



# How to Avoid the Springtime Slumps:

## Tips and Tricks for Sticking to Your Resolutions

*by Natalie-Jean Schiavone, PhD*

**N**EW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS CAN SOMETIMES GET THE BETTER OF US. WE MAY HAVE ALL THE BEST INTENTIONS OF STICKING TO THEM, BUT AFTER A FEW WEEKS, A MONTH OR MORE, WE TEND TO SLIP BACK INTO OUR OLD WAYS. IT'S EASY TO FORGET HOW TO STAY MOTIVATED, SO HERE'S A FEW TIPS TO GET YOU BACK ON TRACK AND MOVING IN A HEALTHY DIRECTION AGAIN.

### Who Needs a Gym When You Have the Great Outdoors?

If one of your resolutions was to exercise more, you don't need a gym to accomplish that goal. With springtime upon us, now is the perfect time to get outside. It's a little easier to get motivated by the sunshine and the warmer weather, so take a hike - literally. Find a place to go that you enjoy. It can be a park, a hiking trail, or even your own backyard. Just get outside and go. Take a walk and rejuvenate your senses. Start small and gradually increase your distance with each walk. Remember, even baby steps move you forward.

### You Can Exercise Indoors as Well!

Not a big fan of the great outdoors? No problem. Head to your local mall and take a walk. Most malls offer this program for free. Some even open earlier just for this purpose. You can either join a group of mall walkers or walk by yourself, or perhaps just go with a friend or family member. Either way, you are benefiting from the exercise. While you're there, feel free to lap the mall several times and take advantage of your step count to hit your goal(s).



### Joining a Group is a Great Way to Get Excited to Go Outside!

Many social media sites have local groups with similar interests that you can join. Plus, they don't cost a thing! Just search around, join and enjoy. Joining a group may motivate you to get active, encourage you to meet new people and help you accomplish your goals of living a healthier lifestyle. Feeling accountable, not only to yourself, but also to the group, may help you stay the course. Having the support of a group may motivate you to stick with your new goal(s), and making new friends in the process is just an added bonus.



## Newsletters and Newspapers

Grab the local newsletter or newspaper and see what health-focused classes are offered in your area.

### EXAMPLES OF HEALTH-FOCUSED CLASSES:

- Healthy cooking classes
- Spin class
- Aerobics class
- Cardio dance class
- High Intensity Interval Training (HIIT) class
- Hot Yoga
- Boxing class
- CrossFit
- Barre



Oftentimes, there are free classes for you to participate in or classes that are offered at a discounted rate. Having a class to attend is a fun way to try new activities, meet new people, and get fit. Again, being accountable may be the motivation you need to get you to stick to your New Year's resolution(s).

## Our Four-Legged Friends Can Help Us Stay Fit as Well!

Many animal shelters offer volunteer programs that can help you stay active, which include walking a shelter dog. Contact your local animal shelter and volunteer today! It's a win-win situation. You and your furry friend will get some exercise, you'll be helping a great cause, and you may just end up finding your new best friend. If you do adopt one of these pups, you have a workout buddy for life. Even when you're not feeling very motivated, a dog may be just the trick you need for giving you that extra push. So grab a leash and get going!



## The Many Health Benefits of Gardening



Have you ever stopped and smelled the roses? Well, the roses are in bloom, so get to sniffing!

Gardening is a great way to get outside, enjoy the warmer weather and get your exercise in. If you don't have a yard, that's no problem. Many towns/cities have "community gardens" with areas that people can walk through to enjoy the benefits of gardening. Community gardens can get you moving, spending time outside in the sunshine and meeting new people. Plus, you may even benefit from a basket of healthy veggies or a beautiful bouquet of flowers!

If you happen to live in an apartment or have limited space, a patio garden or planter box will do the trick. You can still plant some of your favorite vegetables or fruits and reap the rewards in just a few months. Either way, roll up your sleeves and get a little dirty. Gardening is a satisfying way to achieve your exercise goals and enjoy organic, clean eating.

