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NPR/PBS NewsHour/Marist Poll*

Americans Optimistic for New Year, Cite Family...

Political Climate Breeds Pessimism for Future...

Exercising More is Top Resolution for 2019

For Immediate Release

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This NPR/PBS NewsHour/Marist Poll Reports:

Many Americans are more optimistic (60%) than pessimistic (37%) about the world in 2019. Americans have become increasingly positive since 2011 when 54% reported optimism for the coming year. Among Americans who are optimistic, the plurality cites family (40%) as the main reason. Their job (15%), health (13%), finances (11%), and politics (10%) follow. The news is mentioned by only 3%.

However, among those who are pessimistic for the new year, nearly two in three (64%) feel this way because of politics. This view is shared by Democrats (73%), Republicans (56%), and independents (66%) alike. The news (16%) is the only other reason which receives double digits among Americans with a pessimistic outlook for 2019.

Americans may not be able to control the political climate, but they are taking matters into their own hands when it comes to their personal lives. 44% of Americans, identical to last year, say they are either somewhat likely or very likely to make a New Year's resolution for 2019. 56% are not likely at all to do so.

What are Americans resolving to do? Among those who plan to make a resolution, exercising more (13%) followed closely by quitting smoking (12%) top the list. One in ten (10%) vow to lose weight. Eating healthier (9%) and being a better person (9%) are next in line. Eight percent say they will spend less and save more. Improving one's health and self-improvement garner 6% each. 27% mention another resolution. Last year, the top resolutions for 2018 were losing weight (12%) and being a better person (12%).

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Americans are pretty good at keeping their resolutions. Among those who made a resolution for 2018, 68% say they kept their resolution for at least part of the year. 32% did not. These proportions have not changed from last year.