

JANUARY 2015

# THINK SMALL

Several months ago I attended a happiness seminar. The first assignment was to select a practice to increase happiness on a daily basis. I chose the “add 15 minutes of exercise to your day” option. Since I already walked my dogs every morning, we added another lap to our current circuit. We now walk 45 minutes per day. If we walk less than three laps it feels weird. I didn’t know it then, but we had just created a new habit using a microresolution. In her book, *Small Move, Big Change*, Caroline L. Arnold describes the art and science of making microresolutions.

Microresolutions, unlike typical New Year’s resolutions, are small actions that when repeated eventually require no conscious thought. They simply become the way we do something – our personal autopilot, a habit. Microresolutions are easy, explicit and customized. They happen today, not at some undetermined date in the future. They involve doing, not being.

My second most recent microresolution resulted in skipping morning coffee. Fullers are coffee spillers. We can’t help it, it’s genetic. There is a trail of coffee in each of our homes and in each of our cars. Since I didn’t want to spill coffee in my new car, I made myself wait until I got to the office to have coffee. I usually drink tea at the office, so now it has been almost two months since I drank a cup of coffee in the morning. It was weird at first, but now it is rote. I still enjoy coffee but now it is more of a treat than a habit. And my car is still unscathed by the Fuller family curse!

Following is a small sampling of Ms. Arnold’s 100’s of examples of microresolutions across the usual domains of New Year’s self-improvement including: Organization, Eating Habits, Fitness, Finances and Relationships. It doesn’t matter where you start, but it is important not to take on more than two at a time.

## ORGANIZATION



Get a good night’s sleep to keep your mind sharp



Carry a notebook to record contacts, thoughts and notes in one place



Throw junk mail into the recycling bin before you bring it into the house



Add every new telephone number to your smartphone contact list

## EATING HABITS



Get a good night’s sleep to discern hunger from exhaustion



Stay hydrated by having eight glasses of water per day



Eat breakfast at home



Eat away from televisions and computers



the supplement  
FACILITATING VITALITY



# the supplement

FACILITATING VITALITY

## FITNESS



Get a good night's sleep to help muscles recover



Take two flights of stairs per day



Walk your dog



Get up every hour and move around for a few minutes

## FINANCES



Get a good night's sleep to reduce impulsivity



Develop zero tolerance for ATM fees



Wait 24 hours before purchasing something online or from a catalog



Only buy clothes that fit

## RELATIONSHIPS



Get a good night's sleep to improve your mood



Respond to the content not the tone of a communication



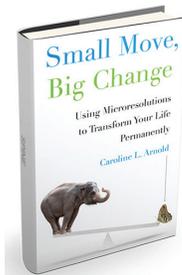
Take friends at their word



Resolve not to complain

The secret sauce to self-improvement, regardless of the domain, is getting a good night's sleep. Fatigue is the enemy of self-regulation, initiative, and decision making. Since all of these come from the same psychological resource and this resource is finite, the more that we can restore it through autopilot or sleep, the more successful we will be at any resolution, micro or otherwise.

## BOOK REVIEW



### *Small Move, Big Change* by Caroline L. Arnold

There are seven guidelines to making a microresolution. Be sure to take yours out for a test run and tweak it as needed until it becomes a habit.

1. **A microresolution is easy.** It is too small to argue about.
2. **A microresolution is an explicit and measurable action.** Just do it.
3. **A microresolution pays off up front.** It is actionable today.
4. **A microresolution is personal.** Do you too suffer from coffee spilling?
5. **A microresolution resonates.** It is a suggestion to change your mindset.
6. **A microresolution fires on cue.** I \_\_\_\_\_ every hour on the hour.
7. **Make microresolutions just two at time.** Set yourself up for success.

## RESOURCES



**PATRICIA M. FULLER, PhD,**  
Director, Wellness Engineering

Patricia M. Fuller has dedicated the last 17 years to designing and delivering wellness programs as a project manager and contractor for PricewaterhouseCoopers, LLP. Her training events earn consistently excellent ratings for her holistic approach and her real world application.

Prior to concentrating in wellness, Pat taught accounting and auditing as an adjunct professor at the University of Tampa. She earned her CPA designation in 1992 as a senior associate for Coopers & Lybrand. She has a Masters in Business Administration from the University of Utah.

Pat has a PhD in holistic nutrition. In 2010, she was board certified by the Holistic Nutrition Credentialing Board. Her areas of research include stress management and eating habits. She is a Certified Wellcoach and a member of the Institute of Coaching. She is an annual attendee to The Harvard Medical School Conference, Coaching In Leadership & Healthcare.

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