Turning over a new leaf: idioms and phrases for the New Year (source: http://bit.ly/2injmgu)

New Year is a time when we often ..... (1) stock of our life (think about what is good or bad about it). We may feel that we should draw a line under the past (finish with it and forget about it) and make a ..... (2) start. This post looks at idioms and other phrases connected with this phenomenon.

If we decide to stop doing something we consider to be bad and to start behaving in a better way, we can say that we are going to turn over a new leaf. We might decide to .....(3) a habit such as smoking (stop doing it), have a ..... (4) at (try) a new hobby, or even leave a dead-end job (one with no chance of promotion) or finish a relationship that isn't going anywhere.

Of course, many of these things are difficult. You may have decided to give up sweets once and for all (definitely and for ever), but that's easier said than done when you receive a birthday box of your favourite chocolates. If you have a bad day or two, it's easy to feel that you are back to square one (have made no progress). However, people who advise on such things will tell you that it's not all or nothing – if you break your resolution, it's not the end of the world and you can soon be back on the ..... (5) (doing what you should be doing).

In order to stick to a resolution, there are some strategies you can use. First, you could put your money where your mouth is (pay money to show you are serious about something), for instance by taking out a gym membership to get fit. One common piece of advice is to take it one day at a time (not focus too much on the long-term goal). After all, as they say, Rome wasn't built in a day.

Another is not to bite off more than you can .....(6) (not try to do too much) – we all know someone whose New Year's resolution to 'renovate their house' means that they and their family are still living in a building site ten years later. It's also important to be realistic – with the best will in the world (even with a lot of effort), a chain-smoking couch potato (lazy person) isn't likely to give up cigarettes and go running five times a week. It may be a good idea to get the ball rolling (start) with a more modest aim.

Some people are very successful in their resolutions. Once they've decided to bite the bullet (do something difficult), they get their act together (organise themselves effectively) and put their heart and ..... (7) into achieving what they want to achieve. If they manage to stay the course (not give up), they will see their efforts bear fruit.

And finally, I could not leave this topic without one well-known proverb: the road to ..... (8) is paved with good intentions, which means that although people often intend to be good, they often fail at it.

	A	B	C	D
1	take	hold	set	catch
2	new	fresh	renewed	late
3	push	throw	rid	kick
4	goal	crack	break	rift
5	down and out	upside and downside	straight and narrow	black and right
6	chew	swallow	digest	tear
7	body	soul	mind	brain
8	perdition	Mandalay	hell	failure

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