

## International Conversation Cafe

Lifestyle Topic: New Year's Resolutions

A new beginning is often accompanied with reflection on the past and how to make the future better. We might do this at the beginning of the school year, at our birthday, and of course on January 1. Typically, we call this kind of decision to improve, a "resolution."

Below is a list of the top ten resolutions made in 2014, as noted in the University of Scranton, Journal of Clinical Psychology. (<http://www.statisticbrain.com/new-years-resolution-statistics/>)

Take a moment and choose your top three resolutions.

1. Lose weight
2. Get organized
3. Spend less, save more
4. Enjoy life to the fullest
5. Stay fit and healthy
6. Learn something exciting
7. Quit smoking
8. Help others achieve their dreams
9. Fall in love
10. Spend more time with family

*Share your top three choices with the group and what you will do to keep your resolution?*

*Does your group choices reflect the same order of choice as reflected in the survey?*

*In your country, do people make resolutions at the New Year? If so, what would you say are some of the popular resolutions?*

**Next is a list of the types of resolutions.**

1. Self-improvement or other education or related resolutions
2. Weight related resolutions
3. Money related resolutions
4. Relationship related resolutions

In the US, the length of time we keep our resolutions drops dramatically between resolutions kept for the first week (75%) and after six months (46%).

*Of the types of resolutions mentioned above, which are the hardest to keep and what ones are easier?*

*What keeps people from keeping their resolutions?*

*What advice would you give to people who have a hard time keeping their resolutions?*

*In the painting, the New Year seems to be observed by planting a tree.*

*What are some of the ways your family celebrates this holiday?*

*What are some of the older traditional ways New Year's was celebrated?*

*New Year's is celebrated at different times around the world. When does your country observe the New Year?*



Keisai Eisen, Japanese, 1790-1848. Planting the New Year's Pine. Print, 20.8 cm x 17.6 cm. Harvard Art Museums.

