

COACH'S CORNER

Coach's Corner is a DIEEC blog dedicated to providing fresh ideas for all early childhood education professionals.



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Create Your Vision, Set Your Intention

During the month of December, amidst the craziness of the holidays, many people begin thinking about the new year that is approaching. The pressure to start the new year off right by changing habits or making resolutions is everywhere, from TV commercials to social media. It's tempting to see January 1st as the start of a new chapter. This can lead us to be overambitious in making plans to change old habits or develop new ones. While making resolutions can be a New Year tradition, it can be discouraging if you are unable to achieve the goals that you set. We want to start the new year with positivity and a growth mindset; let's look at some ways we can achieve this!



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Setting Intentions

Instead of choosing strict resolutions that you may or may not stick to, **consider what you would like your life to look like in the coming year.** Resolutions tend to be more rigid or focused on a very specific outcome. By setting an **“intention”** we are focusing more on the process and growth that is achieved. For example, a resolution may be, *“I will stop eating junk food,”* while an intention could be, *“I will work to develop healthier eating habits by incorporating more fruits, vegetables, and protein into my diet.”*



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Spend some time writing down what is important to you. Start by reflecting on the past year: identify the aspects that you feel good about, and then the things you would like to change. Are you looking to incorporate some healthier habits into your daily routine? Maybe you would like to dedicate some time to creativity by starting a new hobby or prioritize more family time in the evenings. **Next, ask yourself: How do I feel about this list? Is it reflective of my current routines?** If the answer is no, ask yourself the following questions.

- What do I want to feel like in the new year?
- What makes me feel fulfilled?
- What experiences do I want to have?
- What systems or routines will support me?

Creating Your Vision

It can be helpful to create a vision of your intentions for the new year. This adds a more concrete component to the process. Now that you have an idea of how you would like your new year to look and feel, let's consider how you would like to organize that vision.

Vision boards—Vision boards are a great way to map out the new year. A vision board is a collection or collage of words, pictures, and affirmations.. Vision boards can be divided into different sections for different aspects of your life, such as personal growth, work/career, relationships, and health. There is no right or wrong way to create a vision board. The idea is to create a concrete representation of your vision for the new year.



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Mantras– A mantra is a word or statement that is repeated. The concept is derived from Hinduism and Buddhism and was to aid in meditation. An example of a mantra could be, “***I am worthy of good things.***” Setting a mantra for your year can serve as a constant reminder of where you would like to direct your focus. **Write it down in multiple places and repeat it to yourself as often as needed.**



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Small steps– Instead of trying to change a bunch of habits or create new ones all at once, set a goal for a small amount of time. For example, if you would like to feel calmer or more productive in the morning, try out a new routine for a month. **After the month is over, reflect on what worked or what did not** and adjust accordingly.

Journaling– Throughout the process of adopting new habits or routines, **dedicate some time for reflection.** Take notice of how you feel each day or each week. Don't be afraid to change or adapt your goals if something is not serving you.



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*Tip: Find a friend or a colleague to check in with about your goals. Having someone to provide a space to process how you are feeling can help you to be more successful.

These are just a few examples of ways to start the new year without the pressure of resolutions. We would love to hear your plans for starting the New Year with a renewed sense of purpose. Keep in mind, you have the power to adjust your focus at any time, not just on January 1st.