

Resolution reads: 6 books for a better you in the New Year

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It's that time of year again. We're not talking about finding a date or a dress for New Year's Eve or watching college bowl games. January 1st is upon us and that equals a whole passel of resolutions, and the mantra that this year, you'll actually keep those resolutions. Up your chances for success by checking out the latest crop of how-to books. You'll be healthier, happier, thinner, more organized — whatever your heart desires — in no time; that is, if you can actually read the books and stick to the suggested regimen for more than a week.

Health: “Spark” by John Ratey MD (Little, Brown and Company). Instead of working out to reshape your body or lose weight, try focusing on the other benefits of aerobic exercise. Ratey claims that you can defend yourself against a host of medical issues, such as memory loss, depression, ADD, Alzheimer's, and addiction. Reading this might be as effective as a trainer in keeping you on an exercise schedule.

Mood: “The Happiness Diet” by Tyler Graham and Drew Ramsey (Rodale). Kill two birds with one stone and get healthy and happy. Much like Ratey does in “Spark,” Graham and Ramsey use the latest data to show how the mind is affected, this time by our diet. The book shows how the foods we eat contribute to the increasing rates of mood disorders in the U.S. It details foods that will boost our mood, and includes shopping lists, sample menu plans and happy food recipes. Just thinking about the recipes for Brussels Sprouts with Bacon and Lemon Macarons make us feel better already.

Story: Family matters: 5 books that put the ‘fun’ in dysfunction

Weight Loss: “The New Atkins for a New You Cookbook” by Colette Heimowitz (Touchstone). Whether or not you follow a serious Atkins plan, you'll dig these low-carb recipes — everything from snacks and sandwiches to entrees and desserts — for their ease and tastiness. Most require only a few ingredients and all can be prepared in 30 minutes or less. It also includes a handy Atkins primer so you can understand the precepts of the plan, as well as its four phases.

1. More in books

1. Salman Rushdie opens up about his life under a fatwa
2. ‘The End of Men’: Now is the era of the female breadwinner
3. In new memoir, Bieber says he's ‘Just Getting Started’
4. ‘Fifty Shades’ author's husband: I'm not Christian Grey
5. Prom: An American rite of passage

Money: “The Money Class: How to Stand in Your Truth and Create the Future You Deserve” by Suze Orman (Spiegel & Grau). Orman reimagines the American dream — including the home, family, career and finance — and outlines a complete retirement plan that takes into account our country's current climate. Orman pulls no punches, offering frank and sometimes unconventional advice that will guide you toward smart financial choices. With this book in hand, start the year off on the right financial foot.

Organize: “The Secret Lives of Hoarders” by Matt Paxton with Phaedra Hise (Perigee Trade). Yeah, there are lots of books that can help you create a neat, orderly home, but Paxton — the resident clutter cleaner for reality show

“Hoarders” — shares stories of extreme hoarding. If reading about the folks who squirrel away everything from food to newspapers to cats doesn’t make you immediately start chucking stuff and tidying up, you might want to apply to the TV show and get some help from Paxton and other professionals.

Story: Holidays on ice: 10 books to help heal a broken heart

Relationships: “Attached: The New Science of Adult Attachment and How It Can Help You Find and Keep Love” by Amir Levine and Rachel Heller (Tarcher). Single? Dating? Working on your marriage? Regardless of your relationship status, the authors offer a scientific explanation for your relationship style and patterns, claiming that your patterns stem from your early dynamic with your parents. Through case studies and questionnaires, you’ll be able to assess if you are anxious, avoidant or secure, and use the information to forge more fulfilling and functional relationships.

Tell us, what resolutions are you making this year?

Jennifer Worick is a New York Times bestselling author of more than 25 books and a publishing consultant; she can be found at The Business of Books.

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