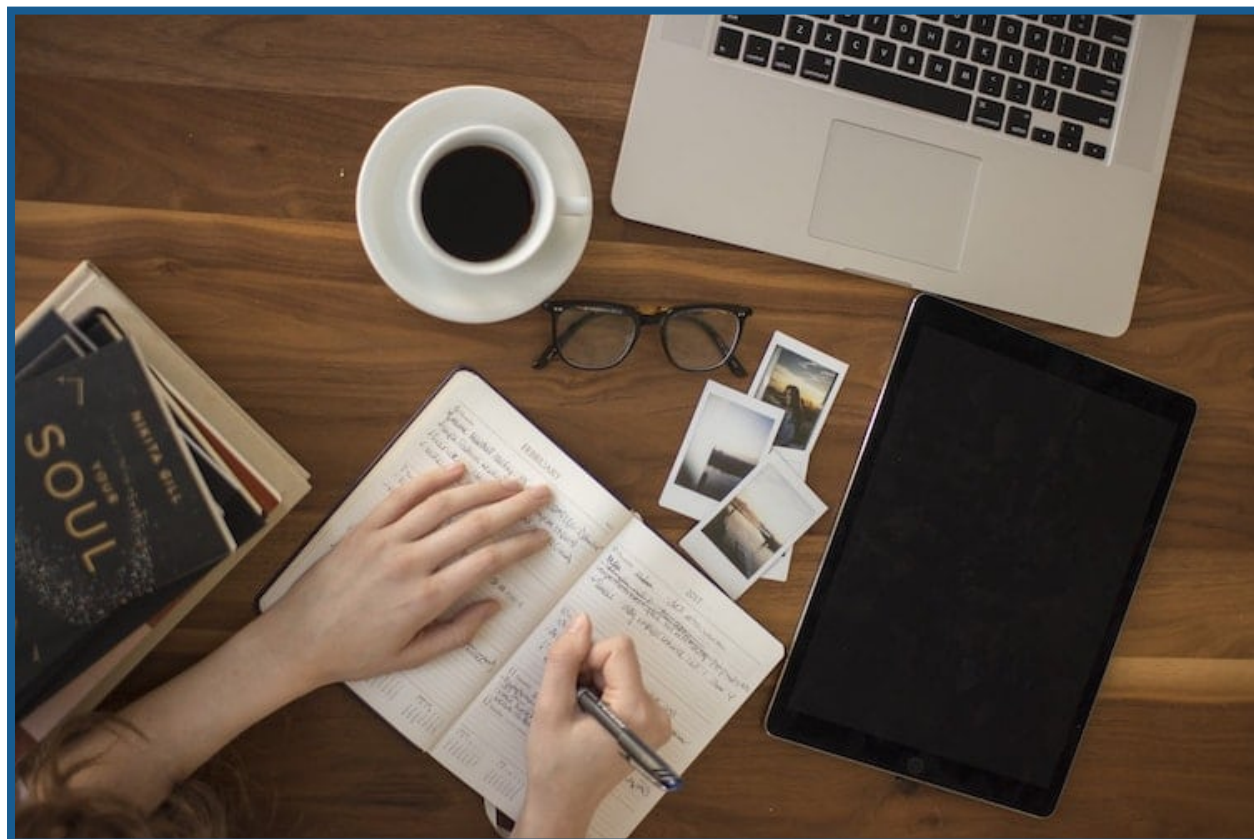




milehighvineyard

family of neighborhood churches



Winter Reflection 2025

[a soul care retreat]

vineyard *Soul Care*

Schedule

FRIDAY

| | |
|-------------|------------------------------------|
| 6:30 - 6:45 | Welcome and Orientation |
| 6:45 - 8:30 | Session 1 : Cultivating Reflection |
| 8:30 - 9:00 | Fire Pit Activity |

SATURDAY

| | |
|---------------|---|
| 9:00 - 9:10 | Welcome |
| 9:15 - 9:50 | Session 2 : Discernment and Desire |
| 9:50 - 11:15 | Reflection Looking Ahead to 2025 |
| 11:15 - 11:55 | Session 3: Wisdom, Obedience and Making Decisions |
| 11:55 - 12:30 | LUNCH |
| 12:30 - 2:45 | Session 4 : Co-Creating with God |
| 2:45 - 3pm | Closing |

