

Welcoming 2016: Intentions for your Soul

The last three weeks I have shared some intentions to consider for 2016 that will guide you to your true self. Accessing your true self is the necessary step to lead an authentic life, one in which you achieve all you were destined to achieve. You will get there by loving and nurturing your physical body, your mind, and your soul.

Today, during these final days of 2015, I would like to get you thinking about your soul. For many this can be a well ignored part of our being. Caring for our soul seems to fall well beyond the bottom of the proverbial “self improvement to do” list. After a period of choosing to ignore that bit of self care, you can be sure your soul will alert you to the fact that it is not being fed. Here are some easy-to-spot signs of a malnourished soul:

- day to day activities feel dry and meaningless
- everything you do feels exhausting
- you question your purpose in being and who you really are
- you experience a lack of compassionate and/or connection to those around you

These are all signs of a hungry soul. So what is food for the soul? Truthfully it can be anything that connects you to one of the following:

Nature



Finding our true, authentic self takes time spent in true, authentic environments. Sadly the majority of our day is spent in contrived environments. Trust me that is not where you will tap into your soul. Nature is THE authentic environment and there is no substitute. It is the only antidote to hours and hours spent in virtual worlds. Spending time in nature shouldn't cost you anything but time and the reward is boundless.

- Discover or create for yourself a nature escape from your office or work space where you can sit and listen to the birds sing and the leaves rustle and watch the shift of seasons on a daily basis.
- Schedule a weekly nature fix to one of our nearby state parks or nature preserves for a long walk or situate yourself in one place to observe all the beauty around you.
- Sit outside each evening, under the stars whatever the time of year and marvel at all the sky beholds.

Creative Time



Making/Creating with our hands is one activity that actually connects our physical body and mental body to our soul. Thankfully “making” has come into a renaissance period and opportunities abound. Don’t save it for your retirement or wait to design a “craft room.” You need this activity **now** to feed your soul. Chances are, you have everything required to begin a maker project immediately. Whether you are making music, making food, writing, cultivating a garden, or sketching a still life, doing so brings you into the present moment and connects you to your true self.

- Set aside time each weekend for a project that allows you to work with your hands. Start with something you already know how to do and for which you have what you need so you don’t get caught up in the preparations rather than the act of making.
- Once you achieve that, try incorporating small

activities that you can do each day with your hands. Think small... Even chopping and assembling a salad is working with your hands or challenge yourself to a doodle a day in a blank journal.

Play



What does play look like to you? You can discover that by bringing to the surface memories of what gave you joy as a child. What activities could you literally lose yourself in, unaware of time and place and only experiencing the joy of the moment. Maybe it was throwing stones for hours into a lake, cuddling with a favorite pet, or riding your bike into the wind. Take some time with this and consider how you felt about yourself in those moments. What might you borrow from these early days that you could integrate into your life today? What steps would you need to take to make space for that activity?

- Schedule a play date for yourself this weekend. Set aside the time needed and honor your commitment to yourself to just play.

So now aren't you excited to get started? I say bring on the New Year and let's all take these courageous steps towards our

true self together!

Let me leave you with the quote that I began this series with as it truly encompasses all you need to prepare for this glorious New Year that stretches ahead:

*“At the center of your being
you have the answer;
you know who you are
and you know what you want.”*

~ Lao Tzu ~