



MENTAL HEALTH

# "Auntie" Stress

by Marianna Paulson

*Happy New You*



How many of you start the year by saying, "This year I'm going to ..."? The drive, the desire, the intention - it's strong in the beginning, but after a few weeks we all know what tends to happen. The momentum has been lost. The fervor has fizzled fast!

I'm sure that you are familiar with these words: "Why did I do that AGAIN?" or "How could I have...?" In fact, you could write your own country and western song with the litany of whys and why nots!

Strategies are needed to get you through the tough times - times when you would rather slouch on the couch or munch through that bag of crunch or sup from that caffeine-filled cup.

One way to deal with these set-backs is to look upon them as learning situations. We are human and we do make mistakes. Rather than beat yourself up (again) ask what you learned from this mistake? (Better to learn the first time, than having to repeat it again and again - like the movie Groundhog Day!) We have set-backs because we've had lots of practice with the "old way" - you know, the one we've made the resolution to change.

It's like we're on automatic pilot, and before you

know it, we've eaten 500 ml of Hagen Daaz or chewed our nails, or whatever non-beneficial habit we do. The truth is that there's a physiological reason why we do what we do in regard to both the good and bad habits.

One way to overcome this is to start to get curious and notice, be aware, observe, watch (whichever word works for you) what your tendency is when you are stressed, upset, angry, hurt, etc. and want to do what it is that you have resolved not to do.

Use the power of your heart to make the changes - get quiet and listen to your heart and what it wants for you. The heart is the first organ to develop in the fetus and there's a reason why there are over 70 heart-related idioms. The heart is love. We are meant to be well, whole and joyful.

Instead of making the usual list of resolutions this year, reflect upon how far you've come (small accomplishments do count!) and celebrate those accomplishments. Then, get quiet and ask what you want unequivocally, enthusiastically and whole-heartedly?

Happy New You!

**Marianna Paulson**  
"Auntie Stress"

**Change of Heart Stress Solutions**

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