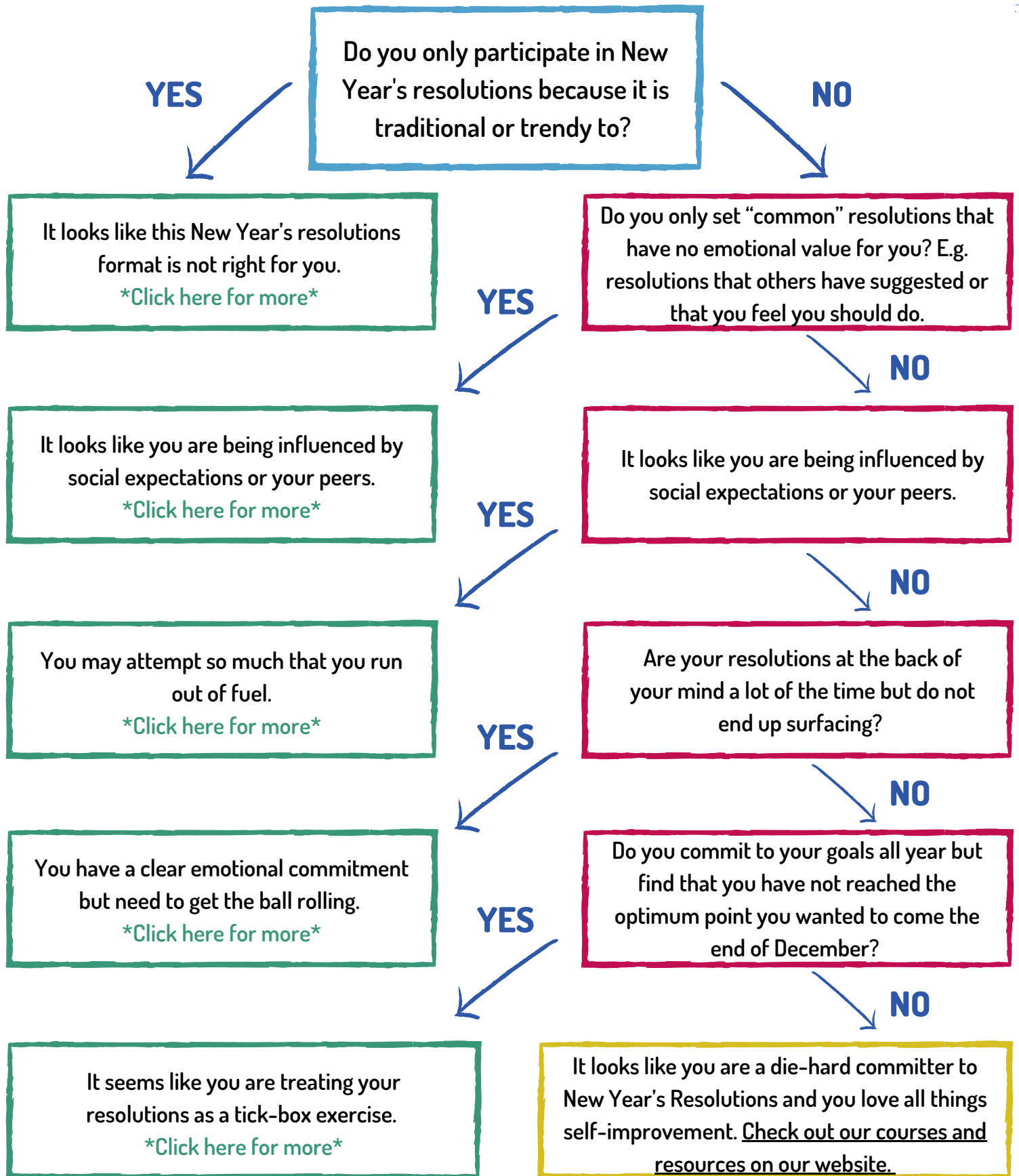




Are New Year's Resolutions right for you?

Explore why you may have felt defeated in the past or continue to hit a brick resolution wall each January with this resource pack.

WHY HAVE YOUR NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS NOT WORKED IN THE PAST?





It looks like this New Year's resolutions format is not right for you.



The format of New Year's resolutions is to sit down and reflect on your life, who you are as a person and how you spend your time. You then set resolutions to work on for the next twelve months. Explore what it is about this process that does not work for you and what would work better.

