As the new year gets underway, almost half of us will have made New Year’s resolutions. Usually, we start strong, but our success tapers quickly. Within one week, 25 percent of us have abandoned our resolutions and only half stay true to resolutions for more than six months.

Health- and weight-related resolutions top the list of life improvement categories, yet statistics show that the vast majority of people who lose weight on diets regain it – and many gain back more than they originally lost.

Here’s my advice: Change your plan from “New Year’s Resolutions” to “Right Now Resolutions.” Why? Because the mistake that many of us make is setting unrealistic and abstract goals, which lead to failure and disappointment. High-level goals are attainable, but if you set them too high, a small setback leads to a feeling of failure, which is followed by complete abandonment of the goal rather than thinking of it as one small misstep on a long-term journey.

So, if you want to have a sustainable impact and positive change, start with something small and achievable, and keep going. You can conquer great things – run a marathon, lose 20 pounds, learn a new language, have better relationships, get out of debt – but you can most effectively do so by starting with doing something, anything – one manageable step toward that goal.

But when it comes to your resolution, get specific. Celebrate every step – and the accumulation of steps – in the right direction.

Perhaps your resolutions fall into one of the following themes:

- Optimal health
- Financial security
- Strong and constructive relationships
- More joy in your life

Every day, beginning now, break down those resolutions into concrete and achievable goals, such as:

- Drink at least one glass of water before leaving home
- Bring leftovers for lunch instead of heading to a restaurant
- Send a thank-you note or email to a friend who has helped you
- Listen to your favorite songs on your way to work

Tomorrow, do the same, and then perhaps a little more. Some days you will take BIG steps, but most days it will be minuscule steps – and that is fine. They will add up. Just keep moving forward.
Healthy UH

Earn 50 Healthy UH Engagement points by completing a qualifying UH class over six to eight weeks. These classes include S.M.A.R.T.: Stress Management and Resilience Training, Tobacco KnockOut, UH OptiWeight™ and UH Dance4Fitness. You will also earn 50 Healthy UH Education points.

The S.M.A.R.T. program is an eight-week workshop designed to help improve your ability to react positively to stress. We also are offering a Mindfulness program, a series of eight interactive workshops designed to improve your ability to focus and positively impact your overall health, as well as a meditation class. To find a complete list of classes and register, click here.

Enroll in UH OptiWeight to learn practical, customized strategies from dietitians designed to help you improve your health and nutritional habits. Classes begin in January at multiple UH locations and online. More information on class locations and how to register can be found through this link.

For information and to register and train for the fight to quit tobacco for good through Tobacco KnockOut classes, click here. Classes begin in January at multiple UH locations and online. This is an approved smoking cessation class for UH medical plan participants.

The next offerings of our popular UH Dance4Fitness begin in early 2017. The UH Dance4Fitness program is focused on teaching participants synchronized dance movements to music including jazz, pop, oldies, country, Latin, R&B, contemporary, hip-hop, blues and more. More information on class locations and how to register can be found through this link.
Last June, 68-year-old Larry Sekula’s heart was no longer able to pump the blood his body required. Left with no other options, and with Larry in dire need of a heart, his physicians listed him as status 1A on University Hospitals’ transplant list. Just 19 days later, Larry received his miracle.

Larry’s cardiac issues began in 2006 when he was diagnosed with myocarditis – a virus that attacks the heart, causing heart failure. At that time, he underwent open heart surgery at a hospital in his hometown of Erie, Pennsylvania. Although he retired from General Electric post-surgery, Larry was able to enjoy his retirement, spending time with his family and golfing whenever possible.

Then Larry’s heart began to show signs of failure. In November 2015, he had a pacemaker and defibrillator implanted to help his heart maintain a normal rhythm.

The following April, a diagnosis of ischemic cardiomyopathy took him back to the hospital. His heart had weakened to the point that it could no longer pump an adequate amount of blood on its own. A left ventricular assist device (LVAD) was placed in his left ventricle – the main pumping chamber of the heart – to keep him alive. But it was clear that Larry needed a new heart.

“Dad, you’re headed for a transplant,” said Debra Carlson, RN, Larry’s daughter and a registered nurse at University Hospitals Geneva Medical Center. A cardiac nurse for more than 20 years, Debra knew what her dad was facing.

After being in the hospital for more than a month after receiving the LVAD, Larry recovered with Debra and her husband at their home in Perry. One day, Debra noticed one side of her father’s face drooping, and he was rushed to the emergency department at UH Geneva Medical Center. He was experiencing mini-strokes due to blood clots forming near his heart. Larry was stabilized and transported by helicopter to UH Cleveland Medical Center and placed in the Neurological Intensive Care Unit.

