



## The Power of Three Words

Every year, I choose a word to guide me. Not a resolution. Not a goal. A word. A word that quietly sits on my shoulder all year long and asks better questions than my to-do list ever could. I'm sure you've seen this in plenty of places as January rolls ahead. This year, one word didn't feel like enough. So I tried something new. Instead of choosing one word, I chose three - each with a different job to do.

Why three words work better than one: A single word can **inspire**. Three words create a **system**. Here's the framework I'm using - and now sharing with clients:

1. The **Pull** Word - what you're moving toward
2. The **Push** (or Shadow) Word - the resistance you need to face and push you out of old patterns
3. The **Integration** Word - how it all shows up in real life; how I actually live and lead

It's part intention. Part accountability. Part gentle nudge when you start drifting back into autopilot.

For 2026, my words are: **Refocus. Unburden. Lighten**. And here's what they're teaching me.

**1. Refocus - my pull word.** This is what I'm choosing to move toward. Not more effort. Not more hustle. More clarity. Refocus reminds me to ask:

- What actually matters now?
- What deserves my best energy?
- What am I doing out of habit instead of intention?

This word pulls me toward strategic focus, cleaner priorities and habits, and leadership that feels deliberate instead of reactive.

**2. Unburden - my push (or shadow) word.** This is where it gets interesting. My shadow word isn't the thing I want to run toward. It's the thing I'm learning to stop running from. The resistance I need to embrace this year is burden. Not just workload - but the deeper stuff:

- Carrying responsibility that isn't mine
- Saying yes when I mean maybe or more likely no
- Holding everything together because "I can handle it"
- Confusing strength with self-sacrifice

Unburden doesn't mean walking away from ambition. It means questioning what I've been silently carrying that no longer serves me - or anyone else. This word pushes me to confront where I absorb pressure instead of sharing it and I've made things harder than they need to be. Unburden is my reminder that leadership isn't about how much I can carry. It's about knowing what not to carry anymore.

**3. Lighten - my integration word.** This is how everything comes together. Lighten is what happens when I refocus on what matters and unburden what doesn't. It's not about being less serious. It's about being less heavy. Lighten shows up as:

- Simpler decisions
- More spacious schedules
- A little more laughter in the process
- Momentum that feels sustainable instead of exhausting

Same standards. Same ambition. Less weight on my shoulders while I carry them forward.

Be Inspired. Be Inspiring.  
Stacie

## Here's How

*How choosing the right words can change how you lead your year.*

Want to try this yourself? If you're choosing words for your own year, try this instead of picking just one:

1. Choose a pull word - what you want more of.
2. Choose a shadow word - the resistance you need to face.
3. Choose an integration word - how you want it to feel in real life.

You're not just setting an intention. You're designing a direction. And if your words lead you to do a little less... carry a little lighter...and lead with a little more ease...I'd call that a pretty great year already.

Here's the mantra I keep coming back to with my word trio in action:  
Refocus on what matters.  
Unburden what doesn't.  
Lighten how you move forward.

Together, these three words create something I've been craving - not just for my year, but for my leadership: More clarity. More freedom. More impact...with less unnecessary effort.