

We all inevitably make one every year: "I want to stick to a diet," "Clear up all debt," "Stop dating the wrong people," but no sooner do those New Year's bells ring that our annual "resolution" is already falling apart as you buy something expensive, eat a double cheeseburger and smile at the man/woman who is sitting across the room with his/her spouse. "The end of a year serves as a benchmark, and brings about the desire to reflect back on how we did, what we accomplished, the challenges we faced and the milestones we passed," says Dru Rafkin Jackman, owner of Sane Solutions by Dru Certified Coaching, Consulting & Training. "It's the perfect time to check in on whether we did what we set out to do when the year began. Most people start the New Year with high hopes, and end with some amount of disappointment, and even regret for the promises they didn't keep."

## ***Take our quiz to see if the coming year will be the year when you will be able to keep your new year's resolution.***

### **1. Your New Year's resolution last year was to lose weight, and come to think of it, it was the same the year before. This year you decide:**

- A. To make it your "real" resolution and stick to it. For this reason, you gather diet books and register with a group, like Weight Watchers, so you follow through this time.
- B. You tell yourself you will do it this year, but don't want to commit to any diet meetings just yet.
- C. You say to yourself that you really should do it, and promise yourself to eat only salad for two months straight.

### **2. Your friends are talking about their New Year's resolutions, so you:**

- A. Start to think about one you can keep.
- B. Think of one that will make an impression on the crowd.
- C. Just keep quiet until it's time to change the topic of conversation.

### **3. You are in a dead-end job, and know it's time to make a move:**

- A. You make your New Year's resolution that you will have a new job by the end of the year, and get started by sending out resumes now.
- B. Realize a new job would be a good new year's resolution that will make you eager to launch your job search sometime after Jan. 1, 2010.
- C. Plan to make getting a new job your new year's resolution, and hope someone you know hooks you up with a new one.

### **4. When faced with a new challenge, you:**

- A. Try to overcome every obstacle.
- B. Work hard to beat the odds, but don't "kill yourself" to do it.
- C. Go through stages of "I can't do it," long before you realize you can.

### **5. You have never kept a New Year's resolution for more than three months, so you:**

- A. Tell everyone you know your resolution this year is to carry out your resolution. In fact, you recruit family and friends to help you stay on track.
- B. Devise a plan to make it past four months this time.
- C. Choose a resolution that will be hard for you to keep.

### **6. You have just suffered a bad breakup with a partner, so you:**

- A. Make your New Year's resolution to "get over him or her" and not go back.
- B. Tell yourself your resolution is to meet someone new, and plan to meet as many new guys/gals as you can.
- C. Think that a good resolution will be to get him/ her back,

or maybe not. In this situation, your new year's resolution is which ever path fate takes you along.

### **7. You think New Year's resolutions in general are:**

- A. A great way to accomplish something you have long been desiring to do.
- B. A creative way to push yourself to do something that is likely good for you.
- C. Bogus, for the most part.

Give yourself five points for every "A," three points for each "B," and one point for every "C."

If your score is 30 or above you have all the traits necessary to keep your new year's resolution. "To keep a New Year's resolution it takes focus: Keep it TOM or "top of mind," instructs Jackman. "You need to remind yourself why this is important, and how excited you will be when you make your goal. Enlist the support of others who know how important this is to you." It's also important to stay aware of your goal. "Have awareness that you will hit obstacles, and that it is part of the process, part of the game," he says. "Have awareness that you will experience a natural pushback from your mind in the form of excuses, justification, rationalizations, etc..."

If you've scored 20 to 29 you will likely keep your resolution for a month, two or maybe three. But you will likely fall short of making it all through the year.

"It's incredibly common to keep your resolution for some time, and then stop," says Jackman. "This can be for a variety of reasons. We begin hitting obstacles and think that they are a 'sign' that we're not up to the challenge. We change our resolution, such as 'I really only need to lose 10 pounds, 25 is just too much,' rather than face the challenge. Perfectionism can get in the way as well; 'I cheated and gained 3 pounds' or 'We're going on vacation, and I want to eat what I want...' We can 'fall off the wagon' because we have forgotten why this is so important to us." To avoid this, he recommends "recommitting to what's important by getting support from someone who will encourage you to keep going even when it gets hard."

If your score is 19 or below you're a person who will not likely keep your new year's resolution. "According to an online study conducted in 2008 by Resolution Research® of Denver, Colorado, 'roughly half of those making only one resolution in 2008 succeeded in keeping it and over 70% of those making resolutions in 2009 admit to making the same resolution(s) they previously failed to keep,'" echoes Jackman. In fact, if you don't reach your new year's resolution this year, it's because you lack much of the support system needed to do so. "These may be the people who need the most support. They're often so unfamiliar with their core values that they have forgotten who they are, and what they are really capable of," he says, "Their focus is on what they can't do, how hard it is, how many times they have failed. Everyone has powerful qualities within them, everyone wants to be acknowledged for who they are; we all want to make a difference. Start slowly, take small steps and know that obstacles are part of the game. Get support from someone who wants to see you succeed because he/she knows it's important to you, not because it's part of his/her desire or agenda for you."