

Refreshing Reminders for a Revitalizing New Year

I find myself spending time reflecting this time of year. Moments to step back and take stock of the time that has past, the good and the bad, and to plan for the new year to come. We've just experienced Thanksgiving and been cognizant of the things we are thankful for and spent time celebrating our family and friends—and then Christmas came by in full swing. So it's appropriate to start thinking now of a new year and a fresh start.

In light of the speed with which time is passing, I put together a short list of things to do as you begin the new year.

Tips for Planning for a Fresh Start in the New Year

1. **Purge:** Stuff, attitudes and anything else in your home that no longer brings you happiness. With a new round of Christmas presents in your home, it's even more important to remove excess. Take the time to organize and remove those things you haven't used in the last six to 12 months. Seriously! If you haven't used it, you probably don't really need it.
2. **Set goals and put them on the calendar:** A goal without a deadline is just a dream. I like to print out a blank calendar or buy a desk calendar to fill in goals, trips and essential dates that need to be protected. I also use a digital calendar, but that's probably more info than you need. For planning purposes, I love the old-fashioned kind where I can write it out and cross off the dates. And don't forget to protect your family time. You must be intentional with your time—it is your singularly most important commodity.
3. **Rest:** I push hard all year long and likely you do too. Take the time to rest and recuperate and care for yourself in ways

that you don't normally do so that you can be everything you need to be for your family.

4. Put up some encouragement as reminders: Some days, we just need a gentle push in the right direction. You know, those days where you just don't have the motivation to go to work one more day or make kids' lunches. Thankfully there are some great options, so you won't have to make those encouragement reminders yourselves.

I love to use a reminder board. As I begin a new year, having in front of me the prayers I pray for myself, my family, my church and more is a wonderful reminder and way to see how God answers prayers as well. We can also use reminder boards for being physically active or to reemphasize the things we forget when we are tired, worn down and exhausted.

I hope that you will take time to reflect on the good things God has allowed in your life this year and plan now to be intentional to spend your time wisely on the things that are important. Take time to set family goals, and ask your children to think about what their goals should be in 2018 as well. This is something I always enjoyed doing when mine were younger, and they always had some really fun ideas. Write them down together and revisit the list every so often—and then encourage them to meet their goals and dreams as well. {eoa}

Victoria Duerstock loves a good story. A happily married mom of three, she is eagerly pursuing a writing career. Being connected with the home furnishing industry in some aspect or another for more than 20 years, Victoria has lots of ideas for what's trending in the marketplace after tagging along with her husband to see the markets from the inside. You can learn more about her at .

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