

Using One Word to Take a New Approach to Change in the New Year

As we approach the holidays, our minds are filled with to-do lists of people to see, activities to participate in, and events to attend. It's also a time that many begin thinking of changes they would like to make in the coming year. Sayings such as "*New Year, New You*" have become embedded in our lexicon, and making resolutions is an annual tradition even though most resolutions are not kept past the end of January ([Statista, 2023](#)). While keeping resolutions may not have a high success rate, there is still a way to incorporate change as we head into the new year.

The *One Word* concept is an alternative approach to making resolutions. Instead of creating a specific goal, you pick a word to focus on the entire year. The word then becomes a filter and guide, helping you to grow in unexpected ways throughout the year.

For example, if you would like to improve your financial stability, you may choose the word, *Intention*. From there, you would consider how to be intentional with your money and what steps you could take to improve your financial situation. Going deeper, you may start to think about how to be intentional in your daily decisions, the dreams you pursue, and the time you spend as it relates to the financial stability you want to achieve.

Choosing one word to focus on can guide every aspect of your life and because of its simplicity, it is much easier to stick with than a list of resolutions. According to Gordon, Britton, & Page, "One Word creates clarity, power, passion, and life-change. The simple power of *One Word* is that it impacts all

six dimensions of your life – mental, physical, emotional, relational, spiritual, and financial” ([Gordon, J., Britton, D., & Page, J., 2023](#)).

For a successful One Word journey, follow these tips.

- Begin by making a list of five to ten possible words.
- Narrow your list to 3-5 words and look up the definitions, synonyms, and antonyms.
- Give yourself about a week to think about the words.
- Choose your word. One may seem to jump out at you, or one may seem to scream “not me”. Any word you choose has the capacity to help you grow if you focus on it for an entire year.
- Make your word visible. Create a poster with your word, definition, and a quote, use the word as a screen saver, get a bracelet or key chain with your word, write it on post it notes, and/or write it in your planner every week.
- Commit to journaling about your word at least once per week using online journal prompts. Focus on how you are implementing your word in your health, finances, spiritual journey, etc.
- Share your journey with a trusted person to help you keep focused.
- Remain open and curious about how your word can apply to every area of your life.
- Write a beginning of the year reflection focusing on how you think your word will change you in different areas. Then write an end of the year summary about what actually happened.
- Enjoy the journey!

Additional *One Word* resources: <https://getoneword.com/> and <https://myoneword.org/>.