Session One

Cultivating Reflection

Entering In

A Psalm & Prayer

*But you, O' Lord, are a shield about me; you are my glory, the one who lifts up my head.
I call aloud upon the Lord, and he answers me from the holy hill;
I lie down and go to sleep; I wake again, because the Lord sustains me.
Deliverance belongs to the Lord. Your blessing be upon your people!*
Psalm 3:3-5, 8

Open, Lord, my eyes that I may see. Open, Lord, ears that I may hear. Open, Lord, my heart and my mind that I may understand. So shall I turn to you and be healed. Amen.

(By Phillis Tickle)

Reflect

Sit quietly for a few minutes and think through the four different seasons of the year. For each one ask God to bring different situations to mind, major events or opportunities, relationships that were difficult or fulfilling. As you do this, respond to the questions below. You may go back and adjust your thoughts many times as memories come to the surface. Use your journal to record your thoughts and answers.



Respond

1. What were the most significant memories, events, conversations, and activities of the last year for you? What themes were evident in your life in 2024?
2. What would you like to celebrate from last year? (*unexpected blessings, reconciled relationships, sweet moments with friends or family, etc.*)
3. In what areas or ways did you grow last year? What did you learn about your-self and also God? Emotionally, Spiritually, Physically, Relationally.
4. Was there a word/ phrase/picture from last year that was your chosen theme? How did this play out?

5. What lessons did I learn from this last year?

6. What am I most proud of from this last year?

7. What was difficult or challenging last year? Any places of loss or grief you can identify?

8. Is there anyone that you need to forgive or anything that you need to let go of? What places of suffering/pain/deep disappointment did you experience in 2024? Write out a few sentences being very specific about what you need to release to the Lord from 2024. Take time with this question.

Litany for Year-End Reflection

By Fran Pratt

adapted for this retreat

God, in everything that's happened this year,
Both bitter and the sweet,
We know that you were with us,
Always loving and present.
We're spending time looking backwards, in hindsight,
Assessing our own progress and growth;
What worked, what didn't,
What helped, what hindered.

And we're spending time looking forwards, toward the new year,
Setting intentions and voicing our hopes
What we'd like to accomplish and improve,
What we'd like to experience and enjoy.
But we are also learning
To be in this moment,
To breathe deeply into our bodies
Right here, right now.
Because we know that the doorway to the Community of Heaven
Is right now -
Accessible always, no matter the circumstance,
Timeless and reliable.
And so we celebrate the year -
Its beginnings and its endings,
Its triumphs and its failures,
Its gifts and its receipts -
By turning our attention to you, God,
And leaning into the eternal flow of Love
As Christ has taught us.
We offer gratitude for each experience
For each person,
And we put our hope in the continued revealing
Of the peace, joy, and love of God.

Amen

Session 2

Discernment & Desire

Consider

Thoughts I want to hang on to:

Reflect

Looking ahead to this year

“O Lord, you have examined my heart and know everything about me. You know when I sit down or stand up. You know my thoughts even when I’m far away. You see me when I travel and when I rest at home. You know everything I do.” (*Psalms 139:1–3, NLT*)

It is comforting to know that God knows everything you about you. He sees you inside and out; he sees what is behind and what lies ahead for you. He knows you better than you know yourself. Spend a few minutes in quiet reflection on these verses, and invite the God-who-knows-you to reveal His thoughts about your future.

Respond

1. What brings excitement and joy as you think about a new year for yourself personally? Are there any places where you feel anxiety about this coming year? Describe.
2. What are the specific areas that you sense God is inviting you to lean into this year? How can you honor and prioritize your spiritual health, emotional health and physical health this year? Think very practically and specifically.

