
YOUR WORD FOR THE YEAR

A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE



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WHY CHOOSE A WORD

Words create impressions, images and expectations. They build psychological connections. Words dictate how we think. And since thoughts determine our actions, there's a powerful connection between the words we speak and focus on and the results we get.

Poorly chosen words can kill enthusiasm, impact expectations and hold people back. Good words carry enormous power to help, encourage and move us to a greater level of living.

Well-chosen words can motivate, offer hope, create vision, impact thinking, and alter results.

Did you know there are 800,000 words in the English language? That gives us a lot of word choices!

There are great opportunities to come up with an amazing word for your year!

This step-by-step guide will help you select a word that helps you create a visual of your desired outcome. Choose it with purpose because it matters.

You might find as you go through this process that sometimes you choose your word ... and sometimes your word chooses you.

A little bit from Letha

I'm glad you decided to join me in one of my most important traditions; choosing a word for the year.

I've been choosing a word since 2001. It started out as a fun and light-hearted tradition and is now one that challenges and transforms me.

The process of choosing a word and the practice of living it out has become more significant for me throughout the years.

I've found that the words take on a life of their own and manifest themselves in my life in unexpected ways.

I love how choosing a word for the year has changed me and I'm excited to think it will do the same for you.

THE PROCESS

Give yourself time to work through everything in this guide and finalize your word. Enjoy the process and don't rush yourself.

You can start working this guide at any time. The word you choose doesn't need to start and end based on a calendar year. Perhaps it's your word for the year from your birthdate, or from the date you complete the process.

HOW TO CHOOSE A WORD

Step 1 - Review

Review the list of words on this page. As you go through the list, think about how the word makes you feel. Use this activity to kick start your creative side. If you've chosen a word of the year in the past, write it down here or circle it if it's on the list.

joy	determination	grace
peace	contentment	family
love	focus	believe
redeemed	commitment	courage
faith	perseverance	surrender
awaken	confidence	gratitude
health	strength	friend
life	vision	passion
heal	patience	worship
bonding	kindness	practice
adventure	honor	humility
compassion	unstoppable	hope
grow	fun	receive
balance	laugh	warrior
unwavering	best	restore
change	trust	nurture
purpose	happiness	still
honesty	truth	adventure

Step 2 - Reflection

Sit down in a quiet place with this guide. Create a relaxing, peaceful space for yourself. You might want to light a candle, pour a cup of coffee, and grab a blanket. If it's summer, maybe you'll sit on the deck, play soft music and enjoy a glass of iced tea. Just be sure to give yourself the time you need to go through these steps. Don't rush the process.

Start by answering these questions:

Consider your current season of life. How would you describe it?

Describe where you want to be.

What are you desperate for more of in your life?

What are you passionate about? In other words, what makes your heart sing?

If a word had the ability to change your life for the better, what word would you choose?

A little bit from Letha

My word choices for the year have been inspired by the seasons of my life.

CHANGE, when I knew change was critical but it was what I feared!

BALANCE, when I was focused on my career but needed to take better care of myself.

UNWAVERING, when the economy took a nosedive and I had to be unwavering in my resolve to keep *The Healthy Weigh* open.

PEACE, when tough decisions had to be made and I needed peace to move forward.

REDEEMED, when I made one of the most life changing decisions of my life; to redeem and heal lost time from my adolescence.

As I write this guide, my word is **AWAKEN**.

This is one of those years that my word chose me. Having had an awakening as the result of my redemption last year, it didn't take much time at all to choose my word for this year!

Step 3 - Top 10

After examining how you want your life to change, what are the top 5 - 10 words that come to mind?

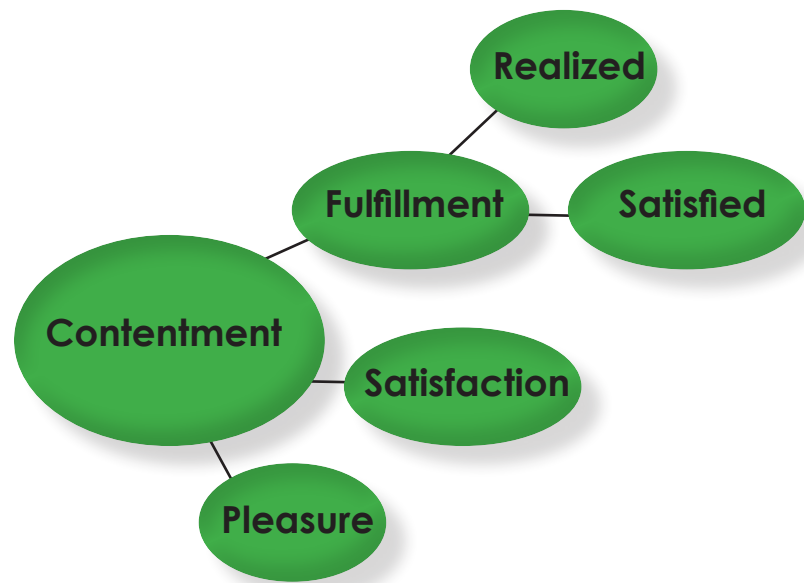
Write those words below.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

Step 4 - Word Search

Go to Google or grab a dictionary and look up your top 10 words. Those searches might expand to show you other words that have more meaning for you. Use the space below to draw your "word trees" and narrow down your focus.

See the example to the right.



Step 6 - Top Two

This is a great time to step away from the process. You'll start to notice how your top words interact with you throughout the day.

After giving it time, write your top two words below.

1. _____
2. _____

Step 7 - Go Deeper

Answer these questions about the top two words.

What would my life look like if I had more of this?

How would the lives of the people around me be influenced if I mastered this word?

Congratulations!

**Because of the work you've done in this guide,
you now have your word for the year!**

My word for the year is:



WHAT TO DO NOW

Part of the fun of having a word for the year is finding your word in unexpected places. People have collected books, rocks, jewelry, artwork, scrabble tiles, t-shirts, journals, songs, and more. It can be a treasure hunt and although it's fun, you will be surprised how your word will show up and change you throughout the year in subtle and not so subtle ways.

Here are a few other ways to keep focused on your word:

- Tell your friends/family your word for the year.
- Use your word as inspiration when you're setting your goals.
- Put your word on your screensaver, mirror, and calendar.
- Create a playlist of songs with your word.
- Use your word as a journaling prompt.
- Become a student of your word. Learn from it.
- Read books that directly relate to your word.

Live your word. Let it change you. Decide now to plant this word in your heart. It will make a difference in your life this year and beyond.

A little bit from Letha

I've had some great experiences sharing this tradition with friends and family. One holiday season I created little cards with words and hung them on pretty twig trees in the corner of my dining room. Throughout the season as friends and family came to our home to celebrate we encouraged each one of them to choose a word off the tree. From the professional businessmen to the teenagers in the youth group, words were chosen and great conversations were had.

My four sisters and I have a "sister day" each January to celebrate each other, plan and dream together. The first order of business each year is to share our word for the year. It's become such a meaningful tradition for us.

Since I've been teaching this concept I've heard from many people who have passed it on as well. Teachers with their students, employers with their employees and parents with their children have benefited from choosing a word for the year.

Once you've experienced the impact choosing a word for the year can have on your life, you can't help but pass it on.

I'd love to hear your story.

Email me at:
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