Welcome to 2020. It’s time to start the New Year right. All the procrastination, stuffing yourself, indulging to excess, staying up too late — that’s got to go. Replace those bad habits and pure laziness with healthier behaviors.

If you want to jumpstart a pattern of living life to the fullest, feeling joy and fulfillment as well as peace, some of these tips to start the New Year right may be just what you need.

1. **Set Your Priorities**—You must set your own priorities. Never let others do this for you. The corollary to this advice is to never allow others to impose their priorities on you. To live according to someone else’s wishes is no way to enjoy life. That’s a charade, not something you want to pursue.

When you make your own choices, prioritizing what’s important and what’s not, you’re in control. This is a top recommendation for starting off the new year right.

2. **Be Accountable**—Remember that what you do has consequences. Every word and action you take has reverberations, many of which you may never know about. People look up to you and model their behaviors after yours. Live with integrity, owning your responsibilities as well as your faults, making good on the mistakes you’ve made.

3. **Prize Self-Improvement**—Make it a point to continually improve. This means doing some proactive activity on a daily basis. Whether it’s learning a new skill, taking a class, getting involved in a hobby, working on interpersonal communication or something else, self-improvement is integral to living a vibrant, purposeful life.

The goal is to achieve the best you can, to be the best person you can be. With this as your daily goal, you’re bound to see incremental gains. For example, you’ll feel more empowered, confident and hopeful. These are small signs you’re on the right path toward meaningful change, one small step at a time.

4. **Know Your Limitations**—In your drive to improve yourself, keep in mind that you must know your limitations. This doesn’t mean that you don’t push past your comfort zone. You need to do that to grow. Definitely push, but not too far. How do you know when you’ve gotten to that point? Avoid the feeling of pain, yet accept that minor pressure means you’re probably approaching the boundary of what you can comfortably accept right now. You can venture beyond that point the next time, having added the confidence you’ve achieved from getting this far.

5. **Recognize Opportunities**—You can train yourself to recognize opportunities. In fact, being able to identify an opportunity is the first step toward success in any new endeavor. Remember, too, that opportunities are often cloaked or hidden. They may be a side benefit to accomplishing some other task, even an everyday one. The key is to be on the lookout for what you might be able to utilize or pursue. Readiness is important in seizing opportunities, as is the willingness to do what it takes once you’ve recognized them.

6. **Rely on Your Strengths**—There are going to be rough times, periods when the only thing you’ve got going for you is your inner strength. This is what you call on to get you through problems, tragedies, pain, sorrow and suffering.
10 Tips to Start the New Year Right (continued)

It’s also your inner strength that will help you navigate complex situations, difficult challenges and obstacles.

7. Maintain Balance—It’s important to maintain a sense of balance in life. If you veer too far out in one area, rein it in. It doesn’t matter if its work-home balance, or diet-exercise-sleep balance, or another kind of balance. What does matter is keeping things in harmony. Lack of sleep and pushing yourself mercilessly won’t result in success. Just the opposite, in fact. But maintaining good self-care, recognizing stress and employing adequate coping strategies, taking time for fun and relaxation—which will help you maintain balance. Now’s as good a time as any to get started.

8. Be Genuine in Relationships—One of the most powerful resources you have can be summed up in one word: relationships. But just having mere acquaintances isn’t enough. To gain the most from relationships, you need to be genuine at all times. No faking it or merely mouthing words you think others want to hear. Also, stop talking and listen. A key aspect of being genuine is learning to be an active listener.

9. Speak Clearly—How many times have you thought one thing and said another? It’s no wonder others misinterpret your intentions. You’re not being clear. People aren’t mind readers. If you want to convey something, speak clearly. It’s also important to say what you mean and do what you say. This builds personal integrity, inspires trust and makes others view you as reliable.

10. Dream Big—Was last year a time when you gave up on something that you once thought important? If so, maybe it’s time to revisit that dream or goal. Just because you may have believed the time wasn’t right before doesn’t mean the opportunity is lost forever. With respect to goals and dreams in general, dare to dream big. Nothing inspires and motivates like a heartfelt goal. Consider the fact that if it means so much to you, it’s something to aspire to and figure out ways to bring the dream or goal to reality. This last part is vital. It’s not enough to dream. You must be willing to act on your intention.

Authored by: Suzanne Kane
The Baton Rouge Magnet High School Speech and Debate Team was re-established in the Spring Semester of 2018 with just 3 students (Alison Qi, Sicily Stull and Milan Monroe) and it morphed to 47 students to this day. Over the 2 ½ years of its existence, the team have won over 9 season tournaments, won District Debate Championships (NSDA and NOCFL), won several individual and team debate events in the season, district championships and state championships while qualifying several students for National Championships. We have several universities looking into our students for their respective collegiate debate program.

