WHAT IS THE MEANING OF NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS?

Read the text below. For questions 1-24, use the word given in capitals to form a word that fits in the gap.

The meaning of most holidays is clear: Valentine's Day celebrates romance; July Fourth, independence; Thanksgiving, **(1)** _____ [PRODUCT]; Christmas, good will towards men. The meaning of New Year's Day — the world's most celebrated holiday — is not so clear. On this day, many people remember last year's achievements and **(2)** _____ [FAIL] and look forward to the promise of a new year, of a new **(3)** _____ [BEGIN]. But this celebration and **(4)** _____ [REFLECT] is the result of more than an accident of the calendar. New Year's has a deeper **(5)** _____ [SIGNIFY]. What is it?

On New Year's Day, when the singing, **(6)** _____ [FIRE] and champagne toasts are over, many of us become more serious about life. We take stock and plan new courses of action to **(7)** _____ [GOOD] our lives. This is best seen in one of the most popular customs and the key to the meaning of New Year's: making resolutions: people wanting to be more **(8)** _____ [ATTRACT] by losing weight, and to be healthier by exercising more and smoking less. They want to do things better, become better people.

New Year's Day is the most active-minded holiday, because it is the one where people evaluate their lives and plan and **(9)** _____ [SOLVE] to take action. One **(10)** _____ [DRAMA] example of taking resolutions **(11)** _____ [SERIOUS] is the old European custom of: "What one does on this day one will do for the rest of the year." What unites this custom and the more common type of resolutions is that on the first day of the year people take their values more seriously. Many New Year's resolutions reveal that people want to better themselves by improving **(12)** _____ [PSYCHOLOGY]. For example, look at your own resolutions over the years. Haven't they included such vows as: be more patient with your children, improve your self-esteem, be more **(13)** _____ [EMOTION] open with your wife? Such resolutions express the moral ambitiousness of a person wanting to improve his/her self and life.

What then is the **(14)** _____ [PHILOSOPHY] meaning of New Year's resolutions? Every resolution you make on this day implies that you are in control of yourself, that you are not a victim fated by circumstance, controlled by stars, owned by luck, but that you are an individual who can make **(15)** _____ [CHOOSE] to change your life. You can learn statistics, ask for that **(16)** _____ [PROMOTE], fight your **(17)** _____ [SHY], search for that **(18)** _____ [MARRY] partner. Your life is in your own hands!

That is why you resolve to be healthier, more ambitious, more confident. You want to enjoy that sense of purpose, **(19)** _____ [ACCOMPLISH] and pleasure that one feels when achieving values. It is **(20)** _____ [HAPPY] that is the motor and purpose of one's life. It is New Year's, more than any other day that makes the **(21)** _____ [ATTAIN] of happiness more real and possible. This is the meaning of New Year's Day and why it is so psychologically important and significant to people **(22)** _____ [THROUGH] the world.

If people were to apply the value-achievement meaning of New Year's Day **(23)** _____ [EXPLICIT] and **(24)** _____ [CONSIST] 365 days each year, they would be happier. So every day, fill your champagne glass of life to the brim with values — and drink deep to your life and the joy that it can and should be. Happy New Year! Happy life!

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