

# The Other New Year

Fall is the best season for change—make a resolution to start fresh!

**IT'S THAT TIME OF YEAR AGAIN**—pristine pencils, a spiffy notebook...but wait: It's the kids going back to school, not us! "We naturally associate fall with new challenges," says Teresa Kay-Aba Kennedy, life coach and founder of Power Living in New York City. "It's a perfect time to set some goals." So we declare September the *new* New Year—with three irresistible resolutions to help you get the season off to a stellar start:

**Calm Dawns** Wake up a few minutes early and get centered before the morning rush begins. "Starting your day with at least 10 minutes of quiet time is a huge help when adjusting to new schedules," says Kay-Aba Kennedy. Try stepping outside for a quick dose of fresh air, or sitting down with your coffee to reflect on the coming day.

**Uncomplicated Days** This school year, we will not overschedule our children—or ourselves! "A sure sign of activity overload is if the parent feels frazzled," says Alvin Rosenfeld, M.D., coauthor of *The Over-Scheduled Child: Avoiding the Hyper-Parenting Trap*. The key to avoiding a jammed calendar is scheduling—for free time. "Regularly leaving kids to their own devices helps to develop their own interests," says Rosenfeld.

**Family Dinners** Weeknight family meals don't have to be fabulous to be meaningful. Teenagers who eat dinner at least five times a week with their families are less likely to smoke or drink than teens who don't, according to a recent study. So even if you order takeout, gather the troops and eat up! —Amy Palanjan

