



THREE WORDS FOR 2023

**A REFLECTIVE PROCESS FOR THE TURN OF
THE YEAR**

WELCOME



LET THE FLAVOURS OF YOUR WORDS INFUSE YOUR YEAR TO COME

AS WE NEAR THE END OF 2022....

I'm glad you're making space to reflect on what's important in the coming year.

I appreciate you joining me and the others who are dedicating time to this 'three words' process. My hope is that it will support you in connecting more deeply to your needs, desires and aspirations for 2023.

For over a decade, I've had a practice of selecting three words to shape my year to come. What I've found is that they infuse that year with a flavour that deepens and matures as the months go by.

Quite often, the year doesn't turn out how I imagined and my relationship with the words might shift over the months. But that's okay. The words still represent an anchor for my awareness of myself, of others and the world around me. I've found it a rich and meaningful way to make the transition from the old year to the new.



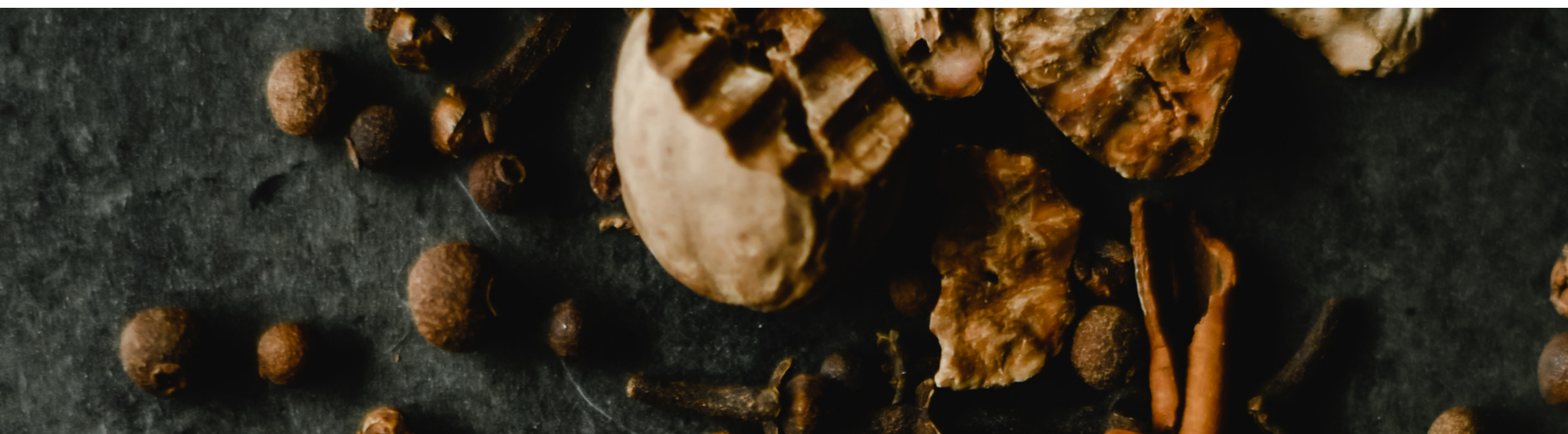
WHY 3 WORDS?

Setting resolutions for the year has never worked for me. I don't know about you, but I find they lean more towards denial than nurture. At the start, I'm full of optimism then my energy wanes and I end up just feeling guilty and negative.

**Choosing three words is different
– because it is a process that
allows for creativity, fluidity and
change.**

When I first started choosing my words, my approach was more geared towards goals and productivity. But over time, I noticed that it became a more sacred practice. I wanted to allow the words to infuse rather than dictate; I wanted to use them to reflect rather than to push or drive myself to achieve things.

***It is in this spirit of making it a sacred
process that I offer this new year ritual.***





START BY TAKING STOCK OF WHERE YOU ARE NOW

Grab a notebook and find somewhere to sit and reflect.

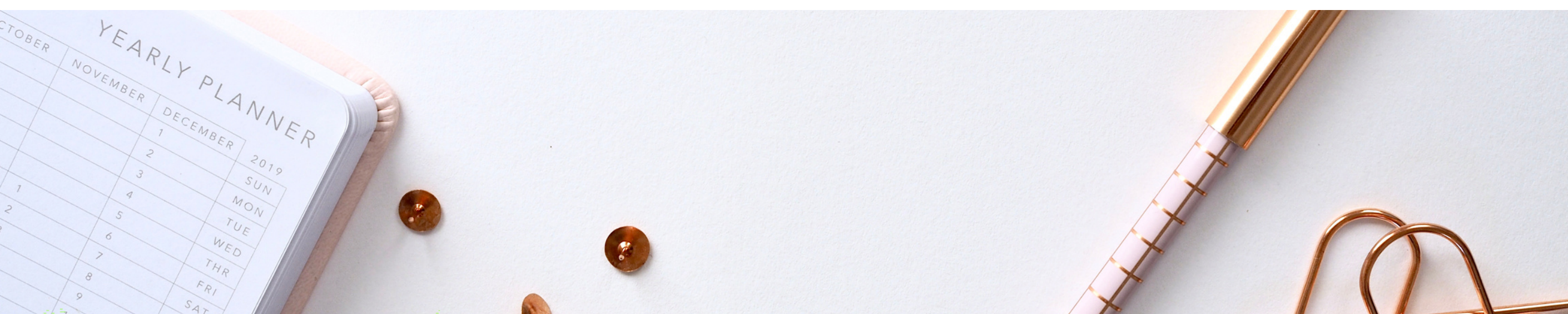
Put on some ambient music if that helps. It can be helpful to set a specific time for your contemplation (I'd suggest up to 15 minutes or thereabouts).

