

## PROGRESS AND THE ANGSTROM

Let's talk about change and small distances.

In my undergraduate days taking chemistry and physics one of the first things we learned was converting between units. Things in physics and especially in chemistry tend to happen on either a really large or really small scale. So you're using small or large multiples of 10.

For instance, inter-atomic measurements and distances are often measured in nanometers; which are equal to 10 to the minus 9 power. That's 0.000000001 meters. It's a small number. And it soon becomes tiresome writing all of those exponents or zeroes.

Enter the Angstrom. It's a unit of measure for small distances originally conceived by the Swedish scientist Anders Jonas Angstrom. It was helpful to him because he was studying electromagnetic waves and the structure of atoms. He needed a unit that was equal to subatomic lengths that was easy to use.

The angstrom is 10 to the minus 10 meters. That's: 0.0000000001. It's denoted as the symbol Å from the Swedish alphabet.

So why even bring this up? Especially on a "health" blog.

Because trying to make healthy changes can feel overwhelming. It's discouraging when you need to lose weight, eat better or do more exercise. It can feel almost pointless. It can seem like an awfully long distance to get from where you are to where you want to be.

You've got to remember that you don't have to get there all at once. You can't actually. So you have to take one step, do one small thing. Take the first step. An inch at a time. Slow and steady. Pick your journey metaphor — but think even smaller. Think in terms of angstroms.

Even just one angstrom in the right direction means that you are going in the right direction. Even if you only lost an ounce of weight this week — you still LOST an ounce of weight. Even if you had fast food for every meal but one this week — you still had that one healthy meal. Even if you took the stairs just once today that's still once more than you did yesterday.

You get the idea. Move on your goals — even if it's just one angstrom at a time. You will be surprised how quickly they add up to something great.