

January 2021: Being Intentional

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Do you ever feel like your life is coming at you? Do you ever feel like life stressors are coming at you, and you are playing a game of dodgeball with the stresses that are coming at you? The year 2020 has been like a never ending game of dodgeball.

When we are experiencing stressful events in our lives it is very easy to get into a habit of reacting without much thought or intention to whatever comes our way. We can spend a lot of time and energy worrying about the future, and getting lost in the past. We can begin to live our lives on autopilot. When we are on autopilot we are going through the motions of life, but not really experiencing or being present in the moment that we are in.

I chose intentional as my word for 2021. I've decided that I want to be more intentional in all aspects of my life. I want to be more intentional about how I connect with the ones that I love, how I take care of myself, how I parent, how I do my job, and how I spend my time and my money. This is a word that I am focusing on this year, but know that living intentionally is a lifelong journey. One thing that I have discovered on my own journey of trying to be mindful and living intentional is the importance of carving out time in the day to be alone and reflect.

As a mom of two kids I realized that I was often in either "mom mode" or "work mode", and had very little time to be on my own, relax, and reflect. I would wake up immediately to the demands of young children and the busyness of the day. I started to carve out some time in the day to be alone. I made a point to start waking up earlier in the morning before the rest of the household was awake. This quiet time in the morning gave me time to have a peaceful cup of coffee and reflect on the kind of day that I wanted to have. I gave myself permission to sit and focus on my breath. Sometimes I would read something that gave me a focus for the day. It was also a time that I could designate for exercising, something that I know that I wouldn't do after working all day and that I know that I need for both my physical and mental wellness. When I designated this time for me, it impacted my entire day in a positive way.

As we start a new year, it is a good time to set intentions. Oftentimes, people create New Year's resolutions. Research shows that the percentage of people who maintain their new year's resolutions falls sharply as the weeks go by. What if we were more intentional about our resolutions this year? What if we decided to take a deep breath every time we walked through a doorway? What if we picked a word that we wanted to focus on for the year, put it up where we saw it every day? What if we created a vision board for the year? What if we set a daily intention for ourselves each morning as we drove to work? What if we identified one small goal that we wanted to accomplish for each week, and then celebrated when we did it? What if we created a theme for ourselves each month, and tried to live out that theme in our daily lives for that month? What are some ways that you can live your life more intentionally?