3. What do you want to spend more time doing this year?

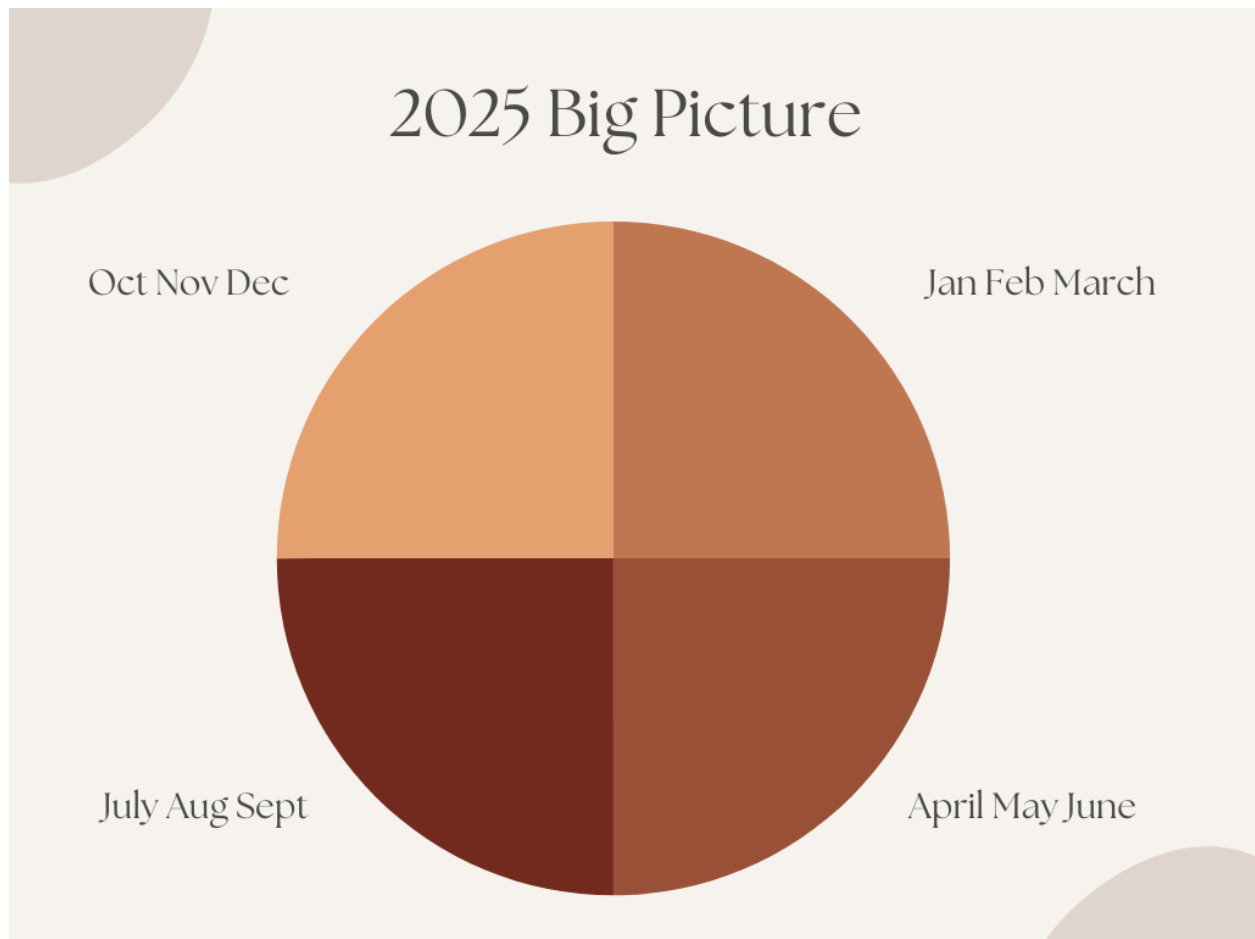
4. What do you want to spend less time doing this year?

5. What are some decisions you have in front of you right now or decisions that you anticipate having to make in 2025?

- vineyard** *Soul Care*

Major Events and Aspirations for 2025

Feel free to use this as a tool to record major events and aspirations for the year.



Session Three :

Co-Creating with God

Consider

Thoughts I want to hang on to:

Reflect

Creative Dreaming

There are several different ways of taking what you have done in the previous section and creatively dreaming about the future by capturing those thoughts in words and pictures. The following are three options for doing this. Take a moment to read about each, then select the one or two you would like to try and follow the instructions. You may choose an option that is familiar and fluid to you, or you may consider choosing an option that is a bit of a stretch. Each option has guidelines but please feel free to express yourself as you are feeling led. There is no right or wrong way to do these activities.

