



WORD OF THE YEAR EXERCISE

This annual word-of-the-year exercise can help you reflect on your values, intentions, and hopes for the new year. Think of it as the anti-resolution resolution. Instead of setting a specific goal, choose a word that captures the mindset you want to adopt in 2026 — a word that will nudge you toward positive change whenever you think of it. To better understand the word-of-the-year exercise, it helps to know what it is not. It should not be a broad resolution (eat healthy), a specific action (start exercise program), or a goal (lose 20 pounds). Instead, choose a single word that reflects how you want to live in 2026.



Your word should reflect your values and intention - your vision for what well-being means to you and the areas of your life that need attention.

As you think back in 2025, what is one thing that is standing out in your mind?

Keep playing that reel of your past year and even before... what other images are emerging?

Reviewing those images, jot down some of them.

What word(s) of reflection might encompass those images?

WORDS OF REFLECTION:

awareness, awe, breathe, pause, reset, gratitude, resilience, optimism, focus

Continuing your journey by reflecting...

What did you love about the last year?

What would you like to change about the last year?

What are some things you should let go of?

What would you like to change about yourself in the upcoming year?

What word(s) of change might encompass your thoughts?

WORDS OF CHANGE:

reset, renew, nourish, energize, growth, recharge, evolve, bloom, adventure, travel

Let's brainstorm!

What are some things you love and are passionate about?

What do you want to have more of in your life?

What word(s) might connect to where you have been?

WORDS OF CONNECTION:

relate, reconnect, experience, balance, engage, cherish, comfort, listen

Time to do some sorting...

Look at some of your notes and words you have jotted down so far.

What are some themes that are emerging?

What do you want to pay particular attention to?

What do you want to have more in your life in 2023?

What word(s) may be bring clarity to those thoughts?

WORDS OF CLARITY:

experience, determined, awoken, mindful, worthy, calm, journey, humble

Narrow it down...

Now that you have put some thought to this, what do you want to have more of in your life?

What is seeming to be your focus word for 2026?

Try it on for size – see if it fits. If after a bit it doesn't feel right, come back here and review this journey.

WORDS OF FOCUS:

triumphant, unstoppable, fearless, motivated, healthy, determined, renew



DEVCA Framework