Different timelines:

A whole year may be too long a time frame to lay out – some people work best when a deadline is approaching as it motivates them to achieve a task. Consider a different time frame for your goals that you feel is more appropriate. You could also break down your goal and set multiple smaller deadlines. For example, in one month's time I want to achieve X, but each week leading up to that, I want to achieve Y1, Y2 and Y3.



Facing one area of your life at a time:

Sitting down on January 1st and addressing your whole life and all your aspirations might be somewhat overwhelming. Instead, you could identify what one priority is for you and improve on that for some time until you feel ready to move on to a different goal.





It looks like you are being influenced by social expectations or your peers.

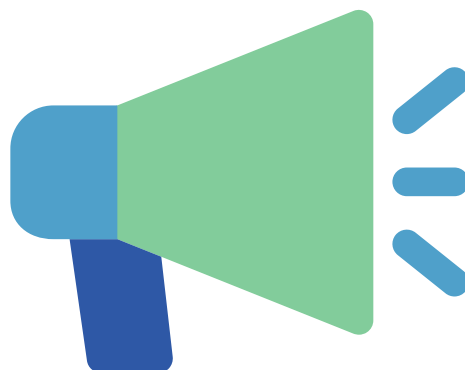


Reflect on your New Year's resolutions from previous years: if you set yourself goals like save more, spend less, organise my life, exercise, etc. then it is likely you fall into this category. Try to put external influences aside and concentrate on what you want.

Common resolutions: Having realised that the inspiration for your resolutions was a mould you were trying to fit, question whether any of these resolutions are going to stay on your list or not. It may be that you really do want to improve in some of these areas but not all of them. Realise where your emotional drive lies.



Unique resolutions: For any typical resolutions that do not feel right for you, say goodbye to them and come up with some new ones that you genuinely care about. It is important for these to align with your personal standards and not those of others.





You may attempt so much that you run out of fuel.



You may have set too many resolutions, tried to do them all at once or jumped to the end result without working on the preparatory steps first. You have a whole year so try to enter into your resolutions with a steadier approach rather than acting on a wave of motivation that leaves when the tide goes out.

Running before you can walk:

When thinking of your New Year's resolutions, you probably pictured the end result which evoked great motivation within you. You may have then acted on this temporary hit of motivation which left when you faced a struggle or did not see the results you wanted to. To avoid this, you need to mentally prepare for each stage leading up to your achievement. Slow the whole process down.

High expectations:

If your initial effort does not pay off straight away, you might find yourself losing heart with your resolutions early on. Do not be hard on yourself or view this as a failure - not achieving what you had hoped to one month into a twelve-month process is absolutely okay. Consider lowering your expectations of yourself by setting fewer resolutions and expecting the process to take a long time. Self-improvement should not be rushed.





You have a clear emotional commitment but need to get the ball rolling.



You seem to have carefully chosen resolutions that you deeply care about which is the first step to success. The next step is starting to action them: you could do this spontaneously or by putting a plan together for yourself to follow. The key in this situation is to find a way of making your resolutions a normal part of your life.

Time constraints:

You may have a busy schedule and use any spare hour that you get to unwind and relax. In cases like this, your resolutions will need to be embedded into your routine rather than have their own slot. Try to think of some creative ways to incorporate your goals into your day-to-day life. For example, to spend more time with a friend, you could agree to video call them on your lunch break every Friday. This alters something you do anyway rather than adding to your to-do list.

Where to begin:

If you do have the time to put aside, you may simply not know where to start. If you are confronting a big goal or something that you have not given yourself much detail for, consider breaking your goal down. Face one resolution at a time. What are the stages and milestones for your resolution? Your starting point and outcome are equally important.





It seems like you are treating your resolutions as a tick-box exercise.



Remind yourself that these are resolutions, not tasks. On reflection, you will learn that New Year's resolutions are paving slabs on the road of self-improvement. You are an evolving, growing human with no cap on your development.

Reflection:

Take some time to think about how far you have come in one year, five years, ten, and appreciate the person you are right now. It is great to have goals and a desire to better ourselves, but we must not let that skew our perception of our previous progress.



Being present:

You might find that you do not spend a lot of time being present. Taking the focus away from tomorrow leaves you with reflecting on the past but also soaking up your life in the moment. What can you see, hear and feel right now? Participate in more activities that make you concentrate purely on the present. This could be crafts, exercise or doing puzzles, for example.