Often it is in the place of artistic creativity that we meet God in new and surprising ways!

Photo Collage

A photo collage is a fun and expressive way to capture moments of your previous year you don't want to forget. We will have a printer you can use to print out photos from your phone and encourage you to also add images from magazines that speak to you about your year. Get creative with this! Use any art supplies to fill in the collage.

Vision Boards

A vision board is only a tool you give yourself to give you a visual target and to stay focused on what God put in your heart.

Use magazines to find pictures and words that help capture what you feel like might be some themes for your year! Don't censor yourself—gather a lot to choose from and start designing your board! This year, we have the option to create an art piece with organic materials (sand, shells, moss, glass tiles etc. and add your word for the year in the middle.... Have fun with this and get creative.

Word of the Year

Is there a word or phrase that has come to you that could be your centering thought for the year? Or maybe you want to spend some time praying for God to show you something. You might even look through the list of words in the sample image and see what sticks out. You may choose afterwards to create a vision board around your word. Additionally, this year you can create a keychain with your word for the year as a daily reminder of God's invitation to you this year.

Next Steps

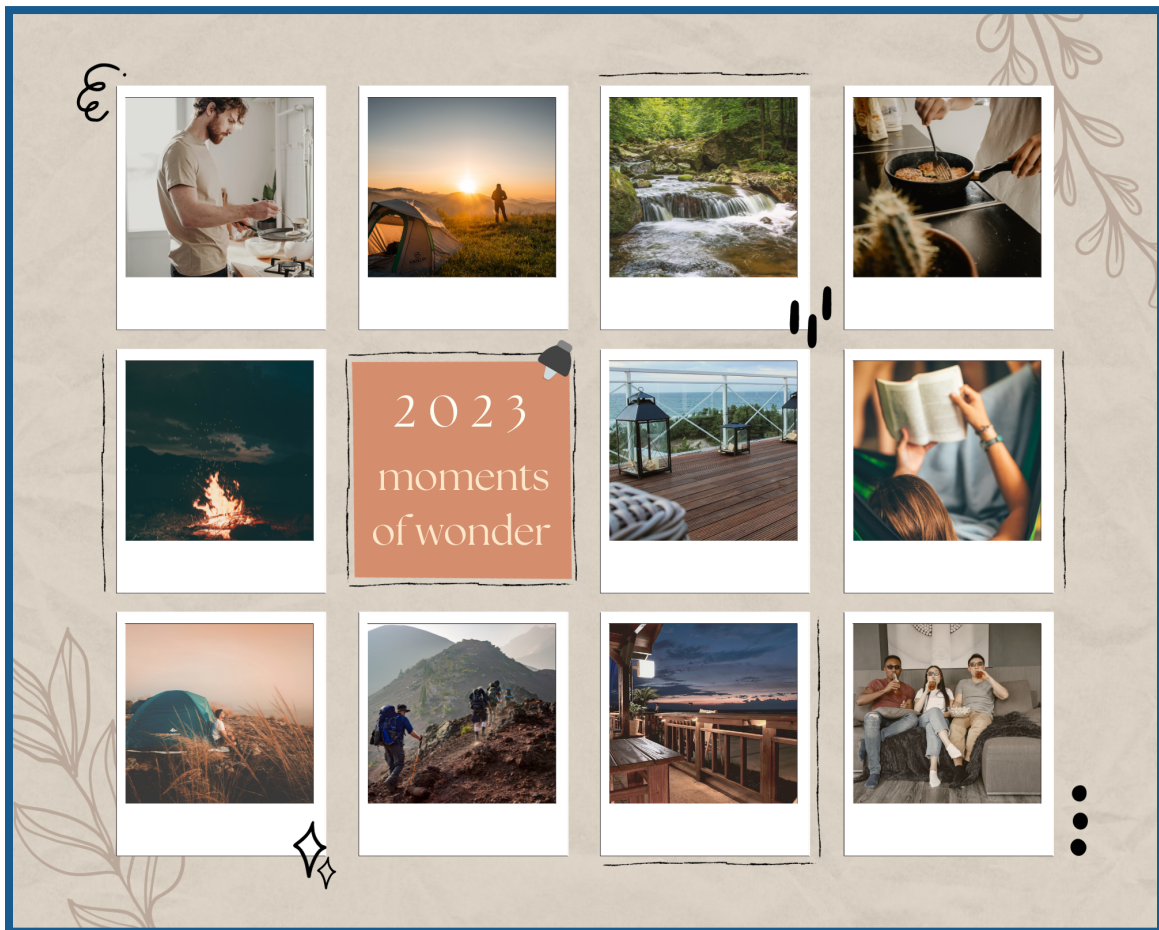
Prayer and processing

There might be some issues that have come up through your reflections that need attention, so we encourage you to share your learnings and what God is talking to you about with another trusted person or a life circle leader. If something more troubling came up, feel free to check out <https://mhv.org/mhv/resources/> for recommendations of counselors or spiritual directors. You can always email me for any follow up needs, questions or updates and good stories you want to share. I LOVE hearing from you. amy@milehighvineyard.org

Option 1: Photo Collage (looking back)

As you already reflected on the last year earlier today, go back and look at your answers to the reflection questions and the year in review document. As you think about the last year, try to recall moments during the year where you may have experienced beauty and wonder. Then, grab your phone and scroll through your photos with an eye towards noticing beauty and wonder.

There is no right or wrong way to do this but you may try to find at least one photo per quarter that highlights a moment of wonder. Print it out and start to make a photo collage with these personal printed photos and any other images from magazines that evoke a feeling of wonder and beauty. Underneath each personal photo that you printed out, write a short description of what you were feeling, noticing and experiencing in that moment.



