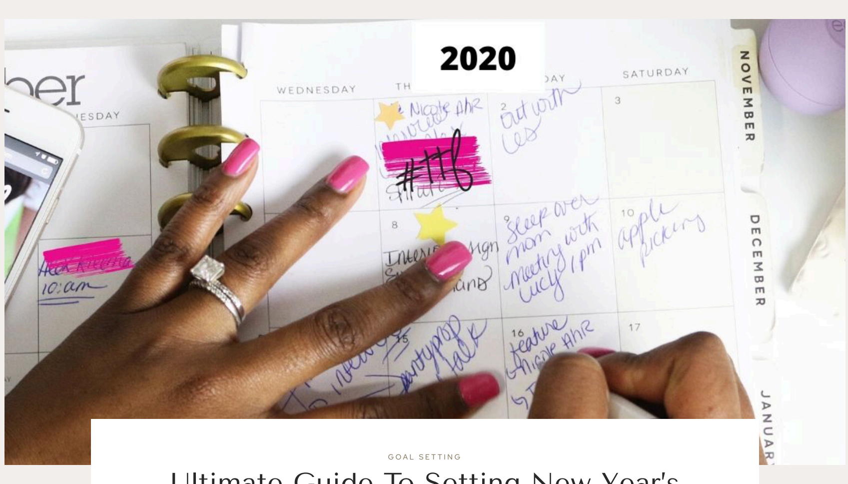

GOAL SETTING

Ultimate Guide To Setting New Year's Intentions

The ultimate guide to setting new year's intentions so that you can create more happiness, fulfillment, and success in the next year. If the traditional model of setting goals for the New Year has failed you or you're looking to try a new approach to setting intentions for the New Year, this article outlines exactly what are New Year's intentions, how are New Year's Intentions different from New Year's Resolutions or goals, and a simple 5 step process for how to set New Year's intentions and achieve success.

With the New Year just around the corner, everyone is feeling the excitement of a blank slate. Since you're reading this, you're likely feeling motivated to make the next 12 months *really* count, and bring you closer to your vision for your life. Especially considering everything you've gone through in the last year, you're ready to live this year differently!

I've been setting New Year's Resolutions for myself since as long as I could remember *(I'm a little over the top, shall we say)* and for a long time I had also been failing at them year after year too.

Related post: Why New Year's Resolutions Don't Work

I discovered that New Year's Resolutions might work for some people *(those 10%)* but they certainly didn't work for me. As a recovering hyper-achieving perfectionist who criticized herself often and harshly, New Year's Resolutions only made the negative self talk louder every year, until I had pretty much given up on setting goals because I didn't see how it made a difference.

When I shifted my focus to setting intentions for the New Year, everything changed.

What are New Year's Intentions?

New Year's Intentions are ways you intend to live more fully into your values in the next 12 months. They are not specific goals nor specific resolutions. They are intentions that directly tie into your core values.

What's the difference between a New Year's Intention vs a New Year's Resolution vs a goal?

The biggest difference between New Year's Resolutions, goals, and New Year's Intentions is how success is defined.

Related post: How To Redefine Success & Achieve It

For example, a New Year's resolution is "to exercise for 30 minutes every single day." It leaves no room for error – 29 mins of exercise 1 day out of 365 and you've failed. If your kiddos were sick and you were up all day and night taking care of them, it doesn't matter.

> *New Year's Resolutions fail because they discount the fact that you're a human, life happens, and you can't predict circumstances outside of your control*
>
> —— ANA MCRAE

Resolutions pressure you to focus on checking the box, rather than reevaluating the circumstances and making a decision that aligns with your core values *(like getting enough sleep and caring for your family).*

A similar goal would be to "lose 10 pounds and achieve 20% body fat by December 31, 2022". **A goal focuses more on the end outcome rather than the process you use to achieve it,** which is how it differs from a resolution. But a goal still has a very black and white definition of success. Either you lost 10 pounds by that date, or you didn't, and 9 pounds lost still creates the feeling of failure rather than inspiring a celebration of the incredible progress you made.

Related post: How To Measure Your Progress On Your Personal Growth Goals

A New Year's intention under the same value (physical health) would be to "live an active lifestyle." **An intention focuses so much more on the core value itself than how you achieve it or what the outcome is.** In doing so, it becomes your most powerful tool for creating successful change in your life because it gives you room to be a human – to play, explore, learn, pivot and grow – as your work toward living in alignment with your values.

