



PARENTS USE YOUR POWER

January 2017

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Have the
Power of
Choice

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Spring '17
Chase the
Sun

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Conversation Starter of the Month— “What is Your New Year’s Resolution?”

Resolutions—Change as a Family

With the arrival of a new year, it is a great time to look at our habits and things we’d like to change to become healthier and happier in our lives. We can do this individually and as a family. [Modeling making healthy changes in your own life](#) is a skill you can teach by example to your children, and it is a win-win! Focus on making changes with positivity.

What do you want in life? It may sound like such a simple question, but how often do we really ask ourselves this question? We are so caught up in our daily routines, responsibilities and relationships with people that we don’t stop to reflect on ourselves. Take some time out of your busy schedule to think about your goals in life and what makes you happy. Expect your answers to change often over time, as we evolve as people.

Develop positive thinking. Try to always see the glass as half full and not half empty. People say this all the time, but it’s not as easy as it seems. However, positive thinking can change the way you feel and make your life more enjoyable. So the next time a negative thought creeps into your head, stop yourself and ask why you are thinking that way? Then try to find the positive outlook to your thought. It may be difficult at first, but the more you practice the easier it will get!

Take time for yourself. Not many of us like to be alone. With cell phones and computers easily accessible, we never have to be. Spending time alone though can be both educational and therapeutic. We can learn to think for ourselves. It also allows us to be free and relaxed. Listen to music, read, meditate or work on a puzzle. Do something you enjoy.

Stay active. Humans are designed to be active creatures, but a lot of us are guilty of being glued to our chairs and couches throughout most of the day. Exercising and moving our bodies around is liberating, detoxifying, energizing and straight out fun. Go for a brisk walk after dinner, learn a sport, or start using the stairs instead of the elevator. Your body will thank you and you will feel happier overall.

Set limits and boundaries. It is our responsibility to understand what makes us feel respected and communicate that message to others. Nobody wants to be taken advantage of or pressured to do something we are uncomfortable with. Doing something that you don’t want to do will only lead to negative outcomes. We should never expect others to behave according to our wants or expectations.

Focus on one goal. Focusing on one goal at a time is the most powerful way of achieving your goals. When you try to take on many goals at once, you’re spreading your focus and energy—the two critical components for achieving a goal. What if you have five goals you want to achieve? Pick one to focus on first. Think of it as a series of steps. Work on one step at a time. Reward yourself after achieving each step. If you’re trying to walk more, enlist others to join you. [If someone else in your family](#) is trying to lose weight and walk more, encourage each other. Share your success with others.

Kindness. Kindness can be cultivated. Focus on it every day and you’ll see profound changes in your life. You’ll feel better about yourself as a person. You’ll see people react to you differently and treat you better, over the long run.

Anything is possible. The only person that is usually holding you back from achieving your goals is you.

Parent Tips:

- ◇ If changes need to happen in your family, start with yourself. You can’t expect a different response from the people around you if you keep doing the same things. Our teens learn positive character traits from watching how we behave.
- ◇ [Talk about changing actions to achieve goals as a family.](#) Encourage one another. Look at strengths you have in the family and build on them.
- ◇ Stay positive; change takes time and there will be setbacks. Expect them, but learn from them and move forward.
- ◇ Don’t forget to take baby steps and reward yourself for each success! Increasing your positive feedback can happen when others encourage you or you can create a log or journal of your progress to let you see even small changes in the right direction.
- ◇ Take advantage of how often we check our phones. Put a photo with a message on your phone’s lock screen. For example, put a message that says “Breathe,” then pay attention to your breath for just a few seconds. If it says “Get fit,” then simply walk up and down a set of stairs or some other simple action.

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