“I felt very comfortable at UH,” said Larry. “I felt comfortable with my doctors, nurses and surroundings.” Michael Zacharias, DO, a cardiologist with UH Harrington Heart & Vascular Institute who specializes in heart failure, was one of Larry’s primary physicians during his stay at UH Cleveland Medical Center.

“Dr. Zacharias approached me and asked if I would entrust UH with my heart transplant,” said Larry. “Without hesitation, I said yes.”

The condition of Larry’s heart, coupled with his extreme risk for a life-threatening stroke, warranted the hospital’s highest status for transplant. At that point, all he could do was wait.

“The staff in Tower 5 at UH Cleveland Medical Center made the time I spent there wonderful,” Larry said. “I got to know people there and see how caring they truly are. Not only did they lift my spirits, but I saw how they raised each other’s spirits as well.”

On June 26, 2016, Larry received what he calls a miracle. An organ donor had given him the most precious gift – a heart and a new chance for life.

The 12-hour surgery was performed by Soon Park, MD, Division Chief of Cardiac Surgery, UH Harrington Heart & Vascular Institute, and Basar Sareyyupoglu, MD, a UH cardiac surgeon specializing in heart and lung transplantation. The outcome has been astonishing: Larry was discharged on July 8 to his daughter’s home to recover. Within two months, he was back on the links, golfing with friends.

“Seeing him today, you’d never know he went through such a struggle with his health,” said Alexandria (Lexi) Bojansky, RN, BSN, Heart and Lung Transplant Coordinator at UH. “He has even come back to UH to talk with a patient who has been waiting for a new heart. Seeing Larry’s remarkable recovery has renewed the patient’s hope.”

UH worked closely with the Louis Stokes Cleveland VA Medical Center to provide and coordinate Larry’s care. “My biopsies, echocardiograms and bloodwork were all done at the Cleveland VA,” said Larry. “As a veteran, I’m grateful that this resource is available to all those who served. I appreciated the ease with which the two organizations collaborated to get me where I am today.”

Looking back, Larry is grateful to everyone who has been involved in his care. Along with the compassionate people he encountered, he also credits his own inner strength for carrying him through. When asked what he would say to others facing serious health issues, he said, “Stay strong, believe in yourself and place your trust in UH.”

To learn more about the Advanced Heart Failure and Transplant Center at UH Harrington Heart & Vascular Institute, please visit UHhospitals.org/Heart.
Faith lives on.

Her heart beats in the chest of a 48-year-old married woman with three children who waited nearly a year for an organ donor. Her lungs went to a 61-year-old married mother of three who loves crocheting and computer games and spent three full years on a waiting list.

And a 56-year-old married father was able to look forward to the holidays, golfing and fishing once again with his three children thanks to a new liver from a young woman he never met.

University Hospitals Parma Medical Center recently lost a spunky, sweet Dietary employee who passed away unexpectedly. But several grateful individuals gained new organs thanks to an important conversation 25-year-old Faith Parsons once had with her husband of just one year.

“If there’s anything positive to take from something so tragic, it’s giving life to someone else,” says Bill Parsons, whose wife influenced his own views on organ donation. “She was a part of helping me come around fully to the idea.”

One organ donor can save and heal eight lives and enhance up to 50, according to Lifebanc, which coordinates organ donation for 80 hospitals, including the 18 within the UH system. Every 10 minutes, a new name is added to the waiting list. In Northeast Ohio alone, more than 2,000 people are waiting.

Faith had no warning that her life would end. The Parma woman was taking a nap on the couch when her husband arrived home from work and realized she had stopped breathing. She never regained consciousness.

Focusing on giving renewed life to another human being can help a grieving family cope. UH Parma Medical Center’s Intensive Care Unit staff and Lifebanc worked with the family on this important decision.

“Even with the best of technology and care, a person sometimes does not survive,” says Michelle Adams, Manager of ICU Services. “You can still affect five to six people who live better and longer because of what we do. You can make a huge difference.”

Faith had more gifts to give. Her kidneys went to two different men, ages 38 and 56. Her bones, connective tissues, skin and corneas also were recovered for potential transplant, research or medical education. Organ donation is a complex, carefully orchestrated process that must occur within hours of a donor’s passing. UH Transplant Institute has decades of experience in transplant surgery at UH Cleveland Medical Center.

Lifebanc seeks to dispel common myths that patients cannot donate organs if they are too old or ill. Organ donation does not violate any religion, prevent a normal viewing of the body or interfere with any lifesaving measures that a family chooses.

