Tips to make your New Year’s resolution stick

90% of New Year’s resolutions fail every year. Hearing the words, “New Year’s resolution” often brings thoughts of overcrowded gyms, crash diets, smoking cessation, drinking less, getting out of debt, etc. All of these examples conjure up memories of past struggles or “failures” because expectations were set too high. The following are tips to help overcome these hurdles and join the 10% who are successful in attaining their New Year’s resolution.

1. **Address the underlying causes first:** Whether it is weight gain or smoking, there are reasons why these behaviors are occurring. Try to understand behaviors that might be causing the problem, such as too much stress or a tight schedule, and address these issues first.

2. **Don’t be Unrealistic:** Set realistic goals. It would be great to cook all meals ahead of time, but if a tight schedule prevents that from happening, it is not a good goal to start with. A simpler step could be making healthier choices on the go, then progressing to meal preparation.

3. **Take Small (Baby) Steps:** Losing weight is not a small step. Losing 10 pounds in 3 months is more manageable.

4. **Hold Yourself Accountable:** Let someone you trust know your goal. Have “check-ins” with them to hold yourself accountable.

5. **Be Mindful:** Be physically, mentally and emotionally aware of how you are feeling. Experience the present moments as they happen instead of living in the past or future.

6. **Relapse Does not Mean Quit:** If you had one too many hors d’oeuvre at your friend’s party, understand that this was a single incident and don’t let it ruin your overall progress. Continue practicing all of these tips moving forward.

7. **Seek Ritual Not Result:** Keep in mind the fact that you want the resolution to become a habit and not merely a result. If you meet your goal, continue to focus on making it sustainable.
Alternatives to Enriched White Flour

Q: Are there any alternatives to enriched white flour that I can use in making holiday desserts?

A: There are several enriched white flour alternatives that are available in stores or online. These include, but are not limited to, almond, quinoa, whole-wheat, coconut, chickpea, barley, and spelt flour.

All-purpose flour is a refined carbohydrate that does not provide much fiber or protein. It also has a high glycemic index, which means that it can cause your blood sugar to spike and crash quickly. However, enriched white flour still has important nutrients that are added, such as riboflavin, niacin, thiamin, iron and folic acid. Unlike all-purpose flour, many of the enriched flour alternatives provide more protein and fiber, and fewer carbohydrates. They also provide other micronutrients that are not found in all-purpose flour, such as vitamin E, calcium, and magnesium.

Many enriched flour alternatives are naturally gluten-free. These include quinoa, coconut, chickpea, and almond flour. Remember to always check the product’s label. Luckily, for people who have celiac disease or gluten-sensitivity, there are still plenty of ways to make delicious treats that are safe to eat.

If you do not have sensitivity to gluten, it is not necessary to eliminate enriched white flour from your diet completely. You may decide to mix it with another flour to improve a baked good’s nutritional value.

It can be tricky to swap enriched flour for one of its alternatives in a 1:1 ratio. For that reason, if you are new to using these alternative flours, stick to an established recipe. For example, coconut flour is very high in fiber and absorbs more water than enriched white flour. If you swap enriched white flour for coconut flour in a 1:1 ratio, you will end up with a very dry baked good. Using new flours may take some experimenting in the kitchen, so test your recipes before the holiday guests arrive!