**An early spring is already here, and the flowers are blooming in abundance here in California from all the rain. This is a great time to revisit New Year’s intentions and take the time to reset and recommit. Please enjoy and be inspired by this blog I wrote below and expanded this year on ‘Your Powerful Spring Intention Reset’. Now can also be a good time to commit to deeply learn and teach the practice of mindful eating and reserve your spot in the spring online professional training, take a late winter, spring or summer retreat or receive personal coaching.**

**Your Powerful Spring Intention Reset**

**By Andrea Lieberstein, MPH, RDN, CMT-P, MB-EAT-C**

It feels like just yesterday, yet weeks ago, when the fresh new year was upon us - a time when many resolutions are made but few are carried out and accomplished. Ever notice how you make a resolution to start a regular meditation, or yoga practice, only to end up feeling guilty that you haven’t practiced consistently. Or perhaps you (or your clients) plan to embrace a new healthy mindful sustainable way of eating, only to return to a previous restrictive diet pattern, diet mentality and the familiar yo-yo pattern. Support and tools are so key to fulfillment and success.

Resolutions are important. They give us hope and a direction, but they usually lack support to carry us through. The good news is that research and experience offer a mindful approach so we can pause and set resolutions that connect to our intentions and values and draw upon inner and outer tools of support. This approach is outlined in my book, Well Nourished, integrating the best of behavioral science, neuroscience and mindfulness in ‘5 Steps to Mindful Eating and Living’, then further explored in depth. This blog focuses on the power of intention setting to help us follow through and make life changes.

**Steps to Set Better Intentions This Year**

1) **Pause.** Stop and breathe, taking three deep relaxing breaths. Let go of any disappointment or frustration from not meeting a previous New Year’s resolution. Meet this fresh new moment of endless possibility and potential. Do a mindful check-in. By settling and calming your mind, you’ll be in the right state of mind to set the tone for the rest of this year.

2. **Clarify and Prioritize**. What are the changes you would like to make? Pick one or two that are the most important to you, the ones you feel energized about. It’s important that these are truly what you want and not someone else’s idea of what you should do. This intention can be non-specific, such as “I want to have a better sense of well-being and energy this year.”

2) **Reflect and** **Name Your Values** – Reflect upon your most important values at this time in your life. What are they? Is it having health, energy to do the things you love, well-being, a healthy lifestyle, creativity, self-expression, social connection, making a difference in the world or something else? Reflect on why these are important to you. Consider what would be more possible in your life as you live your values more fully.

**3) Power Your Intentions with Your Values** Research tells us that when intentions are connected to values, we are more apt to be successful. Your intention becomes your compass, pointing you in the direction of where you want to be, how you want to feel in your life. An intention may include more than one value. For example, “I want to be more present and connected with my family and colleagues to deepen these relationships” or “I want to be rested and energized so that I can most positively contribute at home and to my work with an optimum life-work balance.”

4) **Power Up Your Action Steps with Intention.** You can use your intention to power you up and motivate you to take the action steps to reach it. The next step is to set specific actions to help you reach your broader intention. You can think of these action steps as the day to day steps you will take to keep your intentions moving forward. These are the important daily or weekly ingredients needed to reach the delicious and nourishing manifestation and feast of your intentions in your Well Nourished Bowl of your life. Examples of action steps might be to practice mindfulness meditation 20 minutes a day. Another might be to schedule in specific times to exercise, take a walk in nature, purchase and prepare quality food, take a snack or meal break, or work on that fulfilling dream project.

**5) Stay On Course**. It can be easy to keep working, do errands or procrastinate with TV or screen surfing instead of taking the steps of self-care. Practice a mindful check in, a mindful pause at these significant choice points that occur throughout the day. Then use your intention to power up and take the action step. Practice: - *Pause-Breath-Reflect*-*Connect*-*Power Up*. Notice what might be in the way of doing these action steps if it’s not coming easily. Remember your original intentions, why you are scheduling or practicing self-care in the first place and recommit. Power Up as you reconnect to your original intentions and values fueling what you wish to make happen in your life.

5) **Practice Self-Compassion** **Rather than Judgment**. We can get tripped up when we judge ourselves for not following our intentions or reaching our goals. Sometimes we might even turn the other way or give up. But you can let go of all or nothing thinking. You don’t have to be perfect, just do your best and recommit in the next moment, the next day. It’s important to develop the art of self-compassion so you can engage the “kind voice”, the caring mindful voice, which is supportive, soothes you when your expectations or best laid plans don’t match reality, and motivates you to begin again.

So ready for your Spring Intention Reset? How are you doing so far this year? Review resolutions you may have already made. Take the time to power them up or make new ones using this approach.  Experience how initiating change by taking a mindful pause and connecting with your values and intentions can make all the difference in creating the life you truly want – and a happier more fulfilled you.

Small steps do make for big change over time and before you know it, you are living your mindful Well Nourished Life!

**This blog is expanded from a shorter version that was first published at eMindful by Andrea Lieberstein.**

See more details about the upcoming online professional MB-EAT Mindful Eating Training programs at http://www.mindfuleatingtraining.com/online-professional-training