



Resolutions for a New Year

Dr. Charles Shaffer

Welcome to the New Year! As we start the new year, we typically see a trend in people's mindset. Every new year individuals think 'new year, new me' and are scrambling to make appointments at our office. This is just it for some – a trend. Some patients come back after 10 or 12 years. Each time they are back they explain they fell back into old habits and gained all of their weight back.

The question to ask yourself is, what makes you drift? Drifting from the instructions laid out for you can be very subtle at times, yet the same thing happens over and over again. You may gain your weight back, maybe not all of it, but some.

Many years ago, when I was training for my pilot's license, the greatest joy to me was flying. Aircrafts are equipped with many instruments that expel incredulous amounts of data. Some of the most important instruments is the altimeter, compass, and the heading indicator.

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During a training session, my instructor gave me a heading to follow and I was supposed to stay on that same heading until he gave me another one; he never told me where we were going. Slowly, I would lose concentration and allow the airplane to drift ever so slightly until I was at a completely different heading than the one he had indicated. He would tell me time and time again to not allow the plane to drift, but I still did.

As the lesson proceeded, we flew over some of the nicest areas in West Virginia, where I grew up. We continued on for the next half hour until we arrived at the runway. He wanted me to land on a grass strip in a farmer's backyard at a tiny town in West Virginia. We landed, stretched our legs, and got back in. The airplane taxied and took off.

He mentioned I hadn't landed on the route he wanted me too. He said he wanted to take me to Elkins and buy our lunch, but I had drifted too much and missed it. We wound up on a grass strip 30 miles away from where we were supposed to be.

I tell you all of this so you can understand that drifting can be dangerous. As mentioned before, drifting on your eating plan can be subtle, but has long-term effects. You gain pounds that you don't want by eating food you don't need. These setbacks happen because you allow yourself to drift off from what you know is correct. Some patients return with a gain of 30 to 40 pounds. As they bend their heads down and tears begin to swell, my heart breaks because all they did was become off track for a short period. Drifting takes its toll.

It's interesting to look at what patients gravitate towards. Many of you have learned over the years, if there is alcohol in your lineage then your tendency to gravitate towards it can be overwhelming. If you have a sweet tooth, the holidays may seem brutal to you because you cannot partake. The trouble is that people continue to participate until they have gained a significant amount of weight.

And then we have patients who have restarted for 16 years. These patients come for about three months with the intention to learn and lose weight. Their attitude eventually changes, and they think they can do it themselves and leave. The next year rolls around and I see them again, and they are either back at their original weight or have gained even more. They do not stay long enough to allow success in their lives.

Of course, emotional eating over the holidays plays a big part in the scheme of things. Once we are around family and friends, eating cookies and other sweets is just too tempting. Additionally, we start eating things that remind us of our childhood and past Christmas'.

The memories become a driving force. As much as I would like to stay in every patient's home and encourage them as they go about their day, it's not possible.

What has made this past year even worse is COVID-19. People at home are eating out of boredom, anxiety, and stress. Sitting at home in front of the computer has been extremely difficult for many people. So, they begin to munch. Others who tend to munch are those that drive that long distances. These individuals are sitting in their cars for hours and munch to distract themselves. Drifting is all too easy.

What I would like to leave you with is this: it's relatively easy to lose weight and keep it off for good, you just have to be consistent.

Hopefully, in 2021, many of you will become determined to get your health back, follow what you know to do, and be successful.

Many of you know we pray for you daily. I think that what makes this job so satisfying to me is that I see God working in so many people's lives that I have prayed for years. In some that I have prayed for years, I see no changes, which does not mean God is not answering prayer. It may mean that the patients I am praying for do not listen to the little, small voice inside.

Have a great new year. Wash your hands, wear a mask, and stay away from others if you are not feeling away.

Blessings and Happy New Year,
Chuck Shaffer MD

The Recipe of the Month

Home Made Flax Bread French Toast

**2 part recipe*

Ingredients

- 2 C flax seed meal
- 1 Tbsp baking powder
- 1 Tsp salt
- 1-2 Tbsp Truvia, Stevia or Pruevia
- 1-2 Tbsp cinnamon
- 5 beaten eggs
- 1/2 C water
- 1/3 C oil



Directions

Preheat oven to 350 F. Prepare pan (10x15 pan with sides works best) with oiled parchment paper. Mix dry ingredients well. Add wet to dry, and combine well. Be sure there are not any obvious strings of egg white in the batter. Let batter set for 2 to 3 minutes to thicken up.

Pour batter onto pan. Spread it away from the center, in roughly a rectangle an inch or two from the sides of the pan (you can go all the way to the edge but it will be thinner. Bake for about 20 minutes, until it springs back when you touch the top and/or is visibly browning even more than flax already is.

Cool and cut into slices. Once completed, take 1 slice and dip it in a bowl with a beaten egg with 1 tbsp of cinnamon mixed in. Transfer to a coated pan and cook on both sides over medium heat. Top with a sprinkle of Truvia and blueberries as desired.

**Delicious,
Hearty, Yum.**