

It's taken me a couple extra weeks to actually write this down in any coherent way, but I've been thinking a lot about my intentions/resolutions for this 2017 year, and I think they are finally coming into focus. I think I am coming to accept that this year is *not* a year for proactively taking on new big challenges and aspiring to grander activities; I still have more recovery and processing to do before I feel like I will be "free" enough to seek out and accomplish big projects or big changes to my intentional life design. I still do feel a pressure to accomplish and help (help people, help our country, help change the world to be a better place) but I also feel a resistance, a need for taking my time and continuing with the self-care (which is mostly not physical anymore, which makes it a little more complicated). I think it is so important to be politically active and make my voice heard and help others make their voices heard too, but I still have to be conservative with my spoons so I don't burn out or fall into despair and depression. So I want to focus on "small ball", by which I mean working at a more local, personal level to live my values and operate as the kind of person I want to be in my marriage, my family, and my communities. I want to be a role model and really commit to the idea of "be the change you want to see in the world".

So what do I believe in? What are my values? What kind of world do I want to live in? Maybe it would be helpful to list some of them for reference.

- I believe that people are more important than things. I prioritize spending time with people and making them happy over most everything else.
- I believe everyone—yes, everyone—has equal value and importance. Like Jewish tradition teaches, saving one person is like saving a whole world (and therefore hurting or destroying one person is like hurting or destroying a whole world.)
- I believe that for the most part, diversity and differences make us stronger and more interesting and should be celebrated and eagerly sought out, not ignored or devalued.
- I believe in community and collaboration, because we are all connected. I think it does indeed take a village to raise our children and make our neighborhoods clean, safe and nurturing.
- I believe that people are intrinsically good at heart and have the same basic needs for respect, safety, love, connection, comfort, creativity, meaning and purpose.
- I believe we humans are the stewards of this one unique planet Earth and it is our individual and collective responsibility to live in a way that supports and protects our global environment for ourselves and for all future generations.
- I believe in tikkun olam, the healing of the world, and in partnering with each other to make the world a better place for all, not just some.
- I believe in justice and the application of appropriate consequences for wrong actions, not as punishment but as encouragement and scaffolding for learning how to do things right in the future.
- I believe in peace.
- I believe in treating others as you would like to be treated.

- I believe that each one of us has amazing gifts and important stories to share, and that we should both share our own gifts and stories and take the time to appreciate each other's gifts and stories.
- I believe in optimism and hope, even in the face of difficulties.
- I believe in honesty.
- I believe in self-reflection and personal growth, because the more we understand ourselves the stronger and more resilient we get and the more we can empathize with/connect to other people.
- I believe in treating others (and myself) with kindness and respect.
- I believe in play and creativity and trying new things.
- I believe in being of service.
- I believe in the "oxygen mask theory" where you need to take care of yourself first in order to then take care of others.

I'm sure there are more things I believe in, but this is a pretty good list for now. If I can keep reminding myself to live my life according to these beliefs I think I'll have a successful year.