A Brief History of New Year's Resolutions—and a Smarter Way to Set Yours

As the calendar turns and a new year begins, many of us feel inspired to hit the reset button. New Year's resolutions have become a tradition tied closely to self-improvement—but where did this idea actually come from? I was interested so here's what I found:

The practice of making New Year's resolutions dates back over 4,000 years to ancient Babylon. During a 12-day festival marking the start of the new year, Babylonians made promises to their gods to repay debts and return borrowed items. Later, the ancient Romans continued the tradition, dedicating the new year to Janus, the two-faced god of beginnings and transitions, by making vows for better behavior in the year ahead. Over time, these promises shifted from religious commitments to personal goals—bringing us to the modern resolutions we know today.

Enough history....now for some interesting and helpful tips.

At the gym, the New Year often brings a surge of motivation, energy, and ambition. While setting resolutions can be powerful, it's important to be smart about how you approach them. Big goals are exciting, but sustainable progress comes from realistic expectations, consistency, and patience.

Remember: slipping up doesn't mean you've failed. Missing a workout, losing motivation for a week, or making mistakes along the way is part of the process—not the end of it. Progress isn't linear, and perfection isn't required. What matters most is showing up again.

As you set your resolutions this year, focus on building habits rather than chasing quick results. Celebrate small wins, adjust your goals when needed, and most importantly, be kind to yourself. A healthy lifestyle is a long-term journey, and every step forward—no matter how small—counts.

Here's to a new year filled with strength, balance, and self-compassion

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