

0066 New Year's Resolutions Are Notoriously Slippery, but Science Can Help You Keep Them 新年决心是出了名的难以实现，但科学可以帮助你实现它们

Table of Contents

1. New Year's Resolutions Are Notoriously Slippery, but Science Can Help You Keep Them 新年决心是出了名的难以实现，但科学可以帮助你实现它们
2. New Year's Resolutions Are Notoriously Slippery, but Science Can Help You Keep Them

1. New Year's Resolutions Are Notoriously Slippery, but Science Can Help You Keep Them 新年决心是出了名的难以实现，但科学可以帮助你实现它们

Every January /nearly half of Americans make New Year's resolutions 决议；正式决定. Unfortunately, several studies suggest that /most of these resolutions don't stick 粘贴；粘住. But it doesn't have to be that way.

Example 1. 标题

每年一月，近一半的美国人都会制定新年计划。不幸的是，多项研究表明，大多数这些决心都无法坚持下去。但事实并非一定如此。

You advocate 拥护；支持；提倡 putting a number on goals. Can you explain what you mean by that /and why it is important?

I think of goals like baking recipes 烹饪法；食谱. You need to list (v.) the exact 精确的；准确的 quantities: “walk 10,000 steps a day” is better than “walk a lot” /because it tells you how much (10,000 steps) and how soon (by the end of the day).

Example 2. 标题

你主张为目标设定一个数字。您能解释一下这是什么意思以及为什么它很重要吗？

我想到了像烘焙食谱这样的目标。您需要列出确切的数量：“每天走 10,000 步”比“走很多路”更好，因为它告诉您走了多少（10,000 步）以及多久（一天结束时）。

I am really fascinated by /what you call “the middle problem.” Could you describe what it is /and what can be done about it?

We’re highly motivated /at the beginning. Over time, our motivation declines /as we lose steam 蒸汽动力. **To the extent that** 到...程度；在...程度上 our goal has a clear end point, such as graduating 获得学位（尤指学士）；大学毕业 with a diploma 毕业文凭, our motivation **picks up** again toward the end.

Example 3. 标题

我真的对你所说的“中间问题”很着迷。您能描述一下它是什么以及可以采取什么措施吗？

一开始我们的积极性很高。随着时间的推移，我们的动力会随着失去动力而下降。如果我们的目标有一个明确的终点，例如获得文凭毕业，我们的动力就会在接近终点时再次增强。

In the middle, it's harder to get things done /and to do them right. In a study, Rima Touré-Tillery, now at Northwestern University, and I found that /people literally (强调事实可能令人惊讶) 真正地, 确实地 **cut corners** 抄近路; 以简便方法做事. We handed people a pair of scissors 剪刀 /and asked them to cut out five identical 完全相同的; 同一的 shapes. At first, they neatly 整齐地; 简单而聪明地 cut their shape, but **by the time** they got to the third shape, they started **cutting through more corners**. Then, toward the fifth shape, their shapes (n.) became neat again.

Example 4. 标题

在中间, 完成事情并把事情做好是比较困难的。我和现在西北大学的里玛·图雷-蒂勒里 (Rima Touré-Tillery) 在一项研究中发现, 人们确实会偷工减料。我们递给人们一把剪刀, 让他们剪出五个相同的形状。起初, 他们整齐地切割了形状, 但当他们到达第三个形状时, 他们开始切割更多的角落。然后, 到了第五个形状, 他们的形状又变得整齐起来。

The trick 技巧; 诀窍 is **to think of middles differently**. Katy, your “fresh start effect” is one intervention 干预, 介入 /that does this. It encourages people to use temporal 时间的, 与时间有关的 landmarks /such as the first day in the month /to “restart” a goal, so **instead of** being in the middle, you feel like /you're at the beginning again. Alternatively (引出第二种选择或可能的建议) 要不, 或者, I suggest that /you keep middles short: a monthly saving goal /is better than an annual saving goal.

Example 5. 标题

诀窍在于以不同的方式思考中间。凯蒂, 你的“新开始效应”就是实现这一目标的一种干预措施。它鼓励人们使用时间标志, 例如当月的第一天来“重新开始”一个目标, 这样你就不会觉得自己处于中间, 而是又回到了起点。或者, 我建议您保持较短的中间值: 每月储蓄目标比年度储蓄目标更好。

To keep motivated, when should we **focus on** what we've accomplished /and when should we **focus on** the work that lies ahead?

主 How we monitor (v.)监视；检查 progress 谓 matters (v.). At the beginning of pursuing a goal, you should **look back at** 回顾 your completed actions. Beyond the midpoint, you should **look ahead at** 向前看；展望未来 what's still missing.

In a study /Minjung Koo at Sungkyunkwan University in South Korea and I /conducted (v.) with a restaurant in Seoul, diners (尤指餐馆的) 就餐者 who purchased a few meals /were more likely to come back /if they were enrolled in a reward 励；回报；报酬 program /that emphasized how many meals they had already purchased.

