

Planning for the New Year: Resolutions vs. Intentions

Raise your hand if being asked, "What's your new year's resolution?" makes your stomach drop or your chest tighten. I obviously can't see if your hand is in the air, but I want you to know that mine most certainly is.

Imagine if you could plot the new year like a treasure map of endless possibilities—without the overwhelming strategies or impossibly lofty goals. Sounds nice, right? I think so, too.

The good news? It's possible! Reflect on the past, set the stage for growth, and then turn those reflections into the blueprint for the year ahead.

Let's explore how because we want to make this new year not just lived but celebrated.

Looking Back to Look Ahead

First, let's raid the treasure chest of your past experiences, insights, and values. Remember that [Year in Review](#) we did? Those nuggets of wisdom are pure gold and can act as a compass guiding your intentions for the year.

For those of you who haven't yet taken the time to reflect on the past year, please do so! It's a critical step for transitioning out of the past and into the future.

Journal about your experiences, celebrate the wins, recognize your challenges, flip through photos, reread journal entries from 2023, and start thinking about what you want more of in 2024.

Setting New Year's Resolutions vs. Intentions

Now that we've looked back, it's time to look ahead. If New Year's resolutions give you a bit of [anxiety](#), let's discuss what you can do instead.

Resolutions are those firm commitments we make, right? But let's be honest, they often fizzle out faster than a sparkler on New Year's Eve. Why? They can be like rigid rules, setting us up for disappointment. But fear not! Shifting toward intentions instead of resolutions can help.

Intentions are like setting a vibe rather than a rule. They're flexible, allowing room for life's twists and turns. So, instead of forcing yourself into a resolution-shaped box, we're creating intentions that align with who you are and where you want to go.

Shifting Focus to Experiences and Feelings

Now that we're shifting gears toward intentions, how can we make them count? Let's start with an example.

Take weight loss, for instance. Sure, the goal might be dropping a few pounds, but let's dig deeper. What's the 'why' behind it? Maybe it's about feeling healthier, chasing your kids around without gasping for breath or strutting your stuff in clothes that make you feel like a million bucks. That 'why' is your secret sauce.

Instead of saying, "I want to lose 10 pounds," let's reframe it. How about, "I want to feel vibrant, energetic, and confident every single day." See the difference?

Let me throw a few more examples your way – maybe it's about fostering more profound connections with loved ones, finding moments of peace in a chaotic world, [navigating grief](#), or adding a dash of adventure to your routine. The key? Make it personal.

Your "why" is like a fingerprint, totally unique to you. So, as you craft your game plan, keep that "why" front and center. Your journey, your rules.

Realistic New Year Planning and Intention Setting

Planning for a fantastic year is all about being practical, acknowledging the limits, and keeping it real.

We've all been there – grand plans that crash and burn because, well, life happens. So, first things first, let's give ourselves a break. It's okay not to have it all figured out. Instead, let's focus on realistic planning via small tweaks that make a big impact.

For example, if you're daydreaming about nature and water vibes but can't live by the beach, no biggie. How about discovering new walking trails, soaking in a sunset on your porch, or grabbing season passes to a local waterpark?

It's about infusing those daily doses of joy without flipping your life upside down. So, as we navigate intention-setting for the new year, let's be kind to ourselves and find joy in the simple, achievable moments.

Techniques to Build New Habits that Stick

Now that you've set some New Year's intentions (not resolutions) let's talk about turning them into habits that stick around. Here are a few quick tips to consider:

- **Embrace the 1% Rule:** Forget drastic overhauls; think baby steps. Striving to be one percent better every day adds up to a lot of awesome by the end of the year. The 1% rule can help [set boundaries](#) that allow to celebrate every win on your journey toward growth.
- **Stack Habits:** Have you ever heard of habit-stacking? It's the multitasking wizard of behavior change. Tack new habits onto existing ones. Brushing your teeth? Add a minute of mindfulness. Whatever aligns with your New Year intentions.
- **Build in Buffers:** Life throws curveballs. Expect the unexpected and be kind to yourself when things don't go as planned. It's not about [perfection](#); it's about progress.

- **Reward Yourself:** Celebrate wins, big or small. Whether it's a victory dance, a small indulgence, or just basking in the glow of accomplishment – you earned it.
- **Release Perfection:** Progress isn't always a straight line. Typically, if the path toward growth is curvy and a bit messy, it means you're going in the right direction.

Keep Up the Momentum Year-Round: Assessments and Adjustments

Now that we've explored intentions vs. resolutions and planned to build new habits let's ensure the momentum keeps up all year. Here are a few things to keep in mind:

- **Regular Assessments for Progress Tracking:** Give your goals a monthly check-up. Regular assessments keep you in the loop, showing you where you've nailed it and where there's room to grow. Think of it as your personal progress report – a little self-love and accountability rolled into one.
- **Readjusting Plans for Evolving Priorities:** Life's like a constantly changing playlist, right? So, your priorities might shimmy and shake a bit. That's okay! Be nimble, my friend. If something's not clicking, tweak it. Your plan is a living, breathing thing, not set in stone.

Remember, flexibility is key. Sometimes life throws you a curveball, and that's okay. The magic lies in how you adapt and flow with it. Your plan isn't a rigid rulebook; it's your personal guide through the adventures of a new year.

Setting Intentions for the Year Ahead

As we close out, remember that planning isn't just about dates on a calendar; it's about crafting a roadmap to your best self. When we set intentions based on our "why," our dreams become doable, and aspirations can become everyday reality.

Embrace the journey as you step into 2024. Embrace the detours, savor the wins, and keep dancing forward. It's not about perfection but the messy, glorious dance of progress.

Cheers to you and an incredible 2024!