

3 second rule of intention

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In chapter 10 of *Tiny Humans, Big Lessons*, I define intention as the conscious purpose that directs our thoughts, energy, aims, and actions. When I first tried to weave intention into my life, I had difficulty making it practical. As usual, the babies in the NICU helped me figure that out.

While I have a different version of this practice for NICU professionals, here is the simple, implementable way I began to use intention in my everyday life. This quick pause between thought and action improved my energy, mood, and effectiveness.

3 second rule of intention

Second one: Pause and breathe.

As you step into a room, conversation, meeting, or moment, use that transition as a cue to hit pause on your busyness and take a deep breath.

Second two: Check your baggage.

Consciously and temporarily check any personal or professional baggage you may have in tow. What does not belong in the space you're about to enter?

Second three: Set an intention.

How do you want to direct your energy in this moment, and for what purpose?

Examples:

1. I intend to listen more than I talk when my kids come in the door from school.
2. I intend to bring clarity to this meeting.
3. I intend to be a grounding force in this complicated conversation.
4. I intend to build connection in this moment.
5. I intend to voice my feelings without blame.

Use this space to write down a few intentions for your day.

1. My intention is... _____.

2. My intention is... _____.

3. My intention is... _____.

We are human. We don't always remember to be intentional. When we're not, or wish we would've been, the good news is, we can try again in the next moment. It's a practice.

Read [*Tiny Humans, Big Lessons*](#) for more stories, examples, practical steps, and inspiration.