

New Year, New You: The “Fresh Start” Effect

Turn a new page. Getting closure. Putting the past behind us.

What do all these phrases have in common?
For one, they’re all very familiar to us during times of change, such as at the end of a working quarter or even at the beginning of a brand new year.

This is because we’re most likely to think about bettering ourselves or making changes in our lives at times that mark the end of one phase, and the beginning of another.



In psychology, this is known as the **“Fresh Start”** effect.
According to Katharine Milkman, a professor at The Wharton School, University of Pennsylvania,

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We’re more likely to take action towards our goals after days that mark the start of a new time period and represent new beginnings. ”

But why talk about it now?

Well, for one thing, they affect our goals and how we look at achieving them.

**To understand this better,
we first need to
take a look at –**



Temporal Landmarks

Simply put, these are the days and moments that **stand out** as having **more meaning than other days** and gives us a feeling of making a “fresh start” to achieve our goals.



According to the author Sam Thomas Davies,

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When it comes to attaining meaningful goals, temporal landmarks are particularly effective because they make us feel more distant from our past failures. ”



Achieving goals requires consistent work and effort. On a daily basis, we have many distractions that can easily derail us from our daily effort to make those goals a reality.

We regularly look back at what we haven't done - and then, achieving those goals seem to take longer and longer with each passing day.

This is why temporal landmarks are so effective – because they give us a chance to start over and reset the clock on achieving our goals.

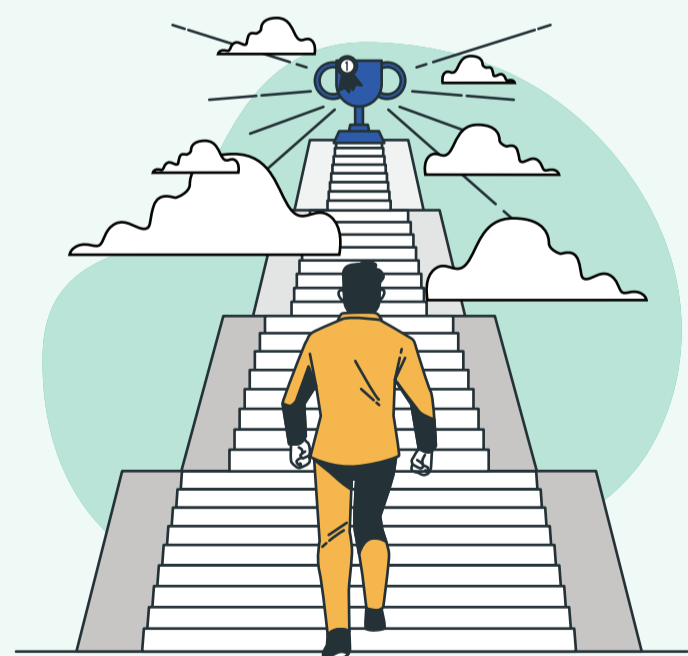
How to Keep the “Fresh Start” Going

Yes, it’s possible! The enthusiasm and excitement of a fresh start can be kept up in the ways listed below.



- Find days or time periods that are significant to you. Are you more likely to be motivated during the beginning of the week, or the beginning of the month? Choose what works for you, not because it’s a universally agreed-on day, but because it means something to you, personally.
- If you drift off target, reset to a new date. It’s okay if you feel your motivation dipping now and then – you’re only human! Commit to your goal, and reset by choosing another date that’s significant. Begin again – it’s never too late.

- Remind yourself of why you’re doing this – for your future self. Yes, goals take a long time to be achieved, but think about how you’ll feel when you finally do achieve them! Think about it this way – with every decision you make now, how will it affect your future self? This can help remind you that you’re working towards something bigger and better.



Your “fresh start” could be the beginning of a lifelong journey towards fulfilment. It’s never too late to begin – if you set your mind to it. Good luck!