Being able to enjoy the fruits (and veggies) of your labor will surely satisfy your taste buds and your waistline, all the while saving you a little money. So get to planting and exercising that green thumb. Your body will thank you later.

## Being Prepared is Key



Remember to wear protective clothing or sunblock when you are outside. Bring a water bottle and stay hydrated too. Having these tools may help you to stay motivated and safe during your outside adventures.

## Insurance Companies Want You to Get Healthy

Did you know that many insurance companies offer rewards or benefits for getting healthy? If you're like most people, you were not aware of these perks. I encourage you to contact your health insurance provider and speak to a representative about this. Some plans offer free or reduced pricing on "Fitbits" or other fitness tracking devices. You can also try getting discounts or (partial) reimbursements on gym memberships. All you need to do is call, ask a few questions and start taking advantage of these self-help tools. Having this kind of incentive is a helpful way to stay on track and accomplish your resolutions without breaking the bank.

## Farmer's Markets: Fun, Affordable and Healthy!



Farmer's markets are a great way to get outside and enjoy the warmer weather while grabbing fresh, local produce. You can walk up and down the aisles and check out what's in season. Oftentimes, we get stuck in a rut of eating the same things over and over again. This may cause us to stop watching what we eat. Visiting a farmer's market may just be the healthy, variety-packed incentive you need to try new foods. I suggest eating across the rainbow – yellow squash, red peppers and blue potatoes. Mixing it up and having some options may help you get back on track and back to the goals you set at the beginning of the year.

## Don't Forget to Hydrate!



Staying hydrated can be quite challenging for some people, and this may have caused you to derail from your healthy resolution path. If counting your glasses and drinking plain water aren't exactly your favorite things, try adding some lemon, lime or sliced cucumber to your water. Sometimes adding natural flavoring will wake up your taste buds and make consuming water a little more tolerable. That way, tracking your water intake might not be so difficult.

Additionally, get yourself a refillable water bottle that holds 48 – 64 ounces of liquid. Start drinking this as soon as you get up and continue drinking it throughout the day. Once the bottle is finished, you will have hit your daily water goal. This may take the chore out of glass counting and consuming your water.

## Final Words of Advice

You have it in you to find the motivation to get healthier. You just need to remember why you started in the first place. Remind yourself that your health and wellness are a priority and no one is going to do it for you. You have to commit to taking care of you. Try incorporating some of the tools listed in this article. Take advantage of the warmer weather and get going. Turn your resolutions into healthy habits. You've got one life to live, so take the control back. Make yourself a priority and have some fun. Have a happy and healthy springtime!

### About the Author:

*Natalie-Jean Schiavone, PhD, has more than 20 years of experience in the healthcare industry. After receiving her Master's degree in General Psychology, Natalie-Jean went on to complete her doctoral degree in Health Psychology with a specialization in obesity. Dr. Schiavone conducted her research and completed her dissertation on female adolescents with obesity and their social experiences. Using her education, experience and expertise, Dr. Schiavone works with patients to create a healthier lifestyle where knowledge is a key factor.*





# ABOUT THE OBESITY ACTION COALITION (OAC)

The Obesity Action Coalition (OAC) is a National non-profit organization dedicated to giving a voice to individuals affected by obesity and helping them along their journey toward better health. Our core focuses are to elevate the conversation of weight and its impact on health, improve access to obesity care, provide science-based education on obesity and its treatments, and fight to eliminate weight bias and discrimination.



PUBLIC EDUCATION



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VIBRANT COMMUNITY

## LEARN, CONNECT, ENGAGE

The OAC knows that the journey with weight can be challenging but we also know that great things happen when we learn, connect and engage. That is why the OAC Community exists. Our Community is designed to provide quality education, ongoing support programs, an opportunity to connect, and a place to take action on important issues.

Through the OAC Community,  
you can get access to:

- Weight & Health Education • Community Blogs
- Community Discussion Forum
- Ongoing Support • Meaningful Connections
- AND MUCH MORE



**JOIN TODAY: GO TO [OBESITYACTION.ORG/JOIN](http://OBESITYACTION.ORG/JOIN)**

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