Below are just a few of our accolades from this past State Championship:

- Extemporaneous Commentary: 3rd Place (Desire’ Crow) and State Champion (Fredlicia Phillips)
- Congressional Debate: 10th Place (Peter Franz)
- Novice Lincoln-Douglas Debate: 3rd Place (Blakeley Cathey/Edith Philip)
- Novice Lincoln-Douglas Debate: 3rd Place (Sophia Perkins)
- Advanced Lincoln-Douglas Debate: Tied for 5th Place (Channing Hall & Peter Franz)
- Public Forum Debate: Co-State Champions (Annie Sheehan-Dean/Rudi Neubrander, Sicily Stull/Milan Monroe & Francesca Cedeno/Ali Marzoughi)

We have several students who are ranked in the Top 10 within their respective categories and several of them are currently ranked #1

⇒ Lillian Thibaut – Original Oratory
⇒ Annie Sheehan-Dean/Rudi Neubrander – Public Forum
⇒ Edith Philip – Big Questions Debate
⇒ Channing Hall – Student Congress and Extemporaneous Commentary

We have been recognized by the National Speech and Debate Association as one of the Rising Schools in the Association, received a Program Charter (quickest in NSDA history) and was granted a National Speech and Debate Bid endorsement for our tournament which we are hosting on February 14th and 15th, 2020 at Baton Rouge Magnet High School.

Volunteers and judges are needed. Any monetary donations are greatly appreciated.

*For more information, please contact Mr. Donald Broussard, Director of Speech & Debate at Baton Rouge Magnet High School. He may be reached at dbroussard1@ebrschools.org*
Entering its 6th year as one of Baton Rouge’s most popular clean-up and beautification projects, MLK Fest 2020 is volunteer-led service event hosted by The Walls Project, City of Baton Rouge and Mayor Broome, Build Baton Rouge, ExxonMobil, Our Lady of the Lake, and Healthy Blue.

Over four days, volunteers will work together on a variety of projects, including painting, removing trash, gardening, and general beautification along Plank Road and its side streets of Choctaw Drive and Chippewa Street. The event organizers hope that, beyond cleaning up a route, citizens will forge connections and strengthen relationships with their fellow residents.

For more information, email helena@thewallsproject.org or visit https://www.facebook.com/events/2679164985462340/

Additional Information:

LOCATION: BREC Howell Park 5509 Winbourne Ave, Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70805
EVENT TYPE: Fairs & Festivals, Health & Wellness
WEBSITE: Visit Event Website
PHONE: 225-434-0515
EMAIL: support@thewallsproject.org
DATE & TIME: Jan 17, 2020 to Jan 21, 2020

Don’t let electronic devices derail your middle schooler’s studies!

Sometimes it seems that middle schoolers are permanently attached to their phones, tablets and other devices. They text from the minute they wake up until they go to bed. They share funny videos and pictures with their friends. They scroll through social media.

So it’s no surprise that students often try to use their phones while they’re working in class or doing homework. But several research studies show that the more time students say that they text, use social media or read online while they do schoolwork, the lower their grades are.

Students often think their devices can help with their work. After all, they can watch a video of the Pyramids while studying history. They can check their answer to a math problem.

There’s just one problem: Kids seldom stay focused on the work they are doing. Pretty soon, they click from the history video to the latest internet joke. From then on, history is not their focus.

What can you do to help your child stay focused on his work and not on his smartphone? Here are some tips:

• Talk about multitasking—and how research shows it doesn’t work. Students need to focus while studying or they won’t learn.

• Follow the rules regarding devices in class. Many teachers have a “parking lot” where students must leave their phones or tablets.

• Limit the use of devices during homework time. Studies show that the more time students spend multitasking, the longer their studies take.

• Be a role model yourself. Don’t check your phone during family dinner or (especially) while driving.

SOURCE: K. Kawalski, “When Smartphones Go to School,” Science News for Students, niswc.com/mid_smartphone
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Try these healthy eating resolutions for a healthier you in the new year.

Why not attack the age-old "lose weight" and "eat healthier" resolutions from a different perspective and cut them into more manageable pieces? It could actually work! Here are 5 do-able New Year’s resolutions for a healthier you this year.

**Resolution 1. Eat More Omega-3s**  
*Solution: Seek out seafood.*

Getting more foods rich in omega-3 fatty acids might just help you keep your blood pressure down. In a recent study, researchers found that among 4,680 healthy adults, those who consumed the highest amounts of omega-3 fatty acids in their diets had the lowest rates of hypertension. Research also suggests that omega-3s can help improve your mood, which we all need a little help with in the short, dark days of winter. Aim to get two servings of fish a week, particularly fatty fish, such as salmon, sardines and some types of tuna, which are rich in omega-3s. Not a fish lover? Opt for walnuts and flax, which are good nonfish sources of omega-3s.

**Resolution 2. Pile On The Veggies**  
*Solution: Get out the roasting pan.*

The majority of Americans don’t eat the daily recommended 3 or more servings of vegetables, according to a recent report from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. If you’re of the mindset that "vegetables don't taste good," but know you should eat more of them since they’re teeming with healthy nutrients and fiber, get out your roasting pan. Roasting vegetable caramelizes their natural sugars so they taste fantastic. It’s an easy way to cook veggies for dinner—pop a pan of them in the oven and make the rest of dinner while they roast.