“Families tell us that sometimes it’s the only ray of sunshine in an otherwise tragic day,” says Jillian Frazier, Lifebanc’s Director of Development and Community Services. “This is another special way to honor a family member’s wishes to help save and heal lives.”

If you don’t have the little red heart on your driver’s license indicating your choice to be an organ donor, join the Ohio Donor Registry.
Controlling Prehypertension with Stress Management: A Study

Half of all adults in the U.S. have blood pressure that is too high yet not high enough to be treated with medication.

This condition, known as prehypertension, is being studied by the University Hospitals Connor Integrative Health Network, with the help of a research grant from the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute. Participants are being sought to participate in this research, which is called the Serenity Study.

Here’s what it is about: Most doctors recommend treating prehypertension with lifestyle changes such as improving diet, exercising and losing weight. However, some scientists take that belief further, positing that stress reduction may also lower blood pressure, as well as encourage important lifestyle changes.

So if you are someone whose blood pressure is slightly elevated and you are interested in learning more about how to manage stress, you may want to participate in a free stress management program at UH Connor Integrative Health Network.

This joint project by University Hospitals, Kent State University and the University of Pennsylvania is designed to test whether stress management training can help lower blood pressure among individuals with prehypertension. Ninety participants are being sought.

The study will also evaluate whether this stress management training can help increase the lifestyle behaviors that are proven to lower blood pressure in individuals with prehypertension.

To be eligible for the study, you should be between 21 and 70 and a nonsmoker who is not taking blood pressure medication. You also must have prehypertension, which means having systolic blood pressure in the range of 120 – 140 or diastolic blood pressure in the range of 80 – 90.

If you want to participate, your blood pressure will be measured several times to see if you are eligible. Then, those who are eligible and want to take part in the study will be randomly assigned to a stress management program.

The stress management training program involves eight weekly 2.5-hour classes, in addition to a full-day stress management retreat. A thorough assessment of blood pressure will be conducted at the beginning and end of the eight-week program. We will also follow up with participants at six and 12 months following the program for further blood pressure assessments. The results will be compared to those of participants in a control group who do not go through stress management training.

In addition to receiving eight weeks of group-based stress management, eligible participants may also receive monetary compensation for their time. If you are interested in learning more about this important health study and would like to participate, please email SerenityStudy@Kent.edu.
As a physician who specializes in disease prevention and health promotion, I am always looking at scientific data to validate hyperbolic headlines claiming to be the next “fountain of youth.” We all know that smoking is bad, exercise is good, trans-fat/saturated fat and added sugar are villains, and unmanaged stress will likely cause physical and emotional distress.

I recently attended my first UH Dance4Fitness program, which is offered through the Healthy UH program at the UH Management Services Center (and other locations). This one-hour dance program, developed by the UH Accountable Care Organization and taught by Belinda Haywood, has been a huge success at UH. (See page 2 of this publication for how to sign up.) This prompted me to review the literature of the hidden health benefits of dance.

Dancing enhances your life in myriad ways that can best be remembered by the acronym “FRESH”:

- **Fun** – Dancing is fun, and you will be surrounded by happy, like-minded people learning a new skill or mastering a new dance.
- **Relaxing** – Although it’s a vigorous work out, dancing provides an enjoyable escape from your daily routine and a chance to relax, relieve stress, and focus on yourself and your body.
- **Emotions** – Dance provides an emotional outlet so that you can express your feelings through body movements with passion and energy.
- **Social** – Dance is an easy, non-threatening way to meet new friends and bond with old friends as you conquer the cha-cha, rhumba and salsa.
- **Healthy** – Dancing enhances your cardiovascular system, muscle tone and mobility, according to recent research from the University of Illinois, Chicago. It also increases flexibility, strength, balance and confidence.

I would like to wish everyone a happy and healthy 2017. And remember, a journey of a thousand miles starts with a single step. So get your dancing shoes and start the journey!

In health,

Dr. B
Thank you to the more than 16,000 people who participated in the 2016 Healthy UH program. Over the past year, the program:

- Doubled the number of wellness program participants
- Doubled the amount of wellness incentives earned by participants
- Increased the number of health education course attendees
- Increased the exercise level of participants through measurement of active minutes

The 2017 Healthy UH program will continue to organize incentives around Exercise, Engagement and Education. The program will expand to include:

- The ability to earn Healthy UH Exercise incentives through tracking steps or active minutes via a wearable fitness technology device
- A wearable fitness technology device replacement program to provide participants who may have lost their device a new Fitbit Zip or credit toward another model
- An increased number of classes available to earn Healthy UH Education incentives
- Expanded opportunities to earn Healthy UH Engagement incentives through community and UH service and quarterly challenges

More information will be shared in early 2017 about these items. Information about opportunities to earn Healthy UH incentive points for Quarter 1 of 2017 can be found at this link.