All three of the above examples fall under the value of physical health, but **only the New Year's intention accounts for the fact that you are a human and addresses what's actually going to make you feel happy and fulfilled: living in alignment with your values***(not checking some box or achieving an arbitrary goal).*

Why is setting New Year's Intentions important?

The process of setting New Year's Intentions is important because it **helps you get clear about the ways in which you'd like to live your life differently** so that you can make decisions and take actionable steps toward your level 10 life.

Related post: How to Do a Life Audit & Why It's So Powerful

Without setting intentions, you continue to fall into old habits and patterns of behavior that leave you in the exact same place you are today, 1, 5, or 10 years from now *(it's literally your brain's job to protect the status quo).* That's fine for some people, but you're here because you're an ambitious wo/man who wants to step into their full potential and experience the maximum level of fulfillment you can, so **you're here to grow, not to stay the same.**

If you'd like to plug into a tight knit community of other ambitious wo/men & entrepreneurs like you who are here to live extraordinary lives, join our tight knit email community.

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How to set New Year's Intentions

Setting New Year's Intentions isn't a complicated process. In the next section, I'll outline the 5 steps to setting New Year's Intentions successfully.

Step 1: Define your core values

Since your **New Year's Intentions are a reflection of your core values** and a declaration to live more fully into them, you've got to be crystal clear on what is important to you in life in order for this to be a useful exercise.

I have an in depth guide on How To Define Your Core Values to walk you through the step by step process of figuring out what your values even are if you've never done it.

Maybe you value physical health and well being, but we've made a habit of unhealthy food choices that you'd like to change.

Maybe you value calm and mindfulness, but you've over committed yourself in different areas of your life and want to change how you spend your time.

Maybe you value connection and positive relationships, but haven't found your tribe and want to spend more time with like minded people.

You must understand your values in order to create a fulfilling life

Here are 3 things you can do right now to clarify your values so that you can set meaningful New Year's Intentions.

Create your ingredient list for joy and meaning

Write out 'an ingredient list of joy and meaning': ask yourself **"when things are going really well, what does it look like?"**

This is a Brene Brown (aff link) concept that I love. It gives you an idea of the 20 things that bring you joy, both little and big.

Categorize it into groups of values

Categorize the things that came up in your list from above into different groups of values.

For example, if your list had things like *"I make time to read, I take a new course, I watch documentaries"* then *Learning & Growth* may be one of your values.

If your list has things like *"I get out for a walk, I have energy to play with my kids, I do yoga"* then *Physical Health* may be one of your values.

Identify how to move toward your values

Make a final list of the 5-7 values that you hold, and write out things you do that bring you TOWARD your values, and things you do that take you AWAY FROM your values.

For example, one of my big values is Being Present. ***Any time*** I focus on my breath, go for a walk, put away my cell phone, practice gratitude, notice and appreciate something, listen when someone talks, and accept what is, I am moving TOWARD being present. ***Any time*** I, scroll through social media, worry about my to do list, interrupt someone who is talking, tune out my kids, multitask, I am moving AWAY FROM my values.

> Knowing the specific actions that give you more of, and less of, what you want in your life creates a clear blueprint for how you can improve

Once your values feel authentic and right, you are ready to move on to the next step in setting your intentions for the New Year.

Step 2: Choose your focus

You can't improve everything all at once.

The key to seeing growth in any area of your life is selecting very few things to focus on and giving them your all.

I'm not going to force you to only pick one thing because I know you're an ambitious human *(but I will say that if you manage to do that, you'll see more results in that one area than if you dilute your focus)*. As you reflect on your values and the different areas of your life, **think about which 1 to 3 need the most attention to get you closer to your version of a 10/10 life.**

Is it your physical health? Is it your mental health or mindfulness? Is it your career or business? Your family or kids? Your partner? Your finances? Your home or environment? Your hobbies or adventure or travel? What part of your life are you ready to create big changes in this coming year?

Step 3: Set your New Year's Intentions

Create a concise sentence that reflects the change you'd most like to see in a certain area of your life.

For example, if you've chosen physical health as the area that needs the most focus in the New Year, choose a phrase that gets you fired up or bought into your intention (perhaps 'to *live an active lifestyle'* to fuel my body', 'to challenge my limits', or 'to optimize my athletic performance') and make sure make sure your intention doesn't make you cringe (like *'to lose weight')*. **It might not seem like much, but the nuance is so important in order for you to enjoy thinking about and acting from a place of intention.**

Feelings dictate many of the actions in our lives. If you want to inspire yourself to change, you must define the intention that *feels* the most authentic to you.