Option 2: Vision Board

Don't censor yourself ...Cut out what speaks to you... Are there themes of the pictures jumping out at you? If it speaks to you- cut it out. Trusting your intuition as a gift from God. Continue to invite God into this process. Use your vision board for focus, but let yourself feel free with what you choose to put on there!





Thoughts to Consider:

1. Think of this as co-creating with God
 - Remember that though a year seems long, it isn't. There is freedom in having a limited focus for a year.
 - Use your vision board as a practical guide for decision making throughout the year - Refer back to it when you have decisions to make
2. Use your vision board as a screensaver, or your phone wallpaper so it's more readily accessible in your everyday life or think of a place where you can display it where you will see it daily
3. Share your board! We don't always know what it means when things make it on our board, but often others who know us well may be able to point out what they see.

Option 3 : Word for the Year (looking ahead)

“In ancient times, wise men and women fled out into the desert to find a place where they could be fully present to God and to their own inner struggles at work within them. The desert became a place to enter into the refiner's fire and be stripped down to one's holy essence. The desert was a threshold place where you emerged different than when you entered.

Many people followed these *ammas* and *abbas*, seeking their wisdom and guidance for a meaningful life. One tradition was to ask for a word—this word or phrase would be something on which to ponder for many days, weeks, months, sometimes a whole lifetime. The word offered was something that would help to usher someone toward the next threshold of awareness in their lives, a journey deeper into the mysteries of being human.

This practice is connected to *Lectio Divina*, where we approach the sacred texts with the same request. “Give me a word”, we ask, “something to nourish me challenge me; a word I can wrestle with and grow into.” We pause at the threshold before crossing into a new year and ask for a word of guidance for the season ahead.”

(adapted from One Word exercise by Christine Valters Paintner)

Choosing your Word

Pay attention to the answers to your reflection questions and notice if there were specific words that surfaced. Notice what memories, feelings, and images stir within you. Where is God calling you to new awareness and action in your life? Choose one word that you sense God is stirring within you the most and sit with God and this word.