Without applying too much effort, reflect on the year you've just had. You can do this by 'freewriting' (prose writing that comes out, stream-of-consciousness-like, without editing) or by making a list or a mind map. Or you might just want to daydream – whatever works for you.

If you want a guide or starting point, here are some questions that might support you:

- What have been the most notable events of 2022?
- What have you learned this year?
- What have been your mistakes?
- And your triumphs?
- What would you have liked more of?
- Identify three words that might characterise 2022 (Some examples might be: change, challenge, hibernation, connection, isolation, transition...)

Once you've completed this stage, allow some time to absorb your reflections – at least a few hours, ideally a couple of days.





IN 2023, WHAT DO YOU WANT TO CALL IN?

Everyone's process is different

...but here are some starting points that might help you land on powerful words to guide you through the year to come:

- What do you want more of? Check the notes you made about the year just gone. Is there anything asking to be brought to the fore?
- Is there anything from this year that needs further exploration? Some people retain one or more words from one year to the next to trace how their relationship with the word or concept shifts and deepens.
- Are there specific things or tangible goals that you want to achieve in the next twelve months? Do you have a project in mind, something you want to accomplish or begin or finish? What word(s) might support this process?
- Think about the atmosphere or mood you would like to embrace in the year to come. What qualities might you call in? (Examples might be: stillness, reflection, energy, vibrancy, creativity, simplicity, abundance...)

Don't worry if you don't land on three precise words immediately. For most people, this point of the process is usually quite open-ended. It's fine just to generate a bank of words, ideas or concepts without necessarily pinning things down.

Imagine you are making a piece of textile art. You are gathering fragments and samples to make a mood board. You might hold colours up against each other. You might think about how the textures of the fabric 'speak' to each other. It's the same with your words. Take your time.

If your three words are already presenting themselves – great! It can be satisfying to have that clarity. You can check if they're the right ones when you get to the 'composting' phase outlined below.

Some people opt for words that appear less purposeful and more atmospheric; for others, it might be a year to get things done and put them out into the world. It completely depends on your personality and where you're at in your life.

For balance, many people like to mix yin with yang: that is, to find words that allow you to express yourself into the word in an active way and others that allow you to soften, grow, transform inwardly.



The 'composting' phase

Put aside your notes and lists for a short time. Let your subconscious do the work as you go about your day or your week. When you come back, are there specific words that stand out more than others? Which are the ones with most energy or charge? Find three that speak most powerfully to what you desire for the new year. Three is a good number. Of course, it's your process, so if you find that you want more than three words, go ahead and include them! Be discerning. If, after careful reflection, other words need to be included, then allow them in. Tune in to what is asking to be examined.

Once you've got your shortlist, it's good to check in and see if you've chosen the right ones. Some people write them down somewhere prominent (by the bed, at the desk) and reflect on them frequently. You might want to doodle them, meditate with them, dance with them or check how they land physically in your body. Say them aloud. How does it feel in your throat, chest, belly? Weigh the words as though they were stones in the palm of your hand. Are they the right fit? If they don't feel right, you can perhaps go back to your longer list and see if any feel more appropriate for what you seek.

Sharing your words

Hopefully, you've found this practice to be nourishing and supportive in and of itself. However, sharing your words with others and having them witnessed can be a powerful way to cement them. Personally, I have found it a validating experience to create a ritual on New Year's Eve with friends. You might consider finding some people with whom to share this practice early in the year (feel free to share this guide with them) and hold a small circle, either in person or virtually, to usher in the intentions around your words - and to support those of others.

However you do it, savour the curiosity and creativity that this process can bring. I wish you all the joy of your words for 2023.

With love Rachel



A few words about me

I'm a writer, creativity mentor, facilitator and transformational coach. I lead those longing for more creative expression into the power of self-authorship.



Whether co-partnering with clients through the coaching process, mentoring creative practitioners or facilitating workshops, my process is always shaped by the pleasure and power of language. If you want to explore long-held patterns in the story of your life – or receive support to develop one you've imagined for the page – I will collaborate with you to re-shape and express it