2016 Healthy UH Codes

Healthy UH cards with codes and digital codes used to get credit for Healthy UH points from wellness activities that were issued in 2016 expired on Dec. 31, 2016. If you were unable to use your promotional code card prior to Dec. 31, 2016, please contact Asset Health via email at Support@assethealth.com or by calling 1-855-444-1255 Monday through Friday from the hours of 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. EST to receive the appropriate replacement code(s) for use in Quarter 1 of 2017. Please note that Healthy UH points earned in 2016 will only be redeemable through the end of 2016 and, if you contact Asset Health for a replacement code, until March 31, 2017.

Have Other Healthy UH Questions or Need Help?

If you need assistance with the Healthy UH program, please email HealthyUH@UHhospitals.org or contact Asset Health via email at Support@assethealth.com or by calling 1-855-444-1255 Monday through Friday from the hours of 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. EST.
Catching Up with Two Run Club Members

As nurse manager of the emergency department at University Hospitals Elyria Medical Center, LaDonna Bonnett spends a good part of each shift running for her job. The busiest ER in Lorain County definitely keeps her on her toes.

A member of the Fitness Center at UH Avon Health Center since 2001, LaDonna added running to her workout routine two years ago. “I noticed that the Fitness Center had a running club, and I was intrigued,” she said. “Because I was relatively new to the sport, I decided to join both to improve my running as well as for the camaraderie.”

The Run Club at the Fitness Center meets on Wednesday evenings for 12 weeks. Open to both experienced runners and those who are just starting out, the program is customized to each participant’s goals. Led by Jordan Smith, a certified personal trainer and certified long-distance running coach through the Road Runners Club of America, the Run Club offers something for everyone. The group not only runs together – both at the center and at various locations throughout the county – they also receive advice and educational sessions from UH physicians and other specialists. According to Smith, “The right training plan, the right support group and the right shoes make all the difference.”

Greg Kulow, UH Elyria Medical Center’s Director of Safety Services and Emergency Management, is also a member of the Run Club. He has been working out at the Fitness Center for nearly 15 years and has been running most of his adult life. He averages 10 – 12 races per year, including half-marathons, 10Ks and 5Ks. But he joined the Run Club in 2016 for the accountability it creates. “There are many advantages to being in the club, but I find that being a member keeps me invested,” he says. “I get a lot of encouragement from Jordan and the others, and it makes me want to keep getting better. Being part of the club has added structure to my runs.”

In addition to runs of varying mileage, members run interval sprints and hills to add variety to their sessions. The Run Club is open to both members of the Fitness Center and nonmembers. Each 12-week program costs $50 for members and $65 for nonmembers. If you are interested in learning more, please contact Jordan Smith at 440-988-6973 or email Jordan.Smith@UHhospitals.org.
UH OFFICE OF SUSTAINABILITY

Energizing University Hospitals

Join the more than 1,000 University Hospitals employees who have made a commitment to helping improve the environment by reducing their energy impact. Reducing our energy consumption leads to cleaner air, which leads to healthier and more energized employees and patients.

Energy-Saving Actions

At Work:

• Avoid “phantom” energy use. Unplug electronics once they are charged, or use central power strips.
• Every time you leave a room, remember to turn off the light switch, especially at the end of the day.
• Turn your computers to hibernate or sleep mode when you are away from your desk to save energy.
• Use natural light in your workspace if possible, and turn off task lighting when not in use.

At Home:

• Open the window shades in the winter to bring in warm sunlight during the day; close them at night.
• Switch to low-flow faucets and showerheads at home to save on water bills.
• Replace or clean home air filters regularly to prevent a slow system that requires more energy.
• Properly insulate and seal air leaks throughout your house to prevent heating or cooling loss.

Additional tips and resources can be found in our Energy-Saving Actions Guide.

Employee Energy Challenge – Result of Phase I, Oct. 15 – Nov. 30

Some 1,066 UH employees systemwide completed Phase I of the Employee Energy Challenge by filling out the online Energy Quiz as a part of energy awareness. Participating employees were quizzed on energy consumption and asked to take energy-saving actions and track energy usage for three months. Participating employees will receive a survey via email by March 1 asking about their actions and energy tracking, as a culmination of Phase II of this challenge.