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Dec. 28, 2007

Release No. 07-92

**Realistic Expectations are Key to Keeping New Year's Resolutions  
APA Says Resolve to Take Charge of Mental Health in 2008**

**ARLINGTON, Va. (Dec. 31, 2008)** — Every January millions of Americans consider changes they want to make in their lives. The American Psychiatric Association (APA) says setting realistic expectations can help you keep your New Year's resolutions and create a sense of accomplishment.

"Whether it's spending more time with family, improving money management or living a healthier life, New Year's resolutions provide a fresh start. Too often resolutions fail. Setting achievable goals will set you on the right path," said Robert S. Benson, M.D., member, APA Committee on Public Affairs. "Establishing the right goals is everything. Make sure you reward yourself for the steps you take along the way to achieving your resolution."

The APA featured expert, Dr. Benson, answers questions this month on [www.healthyminds.org](http://www.healthyminds.org) on how to make and keep New Year's resolutions along with additional information on mental health and treatments.

Dr. Benson also highlights the importance of focusing on mental health as a New Year's resolution priority. "Taking steps to better your mental health is a sign of strength that you are taking control," he said. "Too often questions about mental illness go unanswered and can prevent people from getting help. Mental illnesses are real medical conditions that affect millions of Americans, and treatments can work. Focusing on your mental health in 2008 and the years to come is an important step to a better, more productive well-being."

Additional information on depression, anxiety and other psychiatric disorders is available on the Web site and through the APA Let's Talk Facts brochure series aimed at helping understand psychiatric disorders and treatments.

**About the American Psychiatric Association:**

The American Psychiatric Association is a national medical specialty society whose more than 38,000 physician members specialize in diagnosis, treatment, prevention and research of mental illnesses including substance use disorders. Visit the APA at [www.psych.org](http://www.psych.org) and [www.HealthyMinds.org](http://www.HealthyMinds.org).

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