

New Year's Resolutions for the Faint of Voice: *Living with Spasmodic Dysphonia Ain't for Sissies*

As we start the New Year, we often make resolutions to help improve our lives. The goal of this activity is to think of resolutions that can help you live better with spasmodic dysphonia and realize that living with a voice condition takes courage and determination. Leader Gwen Pongracz presented this activity at a meeting of the Lehigh Valley Support Group, but it can be adapted for individual use and reflection. Our thanks to Gwen, and we hope this helps to start the year in a positive way!

List some New Year's resolutions you have made in the past (examples: lose weight, quit smoking, get a new job, become more spiritual, etc.). Let's now consider the four areas which are affected by voice: Communication, Social Interaction, Career, and Personal Identity. Think of some New Year's resolutions that might help you cope with your SD or focus more on yourself instead of on your voice. We included some suggestions for each area to help stimulate ideas but there are many more. Try to fit your resolutions into the various categories.

Communication

- Join Toastmasters
- Take a Dale Carnegie class
- Try voice exercises
- Read a book about SD
- Become part of a study at NIH
- Send more cards and letters
- Email an old friend

Others:

Social Interaction

- Volunteer
- Join a social group – see local listings on the Meet-Up app
- Connect with old friends
- Start a dinner club

Others:

Career

- Take a course for a new skill
- Take an on-line career matching quiz
- Have a professional help you with your resume or update your LinkedIn profile
- Visit the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation

Others:

Personal Identity

- Take a non-credit course
- Write a book
- Read more books
- Find a cause – volunteer
- Find a new hobby – painting, crafts
- Learn a musical instrument

Others:

List some New Year's Resolutions you have made in the past:

Now think of some New Year’s resolutions that might help you cope with your SD or focus more on yourself instead of on your voice. Try to fit them into the various categories.

Communication:

Social Interaction:

Career:

Personal Identity:
