

January
2022

Fire Line Newsletter

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From the Balcony – Winding Down 2021 and Welcoming 2022

As we wind down this past year, I want to take this opportunity to thank all of our members for their selfless dedication and service to our community. We've had a challenging year in large part to the lingering pandemic throughout our country. Throughout the pandemic our members have served our community without hesitation. We have seen some of our programs and routines return to normal but we still have a while before we are back to pre-pandemic days.

In January we will bid a fond farewell to Engineer Kevin Doll who is retiring with nearly 30 years of service to our City. Congratulations, Kevin. We will usher in seven new recruit firefighter/paramedics in early January as we prepare to staff a fourth ALS Ambulance in 2022. Speaking of ambulances, the ambulance we have on order (2021) has been set back several months due to the ongoing shortage of computer chips which have caused a backlog in receiving chassis to ambulance manufacturers.

The "Bucket Brigade" to benefit the Salvation Army continues to bring joy to our community thanks to the dedication and drive of many of our members. We continue to find ways to support our

community and I know how much the Salvation Army appreciates our continued partnership.

May this holiday season be filled with gratitude and joy for you, your family and friends. I look forward to another year of providing excellent service to the Fond du Lac community.

*Until Next Month,
Be Safe and Be Well*

**Fire Chief
Peter O'Leary**



FOND DU LAC FIRE RESCUE OPERATIONS

By: Assistant Chief
Erick Gerritson



New Recruits

Finding, then connecting new firefighters with the right team: Putting new members on a course that fits their skills and goals helps recruitment and retention efforts.

Every department is jockeying for that individual who will do the fire service justice and serve as a great asset to the community.

Back in 1998, the newspaper was a primary medium to reach potential applicants. It was what first introduced me to the fire service. There were also fire service recruiters who put in long hours to help recruit prospective members from high schools and local colleges and through other community-based recruitment efforts. Now in 2021, with retention issues growing, plus changing demographics in many communities, it's vital that fire departments employ new strategies to find – and keep – quality members who are ready to dedicate a lifetime of service.

FINDING AND HIRING THE IDEAL FIREFIGHTER

The fire service has always reached out to people who possess the desire to be public servants and pillars of their communities.

Fire service leaders typically know the characteristics they want their firefighters to possess. The ideal firefighter is a team player and a critical thinker – essential skills during

a highly stressed environment. Being able to think on their feet could be critical for a patient, crew and the individual firefighter.

There are opportunities for applicants to attend study groups, practice agility sessions, and possibly fire station ride-outs. These steps are often generated through the applicants' peers, some of whom are already firefighters. This begs the question to fire service recruiters: Are you allowing the applicant into your world before they are hired?

These efforts are followed with an approach to firefighter retention called "probationary firefighter migration efficiency." This could be a pattern to help retain the members who have a desire to become pillars in their communities as fire and EMS personnel.

RETENTION OF FIRE SERVICE RECRUITS

Retention is a critical issue for the fire service, as leaders seek ways to retain good firefighters who may be considering moving on to other options. But is the grass really greener on the other side? There have been members leave for brighter paths, and some have returned. But the key question is still this: How do we keep them from leaving in the first place? What are the key elements to retaining firefighters?

Each applicant was driven to the fire service for a reason.

Maybe it was a career move, the dynamics of the department or a financial improvement.

Unfortunately, as we've seen over and over, many firefighters state in exit interviews that they ultimately felt undervalued – an issue that could be addressed by pairing the firefighter with a crew that fits their skills sets and values.

Another issue affecting fire service retention is the divisions among generations. Many have argued that baby boomers and millennials are simply going to operate in different ways, and we should therefore adapt so they can thrive. One way to achieve this is to place probationary firefighters with a crew of similarly aged members to ease that initial exposure to the fire service.

Even if we try to match the probationary firefighter to the crew, it is the probationary firefighter's performance that dictates their destination. There should be a clear pathway from the training division, established by the academy training officers. After all, they have spent the most time with the recruit, so they likely have the best perspective on where the recruit needs to migrate.

