

By Marie Armenia



# resolutions GONE WRONG

When it comes to setting goals for the new year, I'm not exactly resolute.



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**A**m I supposed to be all Happy New Yearish because it's time to make resolutions? Well, I'm not. In fact, I'm a bit peeved. It's January again, and I still haven't organized my bedroom closet like I said I was going to this time last year. Do I really have to do the January gym-joining dance again? And seriously, am I the only woman on earth whose grocery spending increased 43 percent when I kept my New Year's resolution to use coupons?

I don't do resolutions well. In fact, I'm a recovering resolution addict. However, I did discover a genuine resolution solution: I don't make them anymore. My husband, Saint Phil, is extremely grateful he no longer has to endure resolutions such as:

## You and Me and No TV

• January 2nd — In an effort to do something together, Phil asks me, "Wanna play Monopoly?" "Sure," I say naively, "that will be fun." It was fun until the never-before-seen greedy side of this mild-mannered man revealed itself. I ask you, what kind of person thinks it's fun or fair to own all the railroads plus Boardwalk and Park Place and expect the other player to come up with the rent for them?

• January 3rd — Go for a walk with Phil and discuss Monopoly etiquette.

• January 4th — Play Scrabble. Shouldn't there be a time limit for how long a person can stare at his letters before he puts a word on the board?

• January 5th — Play Yahtzee. The unfairness of the universe is evident as Phil gets five Yahtzees in a row and beats me in three consecutive games.

• January 6th — Phil asks, "Where's the remote?" I quickly hand it to him.

## Coupon Queen

• January 2nd — To get my grocery store coupons organized, I purchase new \$16 scissors, a \$29 coupon organizer, and \$12 highlighters.

• January 7th — Phil asks, "Why do we have four boxes of the same breakfast cereal?" "Because," Little Miss Money Saver replies, "I saved 86 cents if I bought four at once." I ignore his follow-up question: "You spent \$12 on cereal to save 86 cents?"

• January 30th — I pour two full but outdated cartons of "Buy Two, Get One Free" orange juice down the drain, give three boxes of cereal to my neighbor, and donate six boxes of "No Need to Refrigerate Microwavable Lasagna" to anyone who is desperate enough to take them.

## Walk Three Miles Every Morning

- January 2nd — Walk three miles.
- January 3rd — Walk three miles.
- January 4th — Stay in bed.
- January 5th — Walk 1.8 miles. See a huge snake on the side of the road. Turn around and run home.

## Organize the Bedroom Closet

• January 11th — Enter closet at 8 a.m. Spend two hours on floor of closet looking at photos I find in a box. Call hairdresser at 10 a.m. to schedule appointment to cut layers in my hair like a photo in the box. 2 p.m. — at hairdresser's.

• January 12th — Reenter closet at 10 a.m. Notice sewing machine on top shelf. Recall last year's resolution to sew throw pillows for the love seat. 11 a.m. — fabric store. Spend several days trying to keep last year's resolution.

• January 22nd — Put \$76 worth of cut and now unusable fabric in sewing machine box and place sewing machine back on top shelf in closet.

## Stop Drinking So Much Coffee

• January 1st — No coffee.

• January 2nd — No coffee.

• January 3rd — No coffee. Spend afternoon searching for the crack in my skull, which I'm convinced is the cause of my splitting headache. Someone says "caffeine withdrawal." I decide that drinking coffee every morning is a sensible pain-management plan. Saint Phil agrees.

## Resolution Solution

Just because I'm the poster child for resolutions gone wrong doesn't mean I'm advocating you and I shouldn't set healthy goals, change some poor habits, or learn how to save money.

I'm just laughing at how silly I was to think I could make real changes by willpower alone. When it comes to New Year's resolutions, I've discovered God helps those who cannot help themselves. Through His Word I've also learned:

- He will direct my path. My first mistake was thinking a New Year's resolution was insignificant and not something I should bother God about. If it's something I care about, it's something He cares about (Proverbs 3:5-7).

- New Year's Day does not exist in heaven. God doesn't care if I allow the Holy Spirit to change me on New Year's Day, Groundhog Day, or Memorial Day. He's working in me every day. If I fail at something, His mercy is renewed every day in January,

March, June, and August, too. He knows my weaknesses better than I do. And He loves me anyway (Psalm 118:24; Lamentations 3:22-24).

- My strength runs out; His doesn't. When I rely on God's strength, I will be able to do anything (Philippians 4:13).

- He has a perfect plan. Jesus is the Author and Finisher of my faith. He's writing my story. When He thinks I need to change something, He'll be right there to help me succeed (Hebrews 12:2).

I have Philippians 1:6 taped to the side of my refrigerator: "I am sure of this, that He who started a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus." He will complete the work He began in me. And you, too. □

*Marie Armenia and her husband, Phil, now avoid board games like the plague, but they do enjoy spending time talking around their outdoor fire pit.*

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