

# RiverBender Blog: Resolutions, Rules and Rembrandt

by Sydney Sinks, News Reporter  
December 5 2023 10:54 AM



As we approach the end of the year, I'm reflecting on my New Year's resolutions. I had big dreams 12 months ago. Did I hit every goal? Do you know me? Obviously, no, I failed. But I did manage to hit one of the most important goals on my list.

1. Work out more. (No.)

2. Delete social media. (Ha.)
3. Get a hobby. (YES.)

Good news, everyone, I did manage to start a new hobby or two. I needed to find a way to fill the time after work that didn't involve staring at the TV or scrolling on my phone. So I set out to Michael's and decided I'd get super involved in a new artsy pastime. Rembrandt, eat your heart out.



I decided to start small, to ease into it. I bought a paint-by-numbers kit. This was ideal because it satisfied my creative urges without requiring any creativity. All I had to do was follow the numbers and paint in between the lines. I poured a glass of wine, turned on a podcast and set to work.

Not only was this so fun, but it also required zero decisions on my part. I only needed to follow the rules, and I'm a great rule-follower. Rules are arguably the antithesis of creativity, but no matter! The finished product looked cohesive and you couldn't see the numbers through the paint, so by all appearances I was a master artist already.

Fast forward a few months, and I was feeling pretty pleased with my paint-by-numbers adventure. I was ready for the next step: making choices, no lines or numbers involved. I registered my mother and myself for a watercolor painting class through Jacoby Arts Center.

This was a huge move for us. We were trying something new! And we both loved it. I had been nervous about the lack of rules, but it turned out that this was the best part. There were no rules, no way to mess up. This is what a hobby should be — something that enhances life, that's fun, with very limited stress.





Plus, my mom and I would end every class by going to Applebee's for margaritas and chicken wings, so it was a win all around.

While I'm still not a master artist and most of my paintings are a little lopsided, it's been a great experience to start a new hobby. Having a creative outlet does wonders for my mood and minimizes the amount of time I spend looking at screens, unless I'm researching new techniques on TikTok or gazing longingly at my Michael's wish list.

I'm thinking about 2024 now and what my resolutions will be for next year. I'm not sure what's next, but I'm excited to see which new hobbies I'll start or goals I can accomplish. One hobby down, about a million other possible ones to go.

What's next in the new year? Who knows. There are no right or wrong answers and no rules to follow.

That's the best part.