In 2020, my theme was *to live intentionally.* When I read those two words I pictured a calm, centered, and deeply content version of myself that was focused on what mattered and proactive in infusing her days with joy.

Thinking of those two words throughout my day helped guide my choices and reminded me of the way I wanted to show up.

In 2021, my intention was *to explode out of my comfort zone*. I had realized that I'd been playing it safe in different areas of my life, and I wanted to focus on breaking through my safety net and redefining what was possible for me *(which resulted in me leaving the perceived safety of a corporate job and going full time in my coaching business, hitting 6 figures in less than 12 months, and living the life of my dreams).* If you're looking for support launching your own business to help you escape the corporate rat race, book a time to chat with me about my private 1:1 VIP Business Coaching Program.

The key to setting a good New Year's Intention is choosing a short phrase that reflects that change you want to work toward, evokes positive emotion, and aligns with your core values.

Step 4: Make it visual

If you're going to remember to follow through on your intention, it's so important to be able to actually see it to remind yourself of the change you're creating and get excited about the outcome and the process of achieving it.

You can capture your intention on sticky notes (aff link) throughout your house. You can write your word out in calligraphy (aff link) and frame it. You can create a background of your word on your phone. Or you can go all out and create a vision board (aff link) of a life lived in alignment with your values.

Regardless of the format you choose, **make sure you've got a daily reminder of your intention for the year** to set you up for success.

Step 5: Make decisions and actions from a place of intention

Your life isn't going to change itself. Nothing is going to be different about the next 12 months if YOU don't start making different decisions and taking different actions. Setting intentions for the New Year won't do you any good if you don't follow through with creating the version of your life you wish to see.

The last, and *most important,* step of this entire process is to actually start making decisions and actions from a place of intention. Catch your limiting beliefs and self sabotaging patterns of behavior and start doing things differently.

This is exactly why I do what I do — partner with ambitious women and Entrepreneurs in creating the life and business of their dreams — **to help you see where you're trapped in your own stories** and hold you accountable to thinking & acting differently **so that you can step into your full potential** and achieve unprecedented success, happiness, and fulfillment in life and business.

If you're curious about what a coaching partnership looks like, book a free (no strings attached) connection call with me to see how I can support you in achieving exponential business and/or personal growth and making this next year the most amazing one yet.

As the year comes to a close, your friends, your colleagues, or your social media feed may constantly be asking *'what are you doing differently in 2022?'*

And that's a great question to ask. **Good questions are the key to unlocking personal breakthroughs.**

But don't feel pressured to spout out a New Year's resolution you found off a list on Pinterest. Take time to reflect on what actually matters to you and set intentions that allow you to become the most authentic, fulfilled, and happiest version of yourself.

Related post: Building A Meaningful Life

A New Year is absolutely a great chance to reconnect with who you are, reflect on how far you've come, and review what you want out of life.

Taking time to reflect on the last 12 months and set intentions for the New Year is so powerful that I've created an **incredibly powerful free workbook** to help you set do exactly that for your life & business. You can access it instantly by joining our email community below.

Get the End of year Reflection & Goal Setting workbook

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It's everything you need to set powerful goals and create meaningful changes in your life in the next 12 months so access it for free now *(you can always unsubscribe)*.

> *You don't need to wait for permission to create a life you love.*
>
> — ANA MCRAE

I hope this simple 5 step process for setting New Year's Intentions was helpful for you. Here's a quick summary of the 5 steps, so that you can go out and make magic happen in the next 12 months!

1. **Define your core values**
   You have to be crystal clear on what's important to you in order to successfully set New Year's Intentions.

2. **Choose your focus**
   The key to seeing growth in any area of your life is selecting very few things to focus on and giving them your all. What part of your life are you ready to create big changes in this coming year?

3. **Set your intention**
   The key to setting a good New Year's Intention is choosing a short phrase that reflects that change you want to work toward, evokes positive emotion, and aligns with your core values.

4. **Make it visual**
   If you're going to remember to follow through on your intention, it's so important to be able to actually see it to remind yourself of the change you're creating and get excited about the outcome and the process of achieving it.

5. **Make decisions and actions from a place of intention**
   The *most important* step of this entire process is to actually start making decisions and actions from a place of intention. Catch your limiting beliefs and self sabotaging patterns of behavior and start doing things differently.

What is your intention for the New Year? Create that extra layer of accountability for yourself and let me know in the comments below!

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