

## Ep #80: How to Set Intentions (That Actually Stick)



### Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

**Devon Clement**

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Welcome back to the Parenthood Prep Podcast. My name is Margaret Mason Tate, and I am thrilled to be filling in for Devon Clement for this episode 80 of the podcast. We're going to be talking about one of my favorite topics, and so Devon entrusted the pod to me today, and I'm jacked. So let's get into it.

Welcome to *Parenthood Prep*, the only show that helps sleep-deprived parents and overwhelmed parents-to-be successfully navigate those all-important early years with their baby, toddler, and child. If you are ready to provide the best care for your newborn, manage those toddler tantrums, and grow with your child, you're in the right place. Now here's your host, baby and parenting expert, Devon Clement.

We're going to be talking about my tried and true method that I have developed for reflecting on the year past and setting intentions or goals or manifesting or whatever you - however you want to verbalize that, process for the year upcoming.

I have been doing this particular thing since I was 17, but New Year's has been really important to me since way before that because there are two things you've got to know about me. The first is that both sides of my family are very Scottish, and that's integral to my upbringing, not least of which ways includes being a lover of the new year. As you may or may not know, in Scotland, it's a really big deal. It's a reverent and fun and playful celebration that lasts three days to our one evening.

That's number one. And number two is that I love office supplies. I love a crisp, fresh new pack of pens. I love an empty notebook, a blank note card. Those things bring me such joy, and they always have. When I was four years old, I asked for office supplies for my birthday and got them. Crazy. It's part of the reason I am the way that I am.

Anyway, those two things, my love of office supplies and my love of New Year's, led me to start doing in, I think I was 18, I started writing my intentions for the next year, the year upcoming, on a note card. And I would keep the note card in my desk. At that time, I was in college. And I'd keep the note card in my desk and I would check in throughout the year wherever I was to see, how am I

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doing? Is where I am right now any closer to these goals or intentions? And it was of such a fantastic way to anchor my self-concept and my progress or not in areas of life that really matter to me, but to everybody, really.

So I started to make it this kind of ritual and ceremony. I started to take myself out on dates to do this. And that was really fun. And then I became an adult and then immediately met the person I married, 20 minutes into adulthood. So that meant that I brought this tradition to that relationship, and we started doing it together. And we had our note cards together. And so that turned into what I would like to bring to you. Because if you're listening to this, it is statistically likely, though not positive, that you are partnered in some way. And I think that this is a really fun date because Devon and I talk a lot about dating as parents and why it's vital.

So what we would do is we would get dressed up. I mean, genuinely there was a dress code. We would really bring it, you know? And we would go somewhere super nice that we loved. In this case, it was a now-closed French restaurant called Atmosphere in Morningside, where we used to live in Atlanta, Georgia. And we would go and we would get a table. We would, a couple of days or a week before, we would have new note cards, and we would write for the upcoming year what we wanted to do. And at that time we would have our old cards to review. So basically, it's a fancy dinner in fancy dress with four note cards on the table: what you want to have done in the past year and what you want to do in the next year.

It makes a conversation have a little bit of structure. And when you've been partnered for a really long time, sometimes having a structure to a conversation can actually be very beneficial because otherwise you'll just riff and be silly. I'm kind of imagining Devon and Alex, her wonderful partner, doing this without any type of note card or anything, and they both just would tangential each other to kingdom come. Anyway, yes, you have the cards and you're talking about it. You're walking through the year, your processing things that deserve revisiting. You're celebrating your wins and you're acknowledging your losses and talking about what works and what doesn't. And it is just really lovely. It's nice to verbalize the intentions for the upcoming year. It's nice to be updated on how

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your significant other or your best friend or yourself are viewing the life that you're living together and how you can be supportive to that person and how you would desire support from that person.

You know, if you want to run a marathon and these conversations are routine in your relationship, if you want to run a marathon next year, this conversation is a great time to verbalize, I'm going to need your support on Sunday mornings because I'm going to do a long run every Sunday morning, and they take for fucking ever because it's a marathon training. Outright stating that in this conversation is a great jumping-off point.

This kind of ritual deserves, I believe, as a as a Taurus myself, I believe, deserves a substantial amount of indulgence. And so, best restaurant that you both like and can afford and best champagne that you can reasonably afford. This is a splurge moment. No matter what has happened in the year, you deserve a really lovely bubble at the end of it.

Now, if you're not a drinker, totally understand and celebrate that as well. I would like to encourage you to do a really lovely dessert, if not at the place that you're going to do dinner at, then somewhere else. You might even have dessert catered to be at home waiting for you. That's one of my favorite and very sexy and clutch moves, by the way. It adds a little surprise element and some elegance. I really enjoy pulling that one.

Not a sugar person? Totally understand. You know how to treat yourself. And I really encourage that because the conversation should be one that and the date should be one that you should look forward to. It should feel, you should feel uplifted and hopeful at the end of it. I know I always did. And if you want to celebrate with somebody, I think that's really good. I have done this with best friends before. I mentioned Devon. Devon has been one of my partners here. She tends to want to set goals at the Aries new moon. That's when she kicks off her mental year, I think. And I don't know anything about her lineage and how they do New Year's. I just know that I've always really loved celebrating it and felt very born anew at the specifically the winter solstice.

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Now, I want to talk about what date is really good for this. Just giving you some tried and true. I've been doing this literally since I was 18 years old. Tried and true dates, like the day of December to do this in. We love either the 28th or the 29th, that kind of weird, funky week after Christmas. It gives an anchor point. I love that. But my friend who now does this tradition, she says that she does two Mondays before Christmas, and that always works. That's always, there are reservations available because you don't want to do New Year's night, New Year's Eve. This is not the date for that. This is a quieter, dare I say sexier, more grownup evening.

And it doesn't involve other people. This isn't a great group activity. You can extrapolate why. So, like I said, the 28th or 29th is a great day to have it standing. You know that's when you're going to do it. You know you're going to need a babysitter. It's something that you can count on. It's something fun, no matter who did what on Christmas. Sometimes holidays can be rough, but this is something that you can look forward to because you have control over it in a lot of ways.

So those five different aspects of your life that you will want to make goals in on these note cards are relational, occupational, physical, environmental, and spiritual. So I want to explain those because my interpretation of those things for this purpose is a lot broader than you're probably thinking. Relational, I don't actually mean your relationship or your primary romantic relationship. I actually mean your relationships with everyone, your relationships with coworkers, colleagues, your team, your children, you know, your in-laws, your kickball team. I'm trying to think outside my own life. You know, people you're on boards with, etcetera. The relationships you have.

Occupational, people often want to hear that's like professional or your job. I do not mean that. I mean how you occupy your time. And sure, your job is going to be a big chunk of that, and it's super valid to have like very specific professional goals outside of this. I'm really talking about, you know, how do you how do you spend your time? What are you doing with your life? What's your screen time like? You know what I'm saying? And don't be convicted by that, honey. Mine is way higher than yours. I guarantee it.

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The third one is physical, and that is honestly, how do you feel driving your body? What your labs say, what your intuition says, what you and your medical, osteopathic, holistic, etcetera team are collaborating on. It's not about how you look unless, I mean, I'm all about doing whatever it is that you want to do to look however it is you want to look. What I mean though is that it's not about your quote unquote appearance or how you present your body, it's just the reality of your body.

The next thing is environmental. Environmental is every environment you are in and have any modicum of control over, i.e., your home, your car or transportation area, your office or where you work. Those types of things. You know, your garden, if you are lucky enough to have one. If you are, we'd love to see pictures. Tag @happyfamilyafter and let us ooh and ah over your plant babies.

The last of the five things that you'll be setting goals in or intentions for is the facet of spirituality. Spirituality and religion are often grouped together unnecessarily, and that is not what I mean here. What I mean by spiritual facet of self is how you feel in relation to something bigger than yourself. How you feel about your behavior, thoughts, and deeds in alignment with the values that you hold really sacred and dear. It is about being reverent and respectful to something greater than. And how we're feeling not mentally and not physically, but that other third thing. That's what I'm talking about.

You might wonder how you would set goals in these areas. You know, it's varied for me over the years. Sometimes I set really concrete goals. When I was a runner, I wanted to run X half marathon, or I wanted to get married. You know, these things were like measurable. Did you get married? Yes or no? Check the box. That was an easy box to check. It was great. Some are a lot more complicated. Some might be deepen my understanding of my religious text or get more in touch with my meditative states. I mean, these are these are less concrete and they're harder to measure, but they're still really fun to put on there.



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I recommend having one to three things for each facet. It's really overwhelming otherwise. The way that I have done it for the last many years gives me an opportunity to actually mark everything off. That has happened before. Oh, it felt great. It was a good year. And it's happened I think twice, two, three times. And I've gotten close many, many other years. And then there were some years that were a total shit show, and none of them really were able to be crossed off. And I was able to look at why, make some changes, and implement some routines or some systems or whatever, and the year following that was really, really good.

Having these cards as a collection is really cool for your kids. I would have loved to have seen not only my parents being intentional about the way that they are moving through the world, but being intentional about dating and focusing on themselves and how they're feeling. I think that would be really cool. Certainly, some of these would be private. You can put some pretty scandalous stuff on here. I one time did the, you know, the number of sex goal or whatever. But then, you know, other times it's get a degree or write a certain number of poems or write a certain number of letters to my relatives. Those are all really, really worthwhile that I did.

If you end up doing this, we would love to hear about it. Share your experience online, tag us @Happy Family After, wherever you are. Hopefully, it's on Instagram. Do you think we should start a Threads account? Yes or no? Let us know. I'm trying to maybe get Devon to come around on that. We'd love to hear a little commotion for the Threads. That's a really deep cut joke.

Okay. Listen, I won't speak to you again before the new year. So I want to tell you that I hope that your 2025 was blessed and beautiful. And no matter how you're feeling about this year as it draws to a close, the sun is going to shine on 2026 soon enough, and I can't wait to connect with you then. Have a great rest of your December. Bye.

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HappyFamilyAfter.com. On our website you can also leave us a voicemail with any questions or thoughts you might have, and you can roast your baby. Talk to you soon.

Thanks for listening to this week's episode of *Parenthood Prep*. If you want to learn more about the services Devon offers, as well as access her free monthly newborn care webinars, head on over to [www.HappyFamilyAfter.com](http://www.HappyFamilyAfter.com).