

ADOPTIVE PARENT SUPPORT

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

NEW YEAR, GENTLE BEGINNINGS



LETTING GO OF THE PRESSURE TO “RESET” FOR THE NEW YEAR

What's Inside ?

Listen



Join Meg Faure and guest Tove Gant as they explore small, thoughtful shifts that can make parenting in the New Year feel more connected and intentional for parents and children.

Read



As the year turns, it's a natural time to look back and look ahead. Instead of resolutions, consider choosing one simple intention your whole family can carry into the year.

Watch



As you begin this New Year with new intentions, this short video is a discussion (and probably a reminder) of 5 areas that make parenting children with childhood trauma a success

January isn't about perfection, resetting, or even "new year, new you." it's about reflection, connection, and setting intentions for the year that feel healthy and doable for your family.

In this month's addition we are including some thoughtful guides and tools to support you in having a compassionate start to the year for you and your adoptee!

MOVING FROM RESOLUTIONS TO INTENTIONS

4 Key Areas to Focus Your Intentions for Parenting This Year:

- **Self-Care and Mindfulness:**

- Ever heard the phrase, “You can’t pour from an empty cup?” It’s true! And sometimes, as parents, that is just what we have to do. However, this year, try to intentionally focus on one weekly act of “self care.” This doesn’t have to be something huge, it can be as simple as taking a walk, going for a drive without a specific destination, or taking a longer shower than usual. Anything that is for “just you” and not for anyone else “counts.”

- **Fostering Connection with your children:**

- Create moments of intentional connection with your children. This doesn’t have to be extravagant, stressful or expensive. Having screen free car rides where you ask them what music they would like to hear and sing together, taking turns sharing what happened in your days, or even just habitually connecting before bedtime are all ways that will increase the connectiveness of your family.

- **Adopt a “positive and patient” mindset:**

- Remember, it doesn’t have to change overnight! You can start small by practicing speaking in a lower tone with a slower speed in moments that might be stressful for yourself or your child. Each moment of stress can be an opportunity to model how to stay calm, stay focused and stay positive to your children.

- **Create Boundaries and Routines**

- Establishing consistent routines, such as dinner at the table at least 3 times a week or family “wind down” time before bed will create structure that is good for everyone. Limiting screen time, creates structure for children. Limiting screen time and increasing space for conversation will help more than you might realize!



Intention vs Resolutions

Resolutions are often specific goals (“I will...”) while intentions are guiding principles that are adaptable and gentle. Intentions use softer language like “practice,” “put energy toward,” or “more of...” so they are less likely to make you feel like you failed when life changes.

New Year’s intentions can be defined as “flexible goals or growth edges that somebody would like to put more energy and actionable steps into.” They are similar to New Year’s resolutions as they also focus on self-improvement and growth, yet they are different in their structure.

Examples of New Year’s Resolutions:

“I will read 2 books a month.”

“I will go to the gym 4 days a week.”

“I will meditate every morning.”

“I will call my mom every day.”

Notice how the resolutions contain absolutes such as specific number goals (2 books and 4 days) and the word “every.”

In these particular resolutions, they are organized in a way that the person would either meet the goal or not. In these cases, it may be easier for the person who created them to feel defeated if they don’t meet the goals or to give up if they are not playing out.

Examples of New Year’s Intentions:

“I will start to carve out more time for myself to read.”

“I will put more focused energy into my physical health.”

“I will practice slowing down and being more mindful throughout my day.”

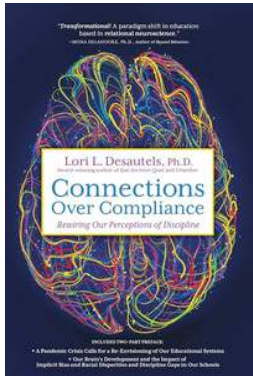
“I will find more time to connect with my mom.”

Notice how intentions have more flexible language such as “more,” “start,” or “practice.”

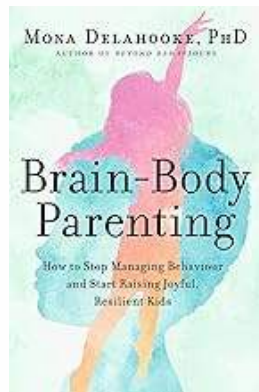
Without a specific goal to hit, there’s often more room to stay connected to the intention itself. If someone plans to go to the gym four days a week but only makes it twice, they’ve still honored their intention by intentionally investing energy in their physical health.

New Year, New Books!

If you want to read more in 2026, consider adding these to your list!



Connections Over Compliance by Lori Desautels: a helpful, easy-to-understand look at how brain science can shift the way we guide children. Her work, featured at our 2023 Trauma-Sensitive Schools conference, highlights how small changes can create more supportive school communities.



Brain-Body Parenting by Mona Delahooke: a warm, science-based guide that helps parents understand their child's behavior through the nervous system and better support them every day.



Hello, Anger by Jessica Sinarski: a children's picture book you can share with younger children that normalizes overwhelming and confusing emotions. This book even gives families an easy mantra and formula to follow when kids get dysregulated. Children learn that they aren't alone in difficult challenges, we all have troublesome moments! Don't miss the "tips for caring adults" in the back of the book.

Share Your Intentions with Your Adoptee

Modeling is an important part of getting the relational behaviors that your child needs to succeed. It is not uncommon for a child from a hard place to struggle with decisions, choices and goals. Set parenting intentions for 2026 and then share them with your child. It will not only help them learn about the skill, it will also reinforce your commitment to them!

Try something like this:

- "I intend to learn": You are committed to educating yourself about them, their culture, and adoption.
- "I intend to listen": You promise to hear them without judgment.
- "I intend to be present": You will be there for the highs and lows, for the victories and the opportunities to try again.
- "I intend to support your truth": You will validate their feelings, even if it's complex, even if you don't understand, even if you don't agree.