



Realistic Resolutions

Dear Aunt Bossy,

At the risk of being predictable, what do you suggest as a good way to keep New Year's resolutions?

Lazy Lou

Dear LL,

One of the biggest secrets to keeping New Year's resolutions is making sure they are things you really, really want to accomplish. I'd love to learn to fly a plane, but that isn't going to happen because I'm not willing to put the time and effort in, much less wrestle with the fear.

Be realistic.

Aunt Bossy

Written by Susan Murphy
Tuesday, 09 January 2018 14:01

Break your resolutions into tiny steps. Rather than resolve to go to the gym every single day, try for once a week. Discipline yourself to always go on the same day. If you do that, you can always add on. Don't give up gluten, sugar, coffee, and carbs. Give up one. Once you have that under your belt - so to speak - add another.

Don't get up an hour earlier if that is terribly challenging for you. Get up ten minutes earlier.

When it comes to "random acts of kindness," start by making yourself aware of what acts should become habits. For example, when you park, make sure you leave enough room in front and back for another person. Greet anyone providing you with a service with warmth and respect. Buy gifts when you run across something that is just perfect for someone, regardless of the occasion. Offer support at any level for someone who needs it.

Don't try to quit Facebook cold turkey. Get it off your phone and go from there. Same with a news obsession.

Speaking of obsessions: check yours. If you find they have to do with confirming your worth, your intelligence, your being "right," or being overwhelmed with hate for another person, temper the activity that feeds them. If you only read "The Daily Kos" or "American Spectator," read a little of both. Spend time doing or learning something new that enhances your feelings of self-worth that has nothing to do with your treasured obsessions.

Get the picture? Measure your progress in millimeters. Good luck, and don't be too hard on yourself, except for the obsession cleanup. Keeping those around is poisonous.

Best, Aunt Bossy

Weird Walking

Aunt Bossy

Written by Susan Murphy
Tuesday, 09 January 2018 14:01

Dear Aunt Bossy,

I saw you walking your dog and cat on leashes and now see you walking the dog on a leash with the cat meandering along beside you. How did you do that?

Janet the kitty lover

Dear Janet,

Thank you so much for noticing one of my greater accomplishments.

The training started with the introduction of Frankie the pup and Jean Jacques, the cat. Jean Jacques was born in the cave (basement) of our house in France, and when my husband arrived in the spring, he was greeted by a momma and her three babies who were about a month old. Jean Jacques moved upstairs shortly after that.

When Frankie and I arrived a month later, we didn't do all the things that experts recommend, like keeping them in different rooms sharing a door so they can smell each other. We just acted like we expected them to behave like siblings. When I arrived, my husband sat on the sofa with JJ on his lap and I joined them with Frankie on mine.

Whenever I pet one, I would pet the other. After three days, they were interacting, and a week later they played together with abandon.

Jean Jacques has always been determined to go outside. (Yes, we know the downside, but consider his quality of life.) I put him on a leash when he was three months and always took Frankie with me when I dragged him down the road on very sort excursions.

Aunt Bossy

Written by Susan Murphy

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After that, he learned to like the leash, and one day he escaped when I opened the door to take Frankie out, and followed us around the neighborhood. That is how it has been ever since.

I'm sure this is in Jean Jacques' nature because it wasn't that difficult. He refused to learn how to use the human toilet even after months of using one of those expensive training kits, so he isn't easy. Also, do not forget he is French. They love dogs.

If you have a kitten, give it a try.

Best, Bossy