would imagine it makes sense to try and correct your personal bad behaviours by initiating a starting point on the calendar. Although any other date would serve the purpose just as well.

A quick check reveals the most common New Year's resolutions people make.

This list may or may not be scientifically accurate, may or may not reflect your personal resolution interests, and in fact may be made up by some lonely writer figuring it out in a basement room illuminated by a single bare light bulb. But it does seem to show some of the most common changes people want to make in their life.

1) Exercise more. Well, that might happen. But if you haven't exercised regularly before, the odds are you aren't going to start. Just ask any gym manager how many people purchase memberships and enthusiastically show up once or twice, then put off the third visit a couple of days, then a week. Suddenly it's been six months and you realize that gym membership didn't really pay for itself.

2) Lose weight. This doesn't take a resolution. It just takes number one, above, self control, and some self esteem.

3) Learn a new skill or hobby. This is probably the easiest one. Hobbies are something you are supposed to do because you enjoy it. Why would you waste time on a frivolous pursuit if you didn't enjoy it?

4) Get organized. This is another easy one. You can't be that disorganized that taking a few minutes to get your home files or closet rearranged would require an actual resolution.

5) Live life to the fullest. You should already be doing that. If you're the kind of person whose idea of quality leisure time is sitting in front of the TV watching Judge Judy and eating Lays potato chips, no resolution will have you taking tap dancing lessons, running a marathon, visiting a museum or attending a theatre performance any time soon.

6) Save more money / spend less money. Good luck with that.

7) Quit smoking. It's a tough thing to do if you're a smoker. But here's the thing if you're a guy. You have to meet a really beautiful woman with a lot of sex appeal who tells you if you don't quit smoking she won't see you again. If that doesn't work for you, you've got big problems. I have no idea if this works from a woman's point of view.

8) Spend more time with family and friends. Spend MORE time with family or friends? People don't go on vacation to get away from it all, they go on vacation to get AWAY from family and friends.

9) Travel more. This is a good one. However the thing of 'travelling more' is someone is going to pay for it. If you're the person footing the bill for that condo retreat in Maui you may start to feel the pinch unless your name is Rockefeller or similar. Everyone I know who 'travels more' have a tendency to do it on someone else's dime.

'Oh yes, my parents have a condo in Mexico.'

10) Read more. Read more of what? Harlequin Romance novels? Archie Comic books? I do a lot of reading 'a lot. However almost all of it is job related or similar research. I don't want to hang out with people who plan to read more. Unless your girlfriend looks like Zoey Deschanel's even more attractive sister and she also happens to be a serious, yet, beautiful librarian, why would you want to spend an evening with someone reading a book in the corner of a room?

I don't plan on making any New Year's resolutions however I do have some new ideas in mind.

If you plan to make some changes, good luck, stay strong.

If you do fail, you can always try again next year!