



Moving Forward with Intention

By Carolyn Morgan, PhD

Laura Lombardi and I have witnessed the impact of the pandemic on family, friends, patients, and participants in the **Rewire** workshop. The purpose of this article is to help people acknowledge how the rewiring of their brains over the past year could impede their intentions moving forward. We have been fortunate to have continued our workshops throughout the past year. Many of the examples that people shared were related to the added stressors that the pandemic has imposed.

The fortuitous name of **Rewire** has never been more appropriate than now, as some people will struggle with the changing policies and movement towards reopening. We have had a year where we have maintained social distance, avoided gatherings, washed and sanitized hands, and worn masks. These behaviors have become practiced and second nature to us. The motivation to abide by these habits has been about our health. Most of us are aware that there has been a great deal of collateral damage from the past year. Many of us would agree that it is essential to strive towards more normalcy. However, people will need to be conscious of how their thoughts and subsequent anxiety could interfere with their well-meaning intentions to move forward. The uncertainty surrounding this virus has exacerbated the tendency to worry and get caught up in the “what ifs.” Worry breeds worry.

One of our **Rewire** participants told the story of going to an outdoor gathering where everyone was immunized. When she got out of the car, she felt anxious at the sight of many people in one place. She recognized her urge to leave but was able to change her thoughts to be more rational. She stayed at the event and enjoyed herself.

It is helpful to set intentions for ourselves and watch how our minds help move us towards or away from those intentions. It is important to remember that thoughts are passing neurological events. We are good at creating stories, but often these stories impact us in negative ways. Increased awareness of our thoughts helps us to change them when they are not helpful. When we are in our head, we are at risk for looking at life through a clouded lens. Lack of clarity makes all decisions more challenging.