This concept of migration efficiency is one approach to helping a new recruit fit into the fire service and its culture.

New Recruits... Continued



PROBATIONARY FIREFIGHTER MIGRATION EFFICIENCY

Joining the fire service can be a shocking initial experience. New members have shown their willingness to give it their best shot, but there will need to be guidance, leadership and mentorship to help the probationary firefighter make progress in their new environment. Now is the time to remember the proverb, "It takes a village to raise a child."

The training division has a method of molding new recruits in the image of the fire service and its foundation. The training division's direction is to

ensure that both parties, new recruit and established fire crews, can gel. This starts with putting firefighters on a path to success.

During the new firefighter's probationary period, they are rotated through several fire stations. This helps the new firefighter adjust to the job. The training division sets a direct path for these rotations before the recruit is released to the operations division. This is where pairing comes in. The new recruit should be paired with a crew that best fits the new member's skill sets.

It's important to map out a new recruit's pathway, not just for the initial exposure to the fire service and its

operations, but also for the efficiency of the migration.

The training division has the best view of the recruit's attributes to help them transition and remain with the department. Having the new recruit's rotations match their attributes allows for a positive exposure to the fire service.

Each fire academy teaches the foundations of fire, EMS and rescue. The recruit may excel highly in one of these areas, if not all three.

The fire service training division should map the recruit's entire probationary period with these attributes in mind. Aligning the recruit's pathway with established

leaders who share similar attributes can help foster retention and create a long-term positive experience that they will use to serve the community with highest upmost care.

This transition is a leap of faith, just as it was when first reaching out to the applicant. Remember, it takes a village to raise a child.

*Reference: Brian Watson from
www.firerescue1.com*

**Until Next Month...
Stay Safe!!!**



This is drone footage of a recent fire. What a different perspective this photo shot gives of an incident. A drone is located in the AC Chief of Operations vehicle along with the Command vehicle.



Operations by the Numbers

November, 2021	By Month		Year-To-Date	
PREVENTION	Last Year	This Year	Last Year	This Year
Total Inspections	214	299	2219	2442
Total Defects	89	167	1100	1047
SUPPRESSION				
Alarms Involving Fire	14	5	119	97
Fire Mutual Aid Given	1	0	12	14
Fire Mutual Aid Received	0	0	3	5
Service/Good Intent Calls	62	47	544	521
False Alarms/False Calls	19	31	284	324
Other Calls	9	14	158	123
Total Fire Alarms & Calls	104	97	1105	1065
EMS				
Total Ambulance Calls	586	560	5819	5897
Total Fire/EMS Responses	690	657	6924	6964
Fire Property Loss	\$111,800.00	\$8575.00	\$803,700.00	\$413,243.00
Fire Contents Loss	\$66,005.00	\$500.00	\$392,071.00	\$171,465.00
Engine Assisted EMS Calls	228	234	2482	2317



Current Status of New Construction

- River Hills Mixed Use Development on S. Main St. – *Building 12 is under construction*
- Forest Mall / TJ Max – *Complete*
- Country Lane Cottages – *101, 201, 301, 401 complete*
- Sister Catherine Drexel Homeless Shelter – *Under Construction*
- Hobby Lobby – *Construction/Renovation has started*
- Big Lots - *Completed*
- BCI Burke – *Addition beginning*
- Summit Auto – *Addition will be starting soon*
- Brooke Street Lofts – *Planning Phase*
- Kwik Trip (Schreiners) – *Demolition Started*
- Taco Johns (West Johnson) – *Under Construction*

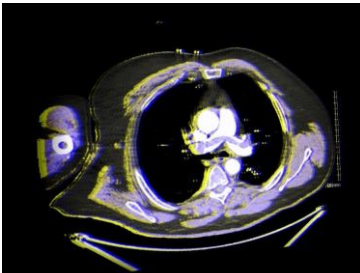


The Code Summary

By: Assistant Chief Todd Janquart

Prehospital Tools to Identify Pulmonary Embolism

Staff at a rehabilitation facility called 922 for a patient with a rapid decrease in mental status. The EMS crew found the patient lying in the recovery position in a bed with medical staff present. The patient was lethargic and could not communicate due to a recent stroke. The airway was intact with good chest rise and fall and the patient was diaphoretic, slightly tachypneic and had rapid/weak radial pulses. A 12-lead ECG was performed and confirmed tachycardia with a right bundle branch block (RBBB) and no ST-segment elevation or depression.



