

*We are deeply saddened by the passing of Kier Murphy, professional school counselor. Kier spent 13 years as a counselor in the West Central School District. For the past year and a half he was counseling at the elementary level in Hartford. He obviously has had a positive influence to many. Our sincere condolences go to Kier Murphy's family, relatives, colleagues, current and former students, and many friends.*

## Sustaining Your New Year's Resolution in 2015

By Mark J. Britzman

*The creation of a thousand forests is in one acorn.*  
-Ralph Waldo Emerson



Many of us made New Year's Resolutions last year that weren't sustained. You're not alone as research touts that only eight percent of new goals made at the beginning of each year are achieved. Fortunately, there are many people that still keep hope alive as 45 percent keep trying and develop fresh commitments each year while 38 percent of Americans have given up on the ritual altogether. The other 17 percent are sporadic and will hopefully become energized with a new way of life for 2015.

Please do not let the past dismal statistics impact your present and future. We can learn what the eight percent of successful individuals do to help increase the likelihood that you too will achieve your new goal in 2015. You may have a bucket list or what Choice Theory calls your "Quality World." This is similar to a huge picture album of everything you enjoy and want in life. What you want will be more achievable when linked to life-fulfilling needs such as love and belonging; empowerment and achievement; freedom and independence, and of course, fun and enjoyment.

Your 2015 New Year's Resolution needs to be refined to one specific shift in attitude and behavior. That is, keep it simple and do not try to make your "bucket list" come alive all at once. Goals are much more likely to be realized if you can shrink change. Establish a daily routine that puts you in a position to feel good and get closer to your ultimate goal. An effective system has been created by an internationally renowned psychologist, Dr. Robert E. Wubbolding, called the WDEP system that can be described as follows:

- \* **Determine a specific Want;**
- \* **Identify optimal Direction to ensure what you are doing is getting you closer to what you want;**
- \* **Evaluate your choices and consequences to ensure you are on the optimal path;**
- \* **Continue to develop a malleable Plan that is intrinsically motivating and provides specific target to realize that you get what you want in 2015!**

The following ingredients will ensure that your New Year's Resolution will be successful:

- Develop a positive mindset beginning with the phrase, "I can...!" Hope and optimism are the fuel that jumpstarts the positive change process.
- Be reminded of successful changes you have made in the past.
- Focus on an individual that cares about you and wants you to succeed with your goal.
- Try to think more about what you have rather than ruminate on what you don't have in life that leads to social comparison.
- Develop a process that is enjoyable rather than a "boot camp" regime that can rarely be sustained and become a lifelong endeavor.
- Surround yourself with "talent scouts" rather than "flaw-finders." Positivity from others acts as a facilitating force.
- Try to focus on small shifts in your daily routine (e.g., I am going to get my gym clothes out and put them on when I wake up in the morning).
- When something does not work, simply try a different path.
- Lapses are just learning opportunities and reminders of what does not work.
- The longer you can sustain your new habit, the more likely it becomes a way of life.

*One small shift in your life can be transforming*



## Impressive Web Links:

South Dakota Counseling Association

<http://www.sdcounseling.org/>

American Counseling Association

[www.counseling.org](http://www.counseling.org)

American Mental Health Counseling

<http://www.amhca.org/>

American School Counseling Association

[www.schoolcounselor.org](http://www.schoolcounselor.org)

American Personnel Association

[www.myacpa.org](http://www.myacpa.org)



## Impressive and Well-Researched Books:

- ◆ ***Hardwiring Happiness***  
by Rick Hanson, Ph.D.
- ◆ ***How Children Succeed***  
by Paul Tough, Ph.D.
- ◆ ***Inevitable: Mass customized learning***  
by Charles Schwab & Beatrice McGarvey, Ph.D.
- ◆ ***Resilience: The Mastering of Life's Greatest Challenges***  
by Steven M. Southwick, M.D. & Dennis S. Charney M.D.
- ◆ ***Mindset: The New Psychology of Success***  
by Carol S. Dweck, Ph.D.
- ◆ ***The Mindfulness Toolbox: 50 Practical Tips, Tools & Handouts for Anxiety, Depression, Stress & Pain***  
by Donal Altman, M.A., LPC
- ◆ ***The Mindful Way through Depression: Freeing Yourself From Chronic Unhappiness***  
by Mark Williams, John Teasdale, Zindel Segal, and Jon Kabat-Zinn
- ◆ ***The Resilience Factor: 7 Keys to Finding Your Inner Strength and Overcoming Life's Hurdles***  
by Karen Reivich, Ph.D., and Andrew Shatte, Ph.D.
- ◆ ***Switch: How to Change Things When Change is Hard***  
by Chip Heath and Dan Heath
- ◆ ***The Myths of Happiness: What Should Make You Happy, but Doesn't. What Should't Make you Happy, but Does***  
by Sonja Lyumbomirsky, Ph.D.
- ◆ ***Why Don't Students Like School?***  
by Daniel T. Willingham, Ph.D.
- ◆ ***Radical Acceptance: Embracing Your Life with the Heart of a Buddha***  
by Tara Brach, Ph.D.
- ◆ ***Live Long, Die Short: A Guide to Authentic Health and Successful Aging***  
by Roger Landry, MD, MPH
- ◆ ***Fully Present: The Science, Art, and Practice of Mindfulness***  
by Susan L. Smalley, Ph.D. & Diana Winston
- ◆ ***The Courage to Teach (10th Anniversary Edition): Exploring the Inner Landscape of a Teacher's Life***

