

The end of the year, when one chapter ends and the next begins. Earth crossing the finishing line in its race around the sun. In other words: Happy New Year!

It's also the time of the year when you'll hear everyone you know throw around the term “New Year's resolution” and the even more anxiety-inducing term “goal.” In my opinion, these terms should be nixed from the English language or, preferably, locked in a vault until we are able to use them more responsibly. There's simply too much pressure associated with the words resolution and goal, especially when it pertains to a new year and new chapter of your life. I read somewhere that 43% of all New Year's resolutions fail by the end of February.

Unfortunately, I'm nearly always part of that statistic, and I'm either disappointed in myself or forget that I ever made a resolution in the first place. In an effort to nix the terms resolution and goal from my vocabulary this time around, I will simply refer to them as “Things to Think About Throughout the Year” or “Things to Consider, Adjust, Amend, or Drop Entirely if I Feel Like It.”

Whether it's getting in better shape, being more financially responsible, maintaining a more organized home, taking more time for hobbies, ridding yourself of bad habits, or even reading more books, everyone has at least one thing to think about at the beginning of a new year. As noted by the 43% rate of failure by February, keeping up with the list of self improvements can be challenging.

Fortunately, there are hundreds – if not thousands – of books written to provide guidance and keep us on track. The subjects of these books range from healthy cookbooks to better home organization, reclaiming your identity to simply being happier. Here are a couple that provide helpful tips to keep you on track throughout 2023!

*Happier At Home* by Gretchen Rubin follows the author's implementation of her “happiness project.” Each chapter in the book focuses on a specific aspect of Rubin's life – her possessions, her marriage, parenthood, time, and body to name a few – and detailing her effort to find happiness in each one. She challenges her readers to pinpoint exactly what brings them joy, satisfaction, and engagement, as well as the not-so-nice feelings of guilt, anger, boredom, and remorse. Rubin asks the reader to take action steps to boost happiness in everyday life, proactively seeking joy rather than waiting to be happy.

The newest book on this list is Eve Rodsky's *Find Your Unicorn Space*. Rodsky touches on something that everyone struggles with: prioritizing creativity. She defines Unicorn Space as “the active and open pursuit of creative self-expression in any form that makes you uniquely you.” Starting with taking time to create and ending with the legacy one's creativity leaves for the world, Rodsky fills her narrative with creative exercises, quizzes, and insightful discussions with a plethora of individuals from all over the world. This all leads to the conclusion that creativity is not an option, but rather an essential element of humanity.

Finding happiness in my everyday life and finding time to unleash my creative side are things that I often struggle with throughout the year – and I have a feeling that I'm not the only

one. So here are two things to think about for 2023: let's work to boost our happiness and do something creative every single day. Happy New Year, everyone!