This cross sectional imaging (CT Scan) reveals the saddle pulmonary embolism described in the case.

The patient was transferred to the ambulance for further evaluation and management. The cardiac monitor confirmed sinus tachycardia with RBBB at 102 BPM, SpO₂ ~85% on room air, BGL 125 (~7.0mmol/L), and the side stream end-tidal carbon dioxide [P_{et}CO₂] level was 15 mm Hg. The patient was afebrile placed on high flow

oxygen via non-rebreather, and a 0.9% normal saline bolus was initiated. During transport, there were minimal changes to the patient's heart rate (102), SpO₂ (96%), blood pressure (92/60 (MAP 71)), and P_{et}CO₂ (18mmHg).

In the Emergency Department the patient was afebrile, vitals notable for mild tachycardia, hypoxia, and the patient was started on 2LNC with improvement in SpO₂. Repeat ECG showed sinus tachycardia with RBBB. A fluid bolus was given.

Chest x-ray was negative, lactate was moderately elevated (3.7), which improved to 1.8 after fluids. BNP and troponin were not elevated. A CT chest angiogram showed a large saddle pulmonary embolus with signs of right heart strain. A heparin drip was started, and the patient was admitted to the cardiac ICU.

Discussion

In the case above, the patient suffered from shock secondary to massive pulmonary embolism (PE). A PE is a venous thromboembolism, a blood clot that likely originated in the deep leg or pelvic veins.

There are many tools at our disposal that can be used to help identify a potential pulmonary embolism, but which tool is the best? Is it our technical monitoring devices that can provide us with blood

pressures, oxygen saturation, heart rate, end-tidal CO₂, BGL, and temperatures? Or is it something far more straightforward, such as our bedside and clinical skills as EMS providers? Or is it a combination of both?

P_{et}CO₂ is the gold standard to confirm endotracheal intubation and monitor high-quality CPR. P_{et}CO₂ reflect the partial pressure of exhaled carbon dioxide and can be measured through both side stream and inline applications. In the pathophysiology of a PE, an acute blockage of pulmonary vessels reduces perfusion to alveoli. Alveolar dead space, area of the lung without perfusion, then begins to increase. With this, the elimination of carbon dioxide is reduced, and carbon dioxide-free gas mixes with gas from perfused alveoli resulting in a lower P_{et}CO₂.^{3,4} Unfortunately, these manifestations of PE often overlap those of other pulmonary disease processes. Therefore, P_{et}CO₂ can only be confidently used to support, but not prove, the presence of a massive PE.

12-Lead ECG

For patients who present to EMS with chest pain, cardiac dysrhythmia, or difficulty breathing, 12-lead ECG is the primary diagnostic tool for identifying acute myocardial infarction (AMI). Prehospital ECGs can significantly decrease door to balloon times and the AMI mortality rate.

Certain ECG changes may also occur in the presence of a hemodynamically significant PE. In the case above, the patient presented with a RBBB with tachycardia. It has been observed in patients with RBBB, tachycardia, S1Q3T3 pattern, inverted T waves in V1-V4, and ST Elevation in aVR are prone to a greater opportunity for circulatory collapse and shock. Regardless of its sensitivity rate, this supports the importance of prehospital ECG transmission to reduce time to interventions.

Assessment

When attempting to recognize or rule out a potential PE, using capnography to identify decreased P_{et}CO₂ values or capturing a 12-Lead ECG to identify electrocardiographic changes can undoubtedly add value. With P_{et}CO₂ and 12-Lead ECG having roles that are considered gold standard, prehospital providers can now move forward with the concepts described above. However, it needs to be stressed that this value certainly does not replace a good clinical assessment.

