

Powerful Intention | Powerful Action

Objective: An intention is the guiding thought or idea about who you want to be and how you want to live. Intention is the starting point of achieving what we desire. Learn how to set powerful intentions.

Discussion (10 minutes)

Begin this discussion with the question, “What is an intention?” Encourage students to consider and discuss the question. “What is the difference between an intention and a goal?” Intentions are thought-based and goals are generally more tangible. Goals tend to relate to things or achievements as opposed to aspirations, feelings or states of being. “What is the benefit of setting an intention?” “When would you want to do that?” “How can setting an intention help you solve a problem you are wrestling with?” “What is an example of a goal?” “What is an example of an intention?”

So why set an intention? Why not just do it? How is creating an intention different than doing? Do you think that somebody like Michael Jordan just played basketball or do you think he set intentions? What about Steve Jobs? Or Beyonce? Did Lemonade suddenly spring out of her head one day? What do those three very different people have in common? They knew how to create a powerful intention, believe in it, nurture it and give it room to become everything they allowed themselves to imagine.

Every time you set an intention for yourself, you create a neural pathway in your brain to that thought or desire. A pathway that is more easily traversed the next time because now a new road has been built. Setting clear, specific intentions creates a more detailed, powerful blueprint or map to get you to wherever, yes, *wherever* you want to go.

Intentions can be things you return to frequently or track for your whole life. For example: the intention of giving back to your community isn’t about a singular event but a way of living. Intentions can also be singular. For example: If you know that you are going to have a difficult conversation with somebody, you can set an intention for yourself of listening fully and responding kindly. If you can imagine yourself making your intention a reality, you have already taken the first steps.

Exercise (10 minutes)

1. Write down an intention for yourself. Something you aspire to or a way you wish to be. Be as specific as possible with your intention. Try to see it, feel it, taste it...
2. Now bring to mind somebody you admire. What do you imagine this person has that you would like to have? Is it money? Fame? Talent?
3. Ask yourself, "What will that thing that this person has... what will it give me? Why do I want that? How do I think it will make me feel?"
4. Look at your written intention again. Is it really a thing you desire or is it a feeling or a state of being? Do you want to rewrite your intention? If so, do it now.
5. Is there anything you are afraid of when you think about setting this intention? Is there something you feel you will lose? Write those fears down. Be honest and don't hold back.
6. Look at your intention again. Is it an intention that feels authentic to you? Or is it something you feel you *should* aspire to? Does your intention really belong to somebody else and not you? If it doesn't feel authentic, write down an intention that does feel like it is right for you. Something you truly want for yourself. It does not have to be huge. It can be something small but it needs to be meaningful to you.
7. When you feel you have settled on an authentic intention for yourself. Silently repeat the intention three times.
8. Now look at your list of fears. As you see every fear written, silently say to yourself, "Even though I fear _____, I completely love and accept myself." Do this for each fear.
9. Take a look at your intention again. Now write down three things that you can do to move yourself toward that intention. They do not have to be big things. Many baby steps go a long way.
10. You can keep this paper and try to implement the steps you wrote down to move you toward your intention. You can set this intention daily by simply saying the words to yourself and spending a one or two minutes quietly listening to your own breath. Mornings are a great time to set intentions. You can have a big intention that you set for yourself over a long period of time or one that you set daily, according to what you feel you need for that day.
11. You can also carry something small with you daily, as a reminder and symbol of your intention.

Final Thoughts: Be Open to *How* Your Intention Becomes Reality

Setting an intention is not the same as deciding ahead of time how something will happen. If you become attached to a specific outcome you limit the other ways in which your intention can be fulfilled. Sometimes we get what we want but not in the way that we want it but in the way that is best for us.