But diners who had already purchased many meals /were more likely to come back /if they were enrolled in a reward program /that emphasized how close they were to winning a free meal.

Example 6. 标题

为了保持动力，我们什么时候应该专注于我们已经完成的事情，什么时候应该专注于未来的工作？

我们如何监控进展很重要。在开始追求目标时，你应该回顾一下你已完成的行动。过了中点，你应该向前看仍然缺少什么。我和韩国成均馆大学的 Minjung Koo 与首尔的一家餐厅进行了一项研究，发现购买了几顿饭的食客，如果参加了强调他们已经购买了多少顿饭的奖励计划，就更有可能回来。但是，如果已经购买了很多餐食的食客，参加了一项强调他们距离赢得免费餐食有多近的奖励计划，他们就更有可能会再次光顾。

主 **Looking back at** what you've done / 谓 reaffirms (v.)重申；再次确定 your commitment 承诺；许诺. If you're unsure /whether a goal is worthy or whether you can do it, **look back at** what you've achieved.

主 **Looking ahead** 谓 makes you realize how far you are from your target. If you're already committed, you'll want to **make more progress** /when you look ahead.

Example 7. 标题

回顾你所做的一切, 会重申你的承诺。如果您不确定某个目标是否值得, 或是可以实现, 请回顾一下您已取得的成就。

展望未来, 你会意识到自己离目标还有多远。如果您已经下定决心, 那么当您展望未来时, 您会希望取得更多进步。

How does our experience of fun or discomfort /influence (v.) our motivation?

You and I both have done research /showing that /finding the fun path to a goal is a key for persistence (n.)坚持; 锲而不舍. But why is fun so important? The reason is that /humans **respond** (v.) more strongly **to** immediate outcomes. If 主 doing something 谓 makes you feel good /while you do it, you're more likely to persist /than if you think it'll make you feel good /at some distant 遥远的; 远处的 point in the future.

Example 8. 标题

我们的乐趣或不适经历, 如何影响我们的动机?

你和我都做过的研究表明, 找到实现目标的有趣途径是坚持的关键。但为什么乐趣如此重要? 原因是人类对直接结果的反应更强烈。如果做某件事让你在做的時候感觉良好, 那么你更有可能坚持下去, 而不是你认为这会让你在未来某个遥远的时刻感觉良好。

Fun is an immediate outcome. It increases (v.) intrinsic 固有的; 内在的; 本身的 motivation, the sense /that we are doing something **for its own sake** 为了某人 (或某事) 起见; 因某人 (或某事) 的缘故. You found that /people who listen to

an audiobook 有声读物 /when they exercise, exercise more. They're intrinsically motivated **to engage in** (使) 从事, 参加 the exercising-plus-listening combo 混合物; (尤指食物的) 杂烩, 组合餐.

Example 9. 标题

乐趣是立竿见影的结果。它增加了内在动机, 即我们为了事情本身而做某事的感觉。您发现, 锻炼时听有声读物的人锻炼得更多。他们本质上有动力参与锻炼加聆听的组合。

We also **respond to** the feeling /that we're learning. In a very recent paper /that is currently in press at Psychological Science, my colleagues and I found that /even slight discomfort —**to the extent that** it's immediate 立即的; 立刻的 — can increase motivation /if it's appraised (对某人的工作) 作出评价 in a certain way. When students in improvisation 即兴创作; 即席演奏 classes /**sought** (v.) discomfort **as** a sign /that they were growing their abilities, they were more **engaged in** the learning process. We all like immediate 立即的; 立刻的 results.

Example 10. 标题

我们也会对我们"正在学习的感受"做出反应。在《心理科学》杂志最近发表的一篇文章中, 我和我的同事发现, 即使是轻微的不适(只要是立即发生的), 如果以某种方式进行评估, 也可以增加动力。当即兴创作班的学生"将不适视为他们能力不断提高的标志"时, 他们会更加积极地参与学习过程。我们都喜欢立竿见影的结果。(小确步)

A common mistake is /**to envision** (v.) 展望; 想象 your future self **as** more goal-oriented and less fun-seeking /than your present 现存的; 当前的 self. When you think you won't care about fun, you choose the wrong job, workout 锻炼 or healthy meal 一餐所吃的食物. .标题

一个常见的错误是, 想象未来的自己比现在的自己更有目标、更少追求乐趣。当

你认为自己不关心乐趣时，你就选择了错误的工作、锻炼或健康饮食。

You **devote** 把...用于,献身;致力;专心 a whole section of your book **to** social support. 主 What kind of social support do you think **系** is most important to achieving a goal, and how can people **go about** 着手处理, 进行 finding it?

Example 11. 标题

您在书中用了整整一部分来讨论社会支持。您认为哪种社会支持对于实现目标最重要？人们如何才能找到它？

When I watched the Olympic Games last summer, it didn't inspire 激励; 鼓舞 me to exercise. But when my spouse 配偶 expects (v.)等待; 期待; 盼望 me to join him in our basement /for our morning workout 锻炼, it motivates me to get out of bed /and into my yoga pants. The best social support /comes from someone who wants you to succeed.

