



Jan 05, 2016 07:00 GMT

8 New Year's resolutions that will make you happier

It's that time of year when, after too much booze and food, we start thinking about our intentions to improve ourselves, with New Year resolutions.

Let's ignore the fact that they are rarely kept beyond the first week of January. It's time for a shinier, healthier, happier New-Year-new-you. Best intentions a-plenty.

To kick-off your journey to self-improvement in 2016, we've come up with a few suggestions for resolutions that might make you happier, and none of them involve pounding a treadmill.

1. Put down your phone

We have become obsessed with tapping touchscreens, instagramming meals and checking social media and it really does get in the way of enjoying real-life.

Try switching off your phone more often. Your family and friends will enjoy having your full attention. And you'll notice and appreciate things you have been missing out on.

2. Get off the bus a stop earlier

Research by Greener Journeys found that the daily short walk to and from the bus stop and your destination can burn 22,630 calories a year, with daily bus users clocking up the annual equivalent of 11 marathons. So why not regularly get off the bus a stop earlier? It'll mean a little extra walking and if you do that every journey, the benefits will soon add up. Walking is good for the soul and helps you lose weight and keep fit.

3. Stop hating your job - get a new one

Life is too short to stay in a job you loathe. Especially when we spend so much of our lives at work. So don't wait for the light at the end of the tunnel, go down there and light it yourself!

Look for a new North East job – [North East Jobs](#), [Fish4Jobs](#), [Reed](#), [Indeed](#), [Guardian Jobs](#)

Or why not update your skills to help you get a better job or change your career? Check-out these training providers that offer professional qualifications [Pitman Training Newcastle](#), [Newcastle College](#), [Gateshead College](#), [New College Durham](#), [Sunderland College](#), [Northumberland College](#)

4. Get out more

Why not make it your New Year's resolution to see more of your friends and more of our wonderful region? Days out with your mates and family are a sure-fire way to good times.

Social time is highly effective when it comes to improving our happiness, even for introverts. Lots of studies have found that time spent with friends and family makes a big difference to how happy we feel, generally. Check out some of [these local attractions](#) that you can visit with friends, all accessible by bus.

5. Do things you've been putting off

This one is all about getting those nagging tasks off your back. This can relate to all sorts of things, such as paying bills, having a clear out, changing your energy provider, returning a favour or errands.

What you need to do right now to feel good is put aside your excuses and procrastinating ways and accomplish something. Make a list of all the things you've been putting off and tick them off one by one. You'll feel great about it because that's one less thing weighing on your subconscious.

6. Help others

Helping others who need our support can be one of the most rewarding things you can do. If you have the time to become a volunteer, do that. If you don't have much time to spare, just aim to spend 5 minutes of your day helping others – this can be as simple as re-tweeting or sharing a post to help a friend to calling your gran to see if she's ok.

If you want to volunteer in the north east, have a look at these opportunities in your area: [Children North East](#) , [Volunteering in Gateshead](#), [Volunteer Centre Newcastle](#), [Volunteering in Northumberland](#), [Volunteer Centre Sunderland](#), [Key Project in South Tyneside](#), [Volunteering in North Tyneside](#).

7. Get more sleep

Research shows that people who don't get enough sleep become more sensitive to negative emotions like fear and anger.

Nearly six in 10 people in Britain now get less than seven hours' sleep a night putting them at risk of cancer, diabetes and heart attacks.

A study by the University of Hertfordshire found that 80% of people are making sleeping more difficult by using technology before bed which exposes them to disruptive blue light. Blue light is present in morning light so late night gadget-use can trick the body into speeding up the metabolism.

Check out these [ten top science-based tips for a good night's sleep](#).

8. Be grateful

Appreciating what you've got is a key to being happier, research shows. This is a simple thing that can make a big difference to your outlook.

Why not share three good things that happen each day with a loved-one, and go out of your way to show your gratitude when someone helps you.

In an experiment where some participants took note of things they were grateful for each day, their moods were improved just from this simple practice.

[Go North East website](#)