



New Year's Resolutions

The New Year holiday brings warm feelings of fellowship and good cheer with family and friends. The marking of the new year also signifies a time to pause, assess what has already transpired, and set goals for the coming year. As such, it provides an opportunity to set New Year's resolutions.

Each year, just as others do, I consider personal resolutions. I resolve to watch my diet, exercise more, and attend to the myriad little items that crowd my desk. But inevitably inertia sets in and I procrastinate. My diet can wait another day as I crave one final chocolate chip cookie. In like fashion, it is certainly more comfortable to relax than to exercise. Health magazines admonish me to eat nutritious foods and exercise regularly to stay healthy. It is not difficult, they report, to maintain a healthy lifestyle. Begin by setting goals, and communicate those goals to others, who can reinforce your resolutions. Keep a calendar, and periodically monitor progress, whether weekly or even daily. Strive for small changes, since radical changes often lead to failure.

If these are examples of personal resolutions, what are resolutions which relate primarily to professional activities? My colleagues shared the following of what they resolved to accomplish in the coming year:

Keep current and up to date. Depending on the office situation, it is very easy to become stagnant in thinking, particularly if there is little interaction with colleagues. An important resolution is to keep current by reading professional articles, attending continuing education courses, and actively exchanging ideas with other professionals.

Join professional committees, attend professional meetings. Sometimes we think it would be nice to become involved in our local dental societies, but we do not follow through. We think it would be wise to attend our national organization annual meetings, but often we allow other obligations to prevent us from doing so. There is never enough time to

do everything and priorities must be set. Perhaps this year we will get involved.

Be open to change. Upgrade the practice. There was a time when the office equipment was new and shiny, the walls were freshly painted and the rooms appeared bright and cheery. But over time, the office assumed a tired appearance. This year, the time has finally arrived to upgrade the equipment and perform required renovations. New dental materials and techniques will be explored. New philosophies, such as an early infant care program, will be incorporated into routine practice.

Show thanks. Sometimes we do not appreciate that there are family and staff who enable us to do what we do. We should resolve to show thanks when the opportunity presents. Do not just think it, but say it. Expressing a sincere "thank you" goes a long way to promote cooperation and good feelings.

It's payback time. While thanks can be conveyed to those who support our activities, it is also important to give back to society for the opportunity to participate in a highly regarded profession. We should support financially and with time the institutions that provided our education and training, so as to ensure others will follow in our footsteps. We should resolve to be role models for future dentists, both as leaders in society, and as healers who are compassionate to those in need.

Slow down, smell the roses. Too often we become victims of monotonous routine, overlooking the responsibility to develop one's self. While we should be open to change for professional development, we must make time for personal development. Only by nurturing ourselves, can we nurture others.

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LETTER TO THE EDITOR



As your readers are aware, errors occur in professional communications. Rarely are these errors life threatening. However, such an error occurred in a recent article published in this journal of which I am a co-author (Oral Midazolam Versus Midazolam and Meperidine in the Pediatric Patient. 2003;25:468-474). Fortunately, I am not aware that this error has caused an adverse outcome.

The error appears on page 469 in the statement: "Maximum doses were 15 mg/kg for midazolam..." The sentence should have stated that the maximum dose of midazolam was 15 mg, regardless of the patient's weight. Adherence to the original statement could lead to a significant overdose

of midazolam with potentially life-threatening clinical complications. The authors and I are grateful for an alert reader who brought this error to our attention.

We apologize that this error was not detected earlier, and we urge all readers to make this correction in the text of that article. Thank you.

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