**Resolution 3. Up Your Fiber Intake**  
*Solution: Experiment with whole grains.*

Getting enough fiber may help prevent cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes and a number of cancers. And eating more fiber may help you slim down. But the average American eats about 14 grams of day—the recommended daily intake is 21 to 38 grams. One of the easiest ways to up your fiber intake is to eat more whole grains. Quinoa, whole-wheat couscous, bulgur and polenta are all quick-cooking options to add to your weeknight repertoire.

**Resolution 4. Eat Less Meat**  
*Solution: Learn to like tofu more.*

A popular reason to cut back on meat is for environmental reasons, but you’ll be helping your heart too. When you replace meat with soy, you’ll naturally eat less saturated fat—and research shows that saturated fat increases LDL. While tofu might not have a real “flavor,” that’s what makes it so versatile—it soaks up the flavors of a stir-fry sauce or marinade like a sponge, making it taste terrific!

**Resolution 5. Rein In Your Sugar Addiction**  
*Solution: Make low-sugar treats to satisfy your sweet tooth.*

Americans eat too much sugar. We consume 355 calories—or 22 teaspoons—of added sugars a day. The American Heart Association advises that we eat much, much less than that. Luckily, you can still make treats that satisfy your sweet tooth and cut back on your sugar intake at the same time.
Follow these five strategies for successful study sessions

Not all teens know how to study. Those that don’t may spend more time than they need to on their work for school. Or they may get frustrated and stop studying completely.

1. **Take notes in class.** Writing down what the teacher says can help your teen see what the teacher thinks is important. Reviewing his notes regularly will also improve his retention of the material.

2. **Break it up.** Research shows that frequent short study sessions spaced out over time are more effective than one long study session.

3. **Study similar subjects at different times.** Putting new information into your brain is a little like pouring concrete. Your teen has to give it time to “set up.”

4. **Avoid getting sidetracked.** If your teen finds his mind wandering during study time, he should keep a note pad by his study spot. He can jot down reminders or random ideas that pop into his head and then get right back to studying.

5. **Eliminate distractions.** The TV, his phone and growling stomach will all distract your teen. Make sure he turns off all electronics and takes care of hunger and thirst before sitting down to study.

Sleep improves students’ school performance

Experts agree: Most middle schoolers aren’t getting the sleep they need in order to their best in school. One study found that 85% of adolescents get fewer than eight and a half hours of sleep each night. Students this age should be getting nine to 10 hours.

When kids don’t get enough sleep, their academic performance suffers. They have difficulty remembering material and concentrating in school.

And it’s not just the amount of sleep that matters. Researchers say that consistency and quality of sleep matter, too.

To make sure your child gets the sleep he needs:

- **Set a reasonable bedtime** that results in at least nine hours of sleep each night. Be consistent throughout the week.

- **Establish a bedtime routine** that helps him relax and fall asleep. He could read or take a hot bath.

- **Set a screen time curfew.** Studies show that watching TV or using electronics 90 minutes before bedtime delays sleep.

lif·e hack
ˈlīfˌhak/
Noun

Informal
noun: life hack
1. a strategy or technique adopted in order to manage one's time and daily activities in a more efficient way.

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life hacks
If you're coughing uncontrollably, raise your hands above your head and it will stop!

#991
1000LifeHacks.com

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life hacks
Potatoes should be mashed using warm milk only. Cold milk will make your potato turn gray.

#996
1000LifeHacks.com

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life hacks
If ever you need a program you want for free (for example a video/photo editor) don't search for "free", search for "open source" to avoid limited trial versions, adverts and malware.

#981
1000LifeHacks.com

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life hacks
A bundle of chalk hung in a closet will absorb extra moisture and keep clothing fresh and dry.

#913
1000LifeHacks.com
January 2020

- January 1st—3rd: Christmas/Winter Break (No School)
- January 6th: Employee In-Service (No School for Students)
- January 7th—Students Return (Beginning of 2nd Semester)
- January 20th—MLK National Holiday (No School)
The East Baton Rouge Parish School System and all of its entities (including Career and Technical Education Programs) does not discriminate on the basis of age, race, religion, national origin, disability or gender in its educational programs and activities (including employment and application for employment), and it is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of gender by Title IX (20 USC 168) and on the basis of disability by Section 504 (42 USC 794). The Title IX Coordinator is Andrew Davis, Director of Risk Management (ADavis6@ebrschools.org) - phone (225) 929-8705. The Section 504 Coordinator is Elizabeth Taylor Chapman, Director of Exceptional Student Services (ETaylor@ebrschools.org) – phone (225) 929-8600. The Title II Coordinator is Dr. Sandra Horton, Administrative Director of Federal Programs (SBHorton@ebrschools.org) – phone (225) 922-5538.

All students have an opportunity to participate in Career & Technical Programs of Study including, but not limited to, areas of Health Care, Construction Crafts & Trades, Automotive Technology, IT Computer Technology, IT Computer Technology, Culinary Programs, Criminal Justice and Agriculture. Admission requirements for each course can be found in the student course guide/schedule packet of the individual campus where the course is being offered. Please contact the Guidance Counselor at the specific school site for additional information, program requirements and/or any questions you may have.

Parent Power is a publication of the East Baton Rouge Parish School System

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