



# A New Leaf

Hi Fall! I feel your cool air! Thank you for the reminder that leaves fall so the new can emerge.

Transformation demands that you find a way back to the authenticity that was always inside you. Cheryl Strayed

Even though it has been a long, hot minute since I was in school, I cannot help wanting a fresh start, a new notebook or a better me when September arrives. If you are looking for a breath of fresh air, here are three easy practices to usher in the new:

**YOUR INNER GUIDE:** Come up with a verb and an adverb that combine to describe the way you always want to live. These words form your core values. For example, “work + earnestly”, “create + passionately”, “loves + fiercely”. Then allow yourself to focus on breathing with these words. Inhale the verb. Exhale the adverb. Do this for several breaths and see how your focus shifts. Your core values help reveal your inner guide. (Martha Beck)

**YOUR DEEPEST PRAYER:** Find a word that describes your experience of the divine. For example, “Abba”, “Spirit”, “Love”. Then find a word that reflects your deepest longing. For example, “Peace”, “Joy”, “Wholeness”. Next, combine these two words to form your prayer, letting your inhale be your word for the divine and the exhale your longing word. In this practice, your soul is drawn to the holy as it connects to its deepest prayer. (Father Richard Rohr)

**YOUR BEST SELF:** Smile! Researchers at the University of Kansas found that smiling in stressful situations can cause your heart rate to slow down. The American Psychological Association found that smiling while getting a shot results in reports of less pain. The Wharton School of Business researched work environments and found that when co-workers smiled, greater trust and deeper bonds were formed. The National Library of Medicine found that smiling people are viewed as more attractive. Tara Brach in her weekly meditations often invites a soft smile to fall over your face as you settle into the quiet. This simple shift in posture, can lead us to our best self, even when we may not feel it. (Erica Mandy)