

Plenty of revelers rang in the New Year with wellness resolutions – vowing to lose weight, move more, or just eat healthier.

But in the gloom of a frozen February, sometimes those resolutions are left in the rearview mirror. According to Maggie Stojak, OSF HealthCare Exercise Physiologist, sometimes life just gets in the way.

“I think that people lose motivation as they sort of find other things that kind of filter into their life that maybe start taking higher priority over their goals that they set up,” said Stojak.

Regaining some February focus is possible. There are some simple tips to get back on track with your wellness goals, including focusing on why you are making changes, and how those changes are benefiting your body. Stojak says the key is to focus on the process of reaching a goal as well as the product you are striving for.

“It’s incredibly important to have something specific that you are working for, something that’s measurable,” said Stojak. “But also looking at along the way, what am I doing for my body, what am I doing for my brain, what am I doing for my heart, my lymphatic system, my muscles, my bones, with everything you’re doing as you’re going.”

Another thing Stojak says is crucial to success – no matter what new habits you are trying to form – is support from family, friends and coworkers. Others knowing your goals can help you power through when you feel like throwing in the towel.

“Social support is one of the biggest factors to actually maintaining a goal,” said Stojak. “Having people there to kind of ask you about it, too, or even someone to report back to or talk about it with, or really making it bigger than yourself is key.”

And finally, Rome wasn’t built in a day, and neither are new habits. # says taking baby steps toward a new goal is the best way to reach it.

“When people start their resolutions and they feel really good because they are working on it and it’s awesome, as they move forward and certain things kind of pop up or they don’t have some of those smaller goals to achieve, they start to realize and kind of look back like, ‘I don’t know if I’m actually going to be able to do this,’ or, ‘I don’t know if it’s worth it or if life is always going to get in the way.’ So really setting yourself up so you can break it down that way and then maintain that going forward is the huge goal. Consistency is the huge goal,” said Stojak.