

THE WEIGHT-INCLUSIVE 411

The Weight-Inclusive Health Section and our 411 seeks to inform and resource the movement toward more evidence-based and weight-inclusive public health education, research and practice.

Oregon Public Health Association
Weight-Inclusive Health Special Interest Section

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In this edition of The Weight-Inclusive 411, we share some wisdom from author and podcaster [Aubrey Gordon](#), along with some of our own thoughts on New Year's resolutions.



This last month of the calendar year is full of reflection on how we want the next year to be different – changes we want to make and new goals. New Year's resolutions are a popular way to state our intentions. And, the weight-loss industry has a LOT of ideas for us. While selling us the most recent diet plans and weight loss drugs is certain to make these companies a great deal of money, they also send the basic stigmatizing message that the body you currently have should be different. These messages can greatly interfere with our enjoyment of end-of-year festivities and set us up for potential harm in the New Year. Considering her “failure” at past weight loss resolutions, Aubrey Gordon writes:

Mine was a life of abundance, but I could only see its lack. And New Year's Eve and Day became my meditation retreat: a time to focus on the self-flagellation I believed I had earned. Over the years, New Year's became a time of deep sadness—one that took days to move through.

For some, New Year's resolutions can seem confining, trite or even silly. For others, they can seem pointless, knowing the data on how few people stick with their resolutions for any length of time. Some, like Gordon, find freedom in opting out.

And then, in college, I just stopped. . . I didn't make peace with my body. I didn't learn to love it, didn't radically embrace it. I simply allowed myself to stop thinking about it. And suddenly, I felt so free. That's when I stopped making new year's resolutions.

But what if the “failure” rate has more to do with the types of resolutions we are making – ones given to us by others (looking at you, weight-loss industry) – rather than ones that come from within, according to our own values? Gordon continues,

In my mid-twenties, after a long break, I returned to resolutions. There was still such utility in them: taking time to take stock, correct course, more fully live my values, and more exuberantly pursue my blossoming young life. So I started making resolutions again—this time, not about my body, but about my character.

We got to wondering what a list of weight-inclusive New Year's resolutions would look like – things that align with our values and that are genuinely health supporting.

Nichole –

I resolve to continue working on being more self-compassionate. I grew up in a family and have worked in organizations that value independence, physical strength, and ambition. Although I appreciate these aspects of myself, I have also had to learn how to be gentle, empathetic, and kind to myself, especially when I am overwhelmed and in need of rest. In 2025, I strive to continue talking to myself in ways I'd speak to my most treasured friends and family members - in ways that leave me feeling embraced, valued, and cared for, regardless of my strength and productivity.



Lillie -

Over the past two new years, I've set really high reading goals for myself and I've met them! I'll round out 2024 with over 120 books under my belt. Most relevant to our work, I read *Belly of the Beast* by Da'Shaun L. Harrison and resolve to add more books about mutual aid, body liberation, fat justice, and activism in general to my list for 2025. Advocacy and activism will be such important parts of our public health work in the coming years!



Liz -

This year I continue to commit to protecting time in my schedule for movement that makes me feel good. This past year I found a sustainable weekly rotation of gentle yoga, swimming, weight lifting, and walking with friends. This variety of types of movement makes me happy and pain free.

Hannah -

I've spent the last 5+ years in my own “no resolutions” era and have enjoyed the freedom I've felt in it. However, now feels like an important time to keep our ultimate goals in view as we try to carve out an inclusive future. I do think resolutions will be helpful for doing that, so in 2025 I commit to: growing my coalition building skills, showing up for my communities even if/when things feel impossible and regularly daydreaming about liberation (because imagination is a form of resistance).

Debbie –

Gardening is such a health supporting activity for me, physically, mentally and touching so many senses. In 2025, I resolve to be more intentional about my time in the garden, which deserves set time in my calendar just as much as work meetings. Professionally, after I retire in June, I resolve to do what I can to support up and coming fat activists in their work.

Jamie -

In 2025, I resolve to continue my mental health wellbeing journey. COVID really took a toll on my mental health in ways I still can't shake. In 2024, I found a phenomenal therapist, started an antidepressant (and doubled it), and took to gardening. I am excited to do a second year of gardening. I've loved tending to houseplants, and I feel a sense of accomplishment in transferring some of that knowledge to the outside world, as well as the opportunity to get the sun on my face. I also want to get my pup out on some nature walks (some may call them “hikes”) and see how she does sharing trails with other humans and animals.



Check out these resources for more details:

- [“I Hated My Body. Then I Stopped Making New Year's Resolutions.”](#) by YourFatFriend (Aubrey Gordon), December 2018.
- [10 Reasons Not to Focus on Weight in the New Year](#) from Center for Body Trust.

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