Example 12. 标题

去年夏天我看奥运会时，并没有激励我去锻炼。但是，当我的配偶希望我和他一起去地下室进行早晨锻炼时，我就会起床穿上瑜伽裤。最好的社会支持来自希望你成功的人。

If readers could remember just one thing /from all the research you cover in Get It Done, what would you want it to be /and why?

Example 13. 标题

如果读者能够从您在“完成它”中涵盖的所有研究中只记住一件事，您希望它是什么以及为什么？

You influence yourself /by changing your circumstances /and how you think of them. Often, framing (v.)框架; (以某种方式) 表达 the same situation in a different way /can **provide** a substantial 大而坚固的; 结实的; 牢固的 boost **to** your motivation.

Example 14. 标题

你通过改变你的环境和你对它们的看法, 来影响自己。通常, 以不同的方式描述相同的情况, 可以极大地提高你的动力。

2. New Year's Resolutions Are Notoriously Slippery, but Science Can Help You Keep Them

Every January nearly half of Americans make New Year's resolutions. Unfortunately, several studies suggest that most of these resolutions don't stick. But it doesn't have to be that way.

You advocate putting a number on goals. Can you explain what you mean by that and why it is important?

I think of goals like baking recipes. You need to list the exact quantities: "walk 10,000 steps a day" is better than "walk a lot" because it tells you how much (10,000 steps) and how soon (by the end of the day).

I am really fascinated by what you call "the middle problem." Could you describe what it is and what can be done about it?

We're highly motivated at the beginning. Over time, our motivation declines as we lose steam. To the extent that our goal has a clear end point, such as graduating with a diploma, our motivation picks up again toward the end.

In the middle, it's harder to get things done and to do them right. In a study, Rima Touré-Tillery, now at Northwestern University, and I found that people literally cut corners. We handed people a pair of scissors and asked them to cut out five identical shapes. At first, they neatly cut their shape, but by the time they got to the third shape, they started cutting through more corners. Then, toward the fifth shape, their shapes became neat again.

The trick is to think of middles differently. Katy, your “fresh start effect” is one intervention that does this. It encourages people to use temporal landmarks such as the first day in the month to “restart” a goal, so instead of being in the middle, you feel like you're at the beginning again. Alternatively, I suggest that you keep middles short: a monthly saving goal is better than an annual saving goal.

To keep motivated, when should we focus on what we've accomplished and when should we focus on the work that lies ahead?

How we monitor progress matters. At the beginning of pursuing a goal, you should look back at your completed actions. Beyond the midpoint, you should look ahead at what's still missing. In a study Minjung Koo at Sungkyunkwan University in South Korea and I conducted with a restaurant in Seoul, diners who purchased a few meals were more likely to come back if they were enrolled in a reward program that emphasized how many meals they had already purchased. But diners who had already purchased many meals were more likely to come back if they were enrolled in a reward program that emphasized how close they were to winning a free meal.

Looking back at what you've done reaffirms your commitment. If you're unsure whether a goal is worthy or whether you can do it, look back at what you've achieved. Looking ahead makes you realize how far you are from your target. If you're already committed, you'll want to make more progress when you look ahead.

How does our experience of fun or discomfort influence our motivation?

You and I both have done research showing that finding the fun path to a goal is a key for persistence. But why is fun so important? The reason is that humans respond more strongly to immediate outcomes. If doing something makes you feel good while you do it, you're more likely to persist than if you think it'll make you feel good at some distant point in the future.

Fun is an immediate outcome. It increases intrinsic motivation, the sense that we are doing something for its own sake. You found that people who listen to an audiobook when they exercise, exercise more. They're intrinsically motivated to engage in the exercising-plus-listening combo.

We also respond to the feeling that we're learning. In a very recent paper that is currently in press at Psychological Science, my colleagues and I found that even slight discomfort—to the extent that it's immediate—can increase motivation if it's appraised in a certain way. When students in improvisation classes sought discomfort as a sign that they were growing their abilities, they were more engaged in the learning process. We all like immediate results.

A common mistake is to envision your future self as more goal-oriented and less fun-seeking than your present self. When you think you won't care about fun, you choose the wrong job, workout or healthy meal.

You devote a whole section of your book to social support. What kind of social support do you think is most important to achieving a goal, and how can people go about finding it?

When I watched the Olympic Games last summer, it didn't inspire me to exercise. But when my spouse expects me to join him in our basement for our morning workout, it motivates me to get out of bed and into my yoga pants. The best social support comes from someone who wants you to succeed.

If readers could remember just one thing from all the research you cover in *Get It Done*, what would you want it to be and why?

You influence yourself by changing your circumstances and how you think of them. Often, framing the same situation in a different way can provide a substantial boost to your motivation.