Article from the 12/14/2021 online edition of JEMS.com.

Good judgement comes from experience, and a lot of that comes from bad judgement. - Will Rogers

HAPPY RETIREMENT



Congratulations on your Retirement, Kevin Doll!

Kevin began his firefighting career at Fond du Lac Fire/Rescue on March 5, 1992. Kevin served the City of Fond du Lac in the capacity of Firefighter, Paramedic, and retires on January 9th as an Engineer. Kevin is looking forward to farming and home schooling his children.

Thank you for your dedicated service to the citizens of Fond du Lac and for being a significant part of our team at FDL Fire/Rescue.

Congratulations to the below members who have reached their 10 year milestone of service and dedication to Fond du Lac Fire/Rescue. These men all started their careers on January 9, 2012.



*Firefighter/Paramedic
Ben Kooiman*



*Firefighter/Paramedic
Nick Czaja*



*Lieutenant
Andrew Golla*



*Lieutenant
Bob Scott*



*Firefighter/Paramedic
Phil Seibel*




The 21st Annual Bucket Brigade was another huge success. This event assists the Salvation Army's Red Kettle Campaign collecting money to help FDL County people who have emergency hardships. Well done FDLFR!



Happy January Birthday

Paul Loderhose • Chris Behnke • Ben Kooiman • Nate Philipsky



Well-trained people are the best defense against fire.

By: Assistant Chief of Training/Safety
James Knowles III

The Art of Reading Smoke: Continuity of Fuel

The art of reading smoke is a process that evaluates four visible smoke attributes—volume, velocity, density, and color (VVDC)—to predict fire size, location, and future growth. Reading smoke is critical to good decision making. This skill is as important to the fire attack team at the front door as it is to the incident commander (IC) at the command post. Learn to read smoke at the front door. Understand how to interpret smoke as you force the door and make a fire attack. Use reading smoke to make your fire attack quick, safe, and effective for you and the citizens you serve.

A core concept to understand when reading smoke is that “smoke is fuel.” Where you see smoke there is “continuity of fuel” to the seat of the fire. Practitioners of the craft of firefighting recognize reading smoke is integral to effective tactical decision making. Combining the concepts of “smoke is fuel” and “continuity of fuel” during fire attack entry door operations tells you that the smoke you see is connected directly to the seat of the fire.

Let’s examine reading smoke as part of the first attack line to provide an understanding of the concepts of “smoke is fuel” and “continuity of fuel.”

Smoke Is Fuel

Smoke is the product of incomplete combustion and/or

pyrolytic decomposition, which includes an aggregate of particulates, aerosols, and gases that form a plume. The concept of “smoke is fuel” brings this definition to life. The solids suspended in the thermal plume include carbon (soot), ash, dust, and airborne fibers. Aerosols (propelled liquids) typically include a whole host of hydrocarbons (oils/tar) and moisture. These aerosols, produced from burning or pyrolyzing plastics, have self-ignition temperatures as low as 460°F.

There are perhaps hundreds of named fire gases in smoke. Carbon monoxide leads the list of gases produced during incomplete burning. Other notable gases (in quantity and flammability) are hydrogen cyanide, benzene, and acrolein. Additionally, smoke can contain polyvinyl chloride, hydrogen chloride, hydrogen sulfide, phosgene, nitrogen dioxide, ammonia, and phenol—to name a few. This fuel package (plume) is a potent mix of toxic and flammable products that include a wide range of ignition temperatures.

Continuity of Fuel

“Continuity of fuel” recognizes that the smoke plume is connected from the outside of the structure, in a nonstop feed, to the seat of the fire. The smoke attribute density lets you know the strength of the connection between the plume and the seat of the fire. The higher the density, the stronger

the connection to the fire. As temperatures inside the plume rise, the risk of rapid fire growth increases. When a smoke plume ignites, “continuity of fuel” predicts a rapid increase in temperatures within the smoke. This predicts increased aerosol and gas ignition and sustained burning of particulates that provides a feedback loop of energy. Without intervention, fire will burn along the fuel path, to the seat of the fire, with potentially devastating consequences. What options do firefighters have to intervene in rapid fire growth initiating from the “smoke is fuel” and “continuity of fuel” concepts?