250 Personal Word of the Year Ideas

| | | | | | |
|-----------|-------------|--------------|-------------|---------------|--------------|
| ABUNDANT | CHALLENGE | ENOUGH | HONESTY | NURTURE | SHARE |
| ABUNDANCE | CHOOSE | ENTHUSIASM | HONOR | OPEN | SHIFT |
| ACCEPT | CLEAR | ESSENTIALISM | HUSTLE | ORGANIZE | SHINE |
| ACHIEVE | CLARITY | EVOLVE | IMAGINE | PARTNER | SIMPLE |
| ACT | CLEAN | EXPERIENCE | IMPROVE | PATIENCE | SIMPLIFY |
| ACTION | CLEANSE | EXPAND | INFLUENCE | PASSION | SPACE |
| ADVENTURE | COMFORT | EXPLORE | INSPIRE | PERSIST | SOAR |
| ALIGN | COMMIT | FAITH | INTENTIONAL | PERSISTENT | SOLIDIFY |
| ALIGNMENT | COMMUNITY | FAITHFUL | INVEST | PERSPECTIVE | SOUL |
| ALLOW | COMPASSION | FAMILY | JOURNEY | PLAN | SOULFUL |
| AMAZE | COMPLETE | FEARLESS | JOY | PLAY | STEADY |
| AMAZEMENT | CONNECT | FINISH | KEEP | PLAYFUL | STILL |
| AMBITION | CONSIDER | FITNESS | KINDLE | POSITIVE | STILLNESS |
| AMPLIFY | CONSIDERATE | FLOURISH | KIND | POSSIBILITIES | STRONG |
| ASPIRE | CONSISTENT | FLOW | LAUGH | POWERFUL | STRENGTH |
| AWAKE | CONSCIOUS | FREE | LEAD | PRACTICE | SUCCESS |
| AWAKENED | CONTENT | FREEDOM | LEADER | PRAY | SUCCEED |
| BADASS | CONTENTMENT | FRESH | LEAP | PREPARE | THANKFUL |
| BALANCE | COOL | FOCUS | LEARN | PRESENT | THOUGHTFUL |
| BALLSY | COURAGE | FORCE | LESS | PRIORITIZE | THRIVE |
| BE | COZY | FORGE | LIGHT | PROGRESS | TRANSCEND |
| BEAUTY | CREATE | FORGIVE | LIMITLESS | PURE | TRANSPARENT |
| BECOME | CREATIVE | GAIN | LISTEN | PURPOSE | TRUST |
| BEGIN | DARE | GENEROUS | LIVE | RAISE | UNAPOLOGETIC |
| BELIEVE | DEDICATE | GENTLE | LOVE | REASON | UNDERSTAND |
| BELONG | DEDICATION | GIVE | MAGIC | RECORD | UNLIMITED |
| BEST | DELIGHT | GO | MAKE | REDUCE | UNTAMED |
| BETTER | DEPTH | GRACE | MAINTAIN | REFLECT | VALUE(S) |
| BLISS | DIRECT | GRACEFUL | MANIFEST | REFRESH | VITALITY |
| BLOOM | DIRECTION | GRATITUDE | MAXIMUM | RENEW | WANDER |
| BOLD | DISCIPLINE | GRATEFUL | MAXIMIZE | REPAIR | WEALTH |
| BOUNDLESS | DREAM | GROW | MEND | RESET | WELLNESS |
| BOSS | DO | GROWTH | MINDFUL | RESILIENT | WHOLE |
| BRAVE | EASY | GUARD | MINIMAL | RESILIENCE | WHOLEHEARTED |
| BUILD | EFFORT | HAPPY | MINIMIZE | REST | WILD |
| CALM | EFFORTLESS | HEAL | MORE | RISE | WISDOM |
| CARE | ELEVATE | HEALTH | MOVE | ROOTS | WONDER |
| CENTERED | EMBRACE | HEART | MYSTICAL | SAVOR | WORTHY |
| CHANGE | EMPOWER | HIGH | NEST | SECURE | WOW |
| CHEER | ENCOURAGE | HIGHER | NEW | SELF-LOVE | YES |
| CHEERFUL | ENERGY | HOME | NOW | SERVE | |
| CHILL | ENJOY | HONEST | NOURISH | SHAKE | |

Options for going deeper with your word for the year:

You may consider doing one (or all) of the following as a way to deepen your understanding of and connection with this word:

1. Create a vision board with your word and select images that will remind you of the meaning of your word.
2. Journal exercise: Imagine the Lord writing to you. Write “I AM (insert your word) and this is what I want you to know...”. (ex: I AM ALIVE and this is what I want you to know...)
3. Write everything that you sense the Lord wants you to know about this word.
4. Look up the definition of your word in different online dictionaries to see what else you notice in different definitions.
5. Pray and ask the Lord for a specific Scripture verse to guide your year or a song that will serve as a theme for your year.

