**ERUUF CHALICE CIRCLE/COVENANT GROUP SOUL MATTERS TOPIC FOR JANUARY 2022**

***LIVING WITH INTENTION***

**Preliminaries/Group Business**

**Opening Words and Chalice Lighting**

Cat: Where are you going?

Alice: Which way should I go?

Cat: That depends on where you are going.

Alice: I don’t know.

Cat: Then it doesn’t matter which way you go.

Lewis Carroll, Alice in Wonderland

**Check In**

**Topic Introduction**

With goals, the future is always the focus: Are you going to reach the goal? Will you be happy when you do? What's next? Setting intention, at least according to Buddhist teachings, is quite different than goal making. It is not oriented toward a future outcome. Instead, it is a path or practice that is focused on how you are "being" in the present moment… Goals help you make your place in the world and be an effective person. But being grounded in intention is what provides integrity and unity in your life... What would it be like if you didn't measure the success of your life just by what you get and don't get, but gave equal or greater priority to how aligned you are with your deepest values?

*Phillip Moffitt*

Before you tell your life what you intend to do with it, listen for what it intends to do with you. Before you tell your life what truths and values you have decided to live up to, let your life tell you what truths you embody, what values you represent.

Parker J. Palmer

I want to stop transforming and just start being.

Ursula Burns

I always wanted to be somebody, but now I realize I should have been more specific.

Lily Tomlin

Intentional living is the art of making our own choices before others’ choices make us.

*Richie Norton*

So here we are again, in the month of January, and all around us there’s going to be tons of talk about creating goals, making resolutions, and imagining the “better me” we ***might*** become. But is that what we really want? Maybe our real New Year’s work is not about pushing forward into self-improvement, but about pausing, creating a quiet space that allows us to connect with who we ***already*** are, a space that protects from the pressure to accomplish and instead makes room to ask questions of integrity. There is a big difference between becoming better and becoming ourselves.

**Questions for Individual Reflection**

1. What does the phrase “Living with Intention” mean to you?
2. What is your practice when you wake up? Some begin the day by asking “What do I have to get done?’’. Others ask, “What do I want this day to be about?”. Which are you?
3. They say intention takes pause. So, when was the last time you stopped, stepped back and allowed yourself to ask, “Am I going in the right direction?”
4. Have you ever felt that life was living you rather than you living it?
5. It is said that “Habits eat good intentions for breakfast.” What new habit could you put in place that enables your intentions to become real?
6. *What would it be like if you didn’t measure the success of your life just by what you get and don’t get, but gave equal or greater priority to how aligned you are with your deepest values? Phillip Moffitt*

**Responses/Discussion**

**Likes and Wishes**

**Closing Words and Extinguish Chalice**

A Prayer of Good Intention

Dear Lord,

So far, I've done all right.

I haven't gossiped,

haven't lost my temper,

haven't been greedy, grumpy, nasty, selfish, or overindulgent.

I'm really glad about that.

But in a few minutes, God,

I'm going to get out of bed.

And from then on,

I'm going to need a lot more help.

*-Anon*

**Additional Resources**

### Videos & Podcasts

Resolutions: I Promise - Spoken Word Poem

Natalie Patterson

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kuEShiLy4MA>

Today I'm Gonna Try and Change the World

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ccm_6HwlUbs>

What Will Your Verse Be?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=85&v=R_zsMwCOoEs>

Excerpted from the film Dead Poets Society

How To Simplify Your Life

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7lECIsRif10&t=159s>

On the need to intentionally create a quieter life.

## Articles

Intent vs. Impact: Why Your Intentions Don’t Really Matter

Jamie Utt

<https://everydayfeminism.com/2013/07/intentions-dont-really-matter/>

How to 80/20 Your Life

<https://markmanson.net/80-20-your-life?utm_source=pocket_mylist>

On how to intentionally focus on those small parts of our life that produce most of the meaning.

### Books

The Power of Habit

Charles Duhigg

How to intentionally change your habits and take back your life.

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