Right Temperature/ Right Mix

For the column of smoke/fuel to ignite, it needs a combination of the right temperature and the right mix with air (within the smoke’s flammable range). The right temperature can be anything in excess of 450°F. The right mix in air includes a supply of oxygen sufficient to support ignition. The flammable range of the smoke aggregate can be from 1% to 74% in air! While firefighters can exercise some control over the mix, by limiting the supply of oxygen through door control and coordinated horizontal or vertical ventilation, there is no guarantee that windows won’t break due to fire conditions. On the other hand, firefighters have essentially complete

control over the temperature of their operational area through water application. Open the line to control the temperature.

Putting It Together at the Door and in the Hallway

Picture yourself at the front door of a single-family residential fire. You and your team are ready for entry. The line is charged. Your self-contained breathing apparatus is donned. You push open the door and make a read of smoke conditions from the entry door. An initial push of smoke billows out and the fire establishes a bidirectional flow path. Smoke/fuel is exiting out the top door with fresh air going in at the bottom.

Looking down the hallway, you can see a clear thermal layer. Reading the smoke in this environment means applying your understanding of the “smoke is fuel” and “continuity of fuel” concepts along with VVDC, with emphasis on velocity and density.

Evaluate the smoke initially. Maintain an awareness of the smoke over your head as you move to the seat of the fire. Comparing an initial read of the smoke to changes that occur as you advance to the seat of the fire will tell you a lot about fire growth. Velocity and density are likely to begin increasing. The rate of



The Art of Reading Smoke... Continued

increase indicates the rate of fire growth and, at some point, the fire attack team will need to control the temperature of the smoke plume to avoid smoke ignition and prevent rapid fire growth.

Smoke that is white to light grey, moving at a low to moderate velocity, will appear either laminar or only slightly turbulent. Low density means you can see the ceiling at least intermittently through the smoke layer. This combination of velocity and density generally indicates a low to moderate level of risk. Ceiling temperatures are likely at or below the low end of possible smoke ignition. It is unlikely you will see any fire within the smoke plume. Advancing under these conditions, in full personal protective equipment, is relatively safe. Vision while low should be excellent and rapid progress to the seat of the fire achievable.

Keeping a read on the smoke, note the rate of change as the fresh supply of air provided by your entry door, or any other ventilation opening, allows an almost immediate increase in fire growth, heat release rate, and smoke production. As velocity increases, you will see a transition from laminar flow to turbulent flow. The

speed of the plume exiting will increase, generally combined with increased volume, resulting in the smoke layer dropping. Density also increases and you can no longer see into or through the smoke. You may begin to see small pockets of ignition or licks of flame in the smoke plume.

At this point firefighters should strongly consider applying water to reduce the temperature of the smoke layer. Good progress can still be made to the seat of the fire. Water application should be done without disturbing the thermal layer if possible. Nozzles should have less than 10-degree pattern, straight stream, or smooth bore. While visibility matters, decreasing the temperature of the smoke/fuel mix is the more important objective. Fire attack should continue to advance while smoke plume temperatures are maintained below ignition temperatures.

As the fire continues to grow, velocity and density will also continue to rise while the color of the smoke will likely remain dark grey to black. Without the water application as noted above, firefighters in the hazard area are at significant risk as conditions deteriorate. The volume and

velocity of the smoke will cause the thermal layer to push down to at or near the floor. Smoke will have significant turbulence inside the plume as well as after exiting the ventilation opening. Smoke will appear very thick as the density of fuel increases with fire growth. If the nozzle has not been opened already, then it should be opened now and remain open through fire attack.

