



New Year's Resolutions

A New Year. A time to start over, re-evaluate, and re-prioritize our lives. And of course to do that, we must make lists of goals that even the Dos Equis "Most Interesting Man in the World" would find impossible to achieve. Why do we put this kind of pressure on ourselves? Aren't the holidays a test in sanity already? And that's before we set ourselves up to fail by January 3rd. But since Socrates said no life should go unexamined, I guess there's no better time for me to think about resolutions I can really keep. At least until March.

I will not spend countless hours agonizing with guilt over all of the things I should have done for my child. Instead, I will devote that time to agonizing over my child's future.

I will not take my child's Ritalin.

I will stop using my child with autism as a scapegoat to my boss for missing so much work. Instead, I will make up stories about my other children.

I will use my real name at my child's school.

I will remind myself that one day my child's actions that may horrify me now will make me a fortune when I write my book.

I will teach my child the difference between the dog *liking it*, and the dog *tolerating it*.

I will stop telling my child she may only wear that outfit on an official "Mix-N-Match" day.

I will simply agree with my child's logic that french fries and potato chips are vegetables.

I will refrain from striking the next person that gives my child a dirty look at the store. Furthermore, I will stop fantasizing about hitting that person and ending up in jail where I will have a free place to stay, someone to cook for me, no kids to chase after, I can lie in bed all day and have opportunity to read a book.

I will not worry about the unbalanced \$.12 in my checkbook. More realistically, I won't stress over the \$112 I can't balance.

I will count chasing my eloping child down the street as exercise.

I will stop petitioning The Lego Group to require parental consent with each sale of small, clear Legos.

I will not skip my child's Back to School Night, or any other opportunity to talk to his teacher just because it happens to fall during Monday Night Football.

I will acknowledge that some days the only way I will be able to get my kids to unify and work together as a team is if I make myself their common enemy.

I will stop telling the young salesman at Chuck E. Cheese, "Yes, install a bar," when he asks if there is anything else he can do for me.

I will not accept my kids' excuse that they don't know how to operate a vacuum when they are able to master a DS game or new feature on the TV in minutes.

I will make a brain game of "I can name that sound in three notes" when I hear my children destroying something.

I will recognize that there will never be an acceptable answer to my question of why there are lo mein noodles on the ceiling and big screen TV.

I will mandate that there be at least ONE day out of the year that I don't have to be Thinker-in-Chief.

I will not use the same tactic on my children that I use on my hair - threatening it with hot weapons and then ultimately using some type of glue-like substance to keep it quiet and under control.

I will petition the IOC to add Olympic sports I could compete in: the 500 meter sprint across a parking lot after a child who is not watching for cars; the lifting and carrying of a combined child weight of 140 lbs; the sleep deprivation marathon; and the backpack long-throw.

I will stop being jealous that my children have better technogadgets than I do.

I will not insist that the equation for Time Out is one hour for each year of the child's age.

When I have to change 12 batteries in one morning, I will refrain from announcing that apparently I'm not the only one my youngest is draining the life from.

I will stop accusing my children of stealing tactics from cops and terrorists, using sleep deprivation to break me.

I will refuse to acknowledge Dip-N-Dots as "the ice cream of the future".

I will start believing that if I can't see it, it isn't dirty.

I will pretend to understand why I have to pay my child's bill even though the lab ran the wrong test. I will also pretend to understand why the Wiggles wear outfits rejected by Star Trek and Bob Dylan when he sings.

I will stop purchasing pets for my pets.

*Written by Shelly McLaughlin, Pathfinders for Autism
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