

**JANUARY MONTHLY THEME:  
LIVING WITH INTENTION**

So here we are again, in the month of January, with its talk of daring resolutions and calls for self-improvement. But are we sure this is what we really want? What if this year we chose to live with intention rather than make a resolution or set a goal? Katie Covey, Soul Matters staff, suggests, *“Intention is different from setting goals or resolutions in that it “pulls us into” who we truly are. Goals and resolutions “push us out” into future possibilities.”*

Is being pushed to improve really what you want and need? Or do you suddenly notice an internal whisper that says, “I long to be pulled in more deeply to the self I already am”? In other words, maybe our real New Year’s work is not about pushing forward into self-improvement, but about pausing, stepping back and asking, “What hunger has my heart?”

There is, after all, a big difference between becoming better and becoming ourselves. Self-improvement is not the same as self-alignment. Maybe our most meaningful work this month is creating a quiet space that allows us to connect with who we *already* are, a space that protects us from the pressure to accomplish and instead makes room to ask questions of integrity. If we are able to carve out that quieter space, then maybe we will discover that this isn’t the year of “finally becoming a better me.” Maybe we’ll decide it’s enough to simply “finally be me.”

**Which question is calling to you? Where is it leading you?**

1. When you wake up, what is your intention for the day? Do you ask, “What do I have to get done?” or “What do I want this day to be about?”
2. Are you too intentional? Is it time to put down all the “doing” and pay a bit more attention to “being”?
3. They say intention arises from within. So, what do you do to stay in touch with the fire in your belly?
4. When was the last time you stopped and allowed yourself to ask, “Am I going in the right direction?”
5. What if it’s not about what you intend to do with life, but about what life intends to do with you?
6. Is it finally time to give up that unrealistic intention? The one you’ve been beating yourself up over, again and again? Is it time to intentionally be gentle with yourself and let it go?
7. Are you as good at assuming the good intentions of others as you are at defending your own?

**Wise Words:**

When I dare to be powerful — to use my strength in the service of my vision, then it becomes less and less important whether I am afraid... I am deliberate and afraid of nothing. *Audre Lorde*

I want to stop transforming and just start being. *Ursula Burns*

At the center of your being, you have the answer; you know who you are, and you know what you want. *Lao Tzu*

Before you tell your life what you intend to do with it, listen for what it intends to do with you. Before you tell your life what truths and values you have decided to live up to, let your life tell you what truths you embody, what values you represent. *Parker J. Palmer*

All I know is that my life is better when I assume that people are doing their best. It keeps me out of judgment and lets me focus on what is, and not what should or could be. *Brené Brown*

Between stimulus and response there is a space. In that space is our power to choose our response. In our response lies our growth and our freedom. *Viktor E. Frankl*

That’s the sacred intent of life, of God--to move us continuously toward growth, toward recovering all that is lost and orphaned within us and restoring the divine image imprinted on our soul. *Sue Monk Kidd*

That which dominates our imaginations and our thoughts will determine our lives, and our character. Therefore, it behooves us to be careful what we worship, for what we are worshipping we are becoming. *Ralph Waldo Emerson*