Additional Resources

Session 1 : Discernment and Desire

Discerning Spiritual Movements

1. Pray for the knowledge of God's will
2. Pray for Freedom
3. Notice places of Consolation and Desolation
4. Imagine yourself having made the decision and try on an option 'on for size'. Be aware of the consolation and desolation in the decision
5. Try on the other option 'on for size'
6. Discern the source and direction of these feelings
7. In light of the answer to question 6, What does this mean for your decision?
8. Discuss your insights with a trusted Jesus following friend, mentor, small group leader or pastor
9. Make the decision

Session 2 : Wisdom, Obedience and Making a Decision

Calm Deliberation

1. Identify the decision you need to make
2. State the choice concretely
3. Pray for internal freedom
4. Gather all the necessary information
5. Pray again for internal freedom
6. List all the advantages and disadvantages (pros and cons)
7. Evaluate advantages and disadvantages. Which reasons seem to be the most important? What core values emerge? What core values seem more consistent with your true self and the story God's writing in your life?
8. Test your reasoning with your imagination. Imagine yourself living out that decision.
9. Talk with a trusted friend, pastor, small group leader about your findings and what you are leaning toward regarding your decision
10. Make a tentative decision
11. Confirm the decision
12. Make the decision - even if you are uncertain about it.

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Reflection Questions To Ask Your Partner

Questions about the past year

What was your favorite memory of this past year?

What was the hardest part of this past year?

How are you feeling emotionally, physically,
spiritually, mentally at the end of this year?

What did I do well as your spouse this year?

What could I have done better as your spouse this year?

Question about the upcoming year

What personal goals do you have
this coming year?

What goals should we set together for next year?

Here are some ideas:

Travel goal

Date night goal

Intimacy goal

Do a couple check in each month

Find a new hobby to do together

Find a marriage course, conference, or counselor

Adjust and stick to our budget

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Reflection Questions To Process with a Friend

Questions about the past year

What was your favorite memory of
from this past year?

What was the hardest part of this past year for you?

How are you feeling emotionally, physically,
spiritually, mentally at the end of this year?

What did I do well as your friend this year?

What could I have done better as your friend this year?

Question about the upcoming year

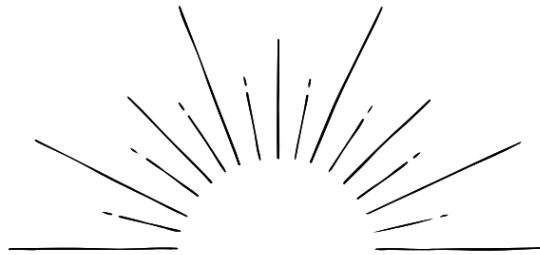
Describe your word for the year and
why you chose that word.

Explain any goals/intentions you
have for this year.

How can I support you as a friend this
year as you pursue your goals?

Mid Year Review

Reflect and Reassess



The mid-year is a perfect time to check in with your goals and intentions that you may have set at the beginning of the year and see how you're doing.

Even if you're not the type of person who sets goals necessarily at the beginning of the year, it's still a great time to take stock of where you are in life and how you want to move ahead.

Pour yourself your favorite beverage, find a comfortable setting, grab a pen and your journal, and settle in for some reflection and assessment.

1|. Are you feeling content with your life at the moment?

Rate yourself on a scale of 1-10 on the satisfaction scale
in the key areas of your life:

Self, Family, Relationships

Home, Work/Business, Health & Fitness,

Finances, Emotional Health, Spiritual Health

Feel free to ignore/add categories according to what's relevant for you.
The idea is to take stock of where you are today, because without having a baseline
to refer to, it would be difficult to evaluate your progress.



2|. What do you want to celebrate over the last six
months?

You could do this for each category listed above
and remember don't discount the small things.

3. | Is there anything you wish you could have done differently over the last six months?

Don't beat yourself up over things that may not have gone according to your expectations. The idea is to highlight the areas you want to improve.
We are all a work in progress.



4. | Where do you sense
God inviting you to take steps in a specific area(s)
of your life for the remaining
6 months of the year?

Without knowing what you're aiming for, it's hard to understand what actions you need to take. Use the list of key life areas if that makes it easier for you to write specific action steps for each area.
Take some time to pause, pray and listen for the Lord's voice to speak to you.

