

# Finding Calm in the New Year

January 2026 Newsletter

## January tends to be loud - especially for families



With resolutions, plans, “new year, new me” talk everywhere, it can be easy to feel like we should be doing more, changing more, fixing more.

### But, what if instead of speeding up, we leaned into slowing down?

This year, let's try making January less about adding things to our plate and more about finding steadiness, rest, and connection in what's already there. When we slow down, our minds and bodies can ease out of go mode. Plus, our kids feel that shift, so our calm, rested presence can help them feel safer and more regulated too!



## The Power of Slowing Down

When life moves fast, our nervous systems do too. The constant rush from morning routines to work to after-school activities and bedtime can quietly keep both parents and kids in a low-level “fight or flight” mode. That's when we begin to see meltdowns, burnout, and short fuses (for all of us).

Slowing down isn't about 'doing nothing' - it's about creating breathing room. A slower pace allows our minds and bodies to reset and think clearly, so we can **respond** instead of **react**.

### Making time to pause helps our nervous system reset, allowing:

- **Better emotional regulation:** Calmer bodies = calmer responses
- **More focus and patience** for both in adults and children
- **Deeper connection:** slowing down gives space to listen & be heard

## Simple Ways To Practice 'Slow'

### First, ask yourself:

- “Where in our week can we choose *slow* over rush?”
- “What helps our family feel grounded and connected?”

### Some helpful ideas for families:

1. **Wake up 5 minutes earlier to start the day quietly.**  
No phones, no rushing, just a slow stretch & deep breath.
2. **Take a “mindful minute”** after school/work to just sit together before talking about the day.
3. **Dim lights & lower voices 30 minutes before bed.** The body takes cues from the environment to slow down.
4. **Pick one “tech-free” evening (or hour) a week** to just be together & play board games, take walks, or do nothing.
5. **Take a slow breath before responding if you feel tension rising.** Let your kids see you practice this.  
When we do, we're not just regulating ourselves, we're teaching emotional safety and balance in real time.

**A gentle reminder: Children don't need perfect parents or perfectly planned days. They thrive with caring adults, gentle routines, and moments of real connection.**

## Activities to Foster Calm

### Sloth Mode Challenge

Choose an evening this week to do things in slow motion!

- Eat slow
- Talk slow
- Walk slow

Notice how different it feels to be intentional instead of rushed. This is a lighthearted way to practice mindfulness where families often discover laughter, calmness, and connection.



### Album Listening Party

Pick an album/song and spend some time listening together. No multitasking, no blue lights or background noise. Just music and presence.

- Let each family member choose a song to share and discuss why they like it.
- Encourage everyone to notice how the music makes them feel: calm, happy, sad?

When the rhythm calls for it, get up and dance! Move slowly, silly, or free - no rules, just joy. This simple ritual helps everyone practice slowing down, listening with intention, & connecting through shared experience.