Without water application, smoke will billow out the door and continue billowing as the smoke exits and moves from horizontal flow inside the building to vertical outside the building. ICs or other teams operating outside the fire attack area should monitor smoke conditions at the door from the initial opening through fire attack. Increasing velocity and density represent increased risk. A high volume of turbulent, thick, black smoke exiting from an entry door represents significant risk to those operating inside.

Consider these conditions to be approaching a Mayday if a team is operating inside and initiate contact with interior teams to ensure the attack line is open and flowing water. A near immediate change in smoke conditions, such as a

color change to white or light grey, should then be visible at the entry door.

Read the smoke when you arrive at the fire. Understand that "smoke is fuel."

Recognize there is a "continuity of fuel" from where you see it to the seat of the fire. During fire attack, read the smoke when you enter. Read the smoke as you proceed to the seat of the fire. Understand that smoke needs the right temperature and right mix to ignite. You don't always control the mix. You can control the temperature through water application. Continue to read the smoke and note the rate of change for velocity and density to determine the risk and when to open the line.

Reading smoke is a tool to improve effective fire attack whether on the outside or the inside of the building. Read, think, and react accordingly for the best possible outcomes for the citizens you are sworn to protect.

Source: Jose, P. (2021). The art of reading smoke: continuity of fuel. Firefighter Nation.

Retrieved from:

<https://www.firefighternation.com/fire/rescue/vent-enter-isolate-search-a-new-approach/>



This Isn't About You, It's About The Life You Save.

Fire Prevention

The Bureau Never Sleeps

By: Division Chief Garth Schumacher



Ice Safety

I hope everyone had a safe and enjoyable Christmas and New Year with family and friends. This is the time of year that I like to reiterate the importance of safety on the lakes and ponds that many of you like to fish and enjoy other recreational activities on. The lake this year has already froze and since has broken up with the wind and warm weather. I fully expect that the big pond will be freezing soon with the colder weather. During that time the lake is at its most treacherous and outdoor enthusiasts are most at risk. Growing up on the lake since my childhood it always amazed me how quickly the ice conditions can change.

During Sturgeon spearing several years ago the ice was in great shape that is until an unseasonably warm couple of days hit us. It was interesting because all the roads that were

used by spearers on the west side of the lake got real bad and real quick. The heavy traffic in the days leading up to the thaw led to cracks in the ice that when the big melt happened the water on the ice eroded the roads to the degree that there would be holes open on those roads and they were unable to be used. The ice remained relatively thick, except where the water had eroded these areas, which included holes that had been cut by fishermen and spearers alike.

My father found out the hard way as he was assisting the neighbors who had two ice shacks tip into the hole they cut due to this erosion. My father was on his four wheeler and found a hole in one of the roads as he was trying to drive to a different shack. My father and his four wheeler went into the lake in about 12 feet of

water. After that day my father was very concerned about how the ice was and if there was even a hint of a warm day after opening weekend, the shack came off the ice.

This similar event happened during this year's cold snap and subsequent warm days, the good thing is the ice was so thin to begin with that there weren't any outdoorsman out there to have an accident. It is common in the ice fishing community to get out there on "first ice" to catch those fish that have been waiting to be fed. I can tell you from my experiences that the fish fry at many supper clubs is a great option when the ice is too risky to be out on. That water is frigid and the idea that you can self-extricate if you fall in is not a given, we are reminded of this nearly

every year, and for families that live on, this tragedy can be avoided and is ultimately devastating to all the loved ones.

In conclusion, the message here is to be safe, rely on ice depth reports sent out by local fishing clubs, follow recommendations from the DNR, and other fishing websites. We don't want to see anyone as a victim of an accident like this - it is preventable. The ice is never 100% safe, treat it like the hazard that it is and watch for changing conditions once it is acceptable to be out there enjoying the recreation that it allows.

Have a great new year!





Fire Safety during Winter Storms

Winter storms can happen almost anywhere. They can cause us problems. Know what to do before, during and after a storm. This will help keep you and your family safe from a winter fire.

- Test all smoke alarms. Do this at least once a month. This way you will know they are working. Install carbon monoxide alarms in your home. Test the alarms.
- Plan two ways out of the home in case of an emergency. Clear driveway and front walk of ice and snow. This will provide easy access to your home.
- Make sure your house number can be seen from the street. If you need help, firefighters will be able to find you.
- Be ready in case the power goes out. Have flashlights on hand. Also have battery-powered lighting and fresh batteries. Never use candles.
- Stay aware of winter weather. Listen to the television or radio for updates. Watch for bulletins online.
- Check on neighbors. Check on others who may need help.
- Generators should be used outdoors. Keep them away from windows and doors. Do not run a generator inside your garage, even if the door is open.
- Stay away from downed wires. Report any downed wires to authorities.
- Be ready if the heat stops working. Use extra layers of clothes and blankets to stay warm. If you use an emergency heat source, keep anything that can burn at least 3 feet away.
- Turn portable heaters off when you leave the room. Turn them off when you go to bed.

IMPORTANT REMINDER

There are more home fires in winter than in any other season. Half of all home heating fires happen in December, January and February.

As you stay cozy and warm this winter season, be fire smart!



Fact

Nearly half of all space heater fires involve electric space heaters.



**NATIONAL FIRE
PROTECTION ASSOCIATION**

The leading information and knowledge resource
on fire, electrical and related hazards

FITNESS TIPS

By: Peer Fitness Trainer
Sam Tennesen



Making your New Year's Resolution Stick

By making your resolutions realistic, there is a greater chance that you will keep them throughout the year, incorporating healthy behavior into your everyday life.

Lose Weight? Check. Start exercising? Check. Stop smoking? Check.

It can be daunting when your list of New Year's Resolutions is as long as your holiday shopping list. In addition to the post-holiday slump, not being able to keep your resolutions by February, March or even late January may increase your anxiety. When your holiday decorations are packed up and stored away, the frustration of an unused gym membership or other reminders of failed resolutions can make the later winter months feel hopeless.

However, it is important to remember that the New Year isn't meant to serve as a catalyst for sweeping character changes. It is a time for people to reflect on their past year's behavior

and promise to make positive lifestyle changes. "Setting small, attainable goals throughout the year, instead of a singular, overwhelming goal on January 1 can help you reach whatever it is you strive for," says psychologist Lynn Bufka, PhD.

"Remember, it is not the extent of the change that matters, but rather the act of recognizing that lifestyle change is important and working toward it, one step at a time."

By making your resolutions realistic, there is a greater chance that you will keep them throughout the year, incorporating healthy behavior into your everyday life. APA offers these tips when thinking about a New Year's resolution:

Start Small

Make resolutions that you think you can keep. If, for example, your aim is to exercise more frequently, schedule three or four days a week at the gym instead of seven. If you would like to eat healthier, try replacing dessert with something else

you enjoy, like fruit or yogurt, instead of seeing your diet as a form of punishment.

Change one behavior at a time

Unhealthy behaviors develop over the course of time. Thus, replacing unhealthy behaviors with healthy ones requires time. Don't get overwhelmed and think that you have to reassess everything in your life. Instead, work toward changing one thing at a time.

Talk about it

Share your experiences with family and friends. Consider joining a support group to reach your goals, such as a workout class at your gym or a group of coworkers quitting smoking. Having someone to share your struggles and successes with makes your journey to a healthier lifestyle that much easier and less intimidating.

Don't beat yourself up

Perfection is unattainable. Remember that minor missteps when reaching your goals are completely normal and OK. Don't give up

completely because you ate a brownie and broke your diet, or skipped the gym for a week because you were busy. Everyone has ups and downs; resolve to recover from your mistakes and get back on track.

Ask for support

Accepting help from those who care about you and will listen strengthens your resilience and ability to manage stress caused by your resolution. If you feel overwhelmed or unable to meet your goals on your own, consider seeking professional help. Psychologists are uniquely trained to understand the connection between the mind and body. They can offer strategies as to how to adjust your goals so that they are attainable, as well as help you change unhealthy behavior and address emotional issues.

This article was taken from the American Psychological Association (APA) website.

