

New Year, New “View”



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Lauren Branz, MHR started in the Laureate Eating Disorders Program as a psychiatric technician in 2018. She highly valued the experience of seeing firsthand, the life change and healing that happens within a treatment setting. Lauren accepted the role of outreach coordinator in 2019, a role which allows her to build relationships with outpatient programs and providers locally and across the country. Perhaps her favorite part of the role is sharing the vision of the program with other clinicians and being able to share from her experience as a tech in the program. In addition, she also stays very connected to the inpatient program by helping with inpatient meals and groups on a regular basis.

Lauren earned a Bachelor of Science in psychology with a minor in English literature from Oral Roberts University. She completed her master's in human relations with an emphasis on clinical mental health counseling from the University of Oklahoma. She values education in her life and plans on pursuing her LPC license.

Every single year, I look forward to the first day of the year – New Year’s Day. A day that’s full of celebration. A day that’s full of tasty black-eyed peas and bright fireworks. A day where, even for just a second, many feel hopeful for the upcoming year and what is to come.

A friend of mine once said, “New Year’s Day is solely devoted to dreaming about what could be.” Goals and New Year’s resolutions are often times birthed on this day as well.

According to research, New Year’s resolutions relate to positive behavior changes, such as quitting bad habits and forming new and more beneficial ones (Oscarsson, p. 11, 2017), Unfortunately, most people are unsuccessful in achieving their goals and usually give up within the first three months of the year (Oscarsson, 2017).

I have always been someone who loves making goals. In fact, last year I came up with 52 new goals

that I wanted to achieve during 2020. This came to one per week to be exact.

Do you know how many I accomplished? Drum roll please... just seven.

I am laughing as I am writing this, because in hindsight, I realized that it was very unrealistic for me to accomplish such a large amount of goals in the duration of only one year. In addition, I am really proud of the seven goals that I was able to achieve in 2020, and it’s frustrating that they would be discounted or disregarded, due to the feelings of disappointment I feel towards my unmet goals. I have spoken to many people who have similar stories of not reaching their goals. It leaves us with feelings of frustration and defeat.

It’s no secret that 2020 was a year that pushed many people to their limits. It was a year full of new challenges, difficult isolation and many crushed dreams. This January, I have seen and heard

more people than usual creating goals for themselves for 2021. Could it be that this is an attempt to rid ourselves of the disappointment we felt in 2020 or wave goodbye and view it only in our rear-view mirror?

As I reflect on the upcoming year, I can’t help but question and investigate what I learned in 2020 and see if it was able to teach me anything. After much contemplation, I realized that 2020 did give me something very valuable – a new viewpoint. It brought such an awareness of what I loved and what I valued in my life. So, this new, hard-earned perspective allowed me to do something a little different for my goals this year. I still love goals (and believe that they can be very helpful and useful in the right circumstance and setting), but I decided that instead of making so many new goals, that I was simply going to continue adopting my new viewpoint throughout the entire year. This viewpoint was spurred

on by 2020 and it is quite simple – be thankful. Specifically, I am so thankful for my family and friends, my job, my home and my faith.

This past January, I have practically implemented this new viewpoint into my life in a variety of ways. Sometimes it looks like writing items I am thankful for on my mirror, verbally telling someone how thankful I am for them or writing a letter to a friend. The point is... it could look however I want it to look. This new viewpoint doesn't feel rigid or controlled because it can change all throughout the year and that's exciting and new to me.

This has alleviated a lot of pressure off my life, which I also count as a win. I wonder, what is a new viewpoint that you would like to adopt in 2021? It could be

anything that feels right to you or gives you peace, even if that means not adopting anything at all.

My encouragement to you would be to take the pressure off of yourself and to become a “whole new you” this year. Sure, we can always continue to grow and mature, but who you are right this very moment is exactly what 2021 needs.

Keep up the good work!

Oscarsson, Martin, et al.
“New Year’s resolutions: A large scale randomized controlled trial.” *9th Swedish Congress on Internet Interventions (SWEsrii)*, Linköping, Sweden, November 3, 2017.

About Laureate

Founded in 1989 by The William K. Warren Foundation, Laureate Psychiatric Clinic and Hospital in Tulsa, OK, provides a full spectrum of psychiatric services as well as research and education for the general public and professional community. At Laureate, we want our patients not only to recover and function, but also experience a fulfilling life within their family, business and community.

Laureate is a private, not-for-profit, freestanding psychiatric facility. The campus is set on 47 acres of rolling hills in a series of related buildings forming a retreat-like atmosphere. Its beautifully landscaped surroundings include wooded courtyards, walking trails, a waterfall and a small lake. Everything on campus, from the outpatient clinic to patient rooms, is designed with patients’ needs in mind.

Laureate is dedicated to providing only the latest diagnostic services and medical technologies. The treatment concepts, the programs, the buildings and the campus itself are an outgrowth of the constant re-examination of how behavioral healthcare should be delivered.

For questions, or to schedule an appointment with a mental health professional, please call the Laureate Outpatient Clinic, Monday - Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. at 918-491-3700.

