



WHY YOUR NUMBER ONE INTENTION FOR 2017 SHOULD BE LOOKING AFTER YOURSELF...

As we fizz in to the new chapter that is 2017, its normal to begin to wonder about how this year will morph – what changes can we make, how can we feel different (more ourselves, less the crazy wired Alpha achiever), and how can we manifest those wishes and dreams we've been pondering over for a while, perhaps even years?! Like you, I sometimes feel fear, worry and disproportionate anxiety – plus, at times, a pressure to achieve beyond my own expectations. Usually the hardest person on ourselves is us – we push ourselves, we feel guilty stopping, we listen to the boring critical voice

in our heads, we look after everybody else first. I believe we can instigate changes at any time in our lives, but this year I'm going to use January as a month to recognise a simple key to unlocking the future – looking after myself.

How many times have you heard that little whisper in your head “I need to look after myself more” or “I need to put myself first” and how many times have you said to yourself “I don't deserve this”, “I am not good enough”, “I don't have time for me”, or “this will never happen for me”? Guilt is such a wasted emotion and yet so many of us beat ourselves up for taking a break. In an age of techno mayhem, the idea of disconnecting and doing – shock, horror – nothing - has become extremely difficult. Not to mention truly going within and having a conversation with our inner selves. Indeed most of us struggle in some way with how to TRULY look after ourselves. As the mothers amongst us know we spend years caring for our children, making sure they get enough sleep, eat nourishing foods, feel stable and loved – any yet, as adults, so many of us forget these essential skills. Instead we rush and hurry along, forgetting to stop, assess and check that our inner needs are also being met.

So, here goes – some tips for 2015...

1) JOURNEY WITHIN, CONNECT WITH YOUR CORE

When we neglect our feelings, our body, our wellbeing what we are really doing is forgetting to respect the Self.

And whilst many of us might think that looking after ourselves means simply relaxing, having a long bath, or a massage (and I absolutely agree that these are both important and wonderful) we need to go deeper beneath the surface. When we feel a profound sense of peace and joy within the world looks like a different place. So today, I would like you to ask yourself the questions below. Take your time, be honest with yourself - know that just by reading this article and taking the time to answer the questions you are making your first baby steps towards Looking after YOU!

Do I believe that all of my emotional needs are being met at this time?

Are there circumstances in my external life that make me feel bad about myself internally?

What is the biggest emotion that is holding me back?

What do I believe I can do to help me express and deal with this emotion?

Do I believe I am deserving of a good life?

When did you last stop long enough to question your life? They may sound corny but delving into these questions can give you a really clear insight into what is going on deep in the emotional depths of the body and thus help you to see things more clearly. As well as this knowing WHERE to make change is as important as the

deed itself. There's no point pushing yourself to do better as work say, if really what you want is a whole new job. There's no point not facing that crumbling relationship, if its continually wearing you down and sucking your energy.

At the root of all this questioning is one bigger question – crucial to your soul's journey:

AM I ALIGNED TO WHAT IS RIGHT FOR ME?

This is a highly significant and personal question – remember you can only deal with the right now, but I urge you to reflect on it, because if you are not aligning yourself to things that are right for you, you will discover that again you are not looking after yourself and are instead holding yourself back from what you genuinely deserve ~ which are only good things.

2) DISCOVER YOUR COMMUNITY – BUILD YOUR TRIBE

Too often when we think of community, we think of our neighbours and the area in which we live, but Community is so much more than that. Who you have for support in your life, who you surround yourself with and who you receive unconditional love from, as well as those that you give support and love to, makes up our personal community. An important aspect of looking after YOU is finding, forging and maintaining a stable level of support so that you feel love on a consistent basis. How much sweeter is life when you can share it with those who truly want the best for you? Once you start to consciously assess your community you may find

that you don't have the support you need, or that you feel that those people who give you unconditional love don't know how to support you in the way that you really need.

In these coming weeks, I would love you to look at this area of your life. Ask yourself who might be surrounding you that causes you hurt or negativity, and who you know you can rely on wholeheartedly. For those of you that do not feel you have support, I would encourage you to create a new community. Don't spend your time with energy suckers, or people who don't make you feel good enough. Stretch your horizons, take up a new hobby, try that yoga class, follow your instincts and nurture a friendship you haven't yet made time for but are attracted to. We all of us need support. We need to feel like we belong.

3) IT'S NOT FINE TO FEEL FINE, STRIP BACK THAT WHICH DOES NOT SERVE YOU, REACH FOR THE STARS!

OK, so this is one of the hardest parts, and yet it is probably also one of the greatest instigators of change. Sometimes in life our circumstances are less than ideal or as we like to say in Ireland, things are "grand" meaning things are just about fine. But being fine, or just about happy IS NOT OK!!! It's challenging not only to accept that we deserve happiness, but sometimes also to make it happen. It's much easier to drift along comfortably, not rocking the boat, perhaps

convincing ourselves that if we change something, it could get worse or that if we address a problem, person or situation there will be bad consequences. But I truly believe that the stripping away of negativity may be messy, come with pain, even anger but from this – and through this - we emerge clearer, happier and above all free. That sounds worth it right? Are you ready to strip it all back? Are you ready to soar?

4) REWARD YOURSELF

It's hard to make changes, it's hard to tell people how we really feel, it's hard to move forwards, and oh so easy to stay put. So, once you've delved within and become consciously aware of the transformations you'd like to make, be sure to reward yourself. It's a way to steady yourself, prepare yourself and protect yourself. And it's my favourite part, because this is where you can sit still for a moment and take a deep breath in and a deep breath out, knowing that you are now in a place where you can make the steps towards long lasting changes. Looking after ourselves is about understanding who we are, and what we allow our lives to be filled with.

I recommend taking a long Epsom salt bath to wash away any final energetic debris, unwind and then, perhaps, listen to this beautiful accompanying meditation that I have created for you to allow you discover a space within your for clarity, peace and freedom.

With hope for a year of self love, self change and self growth,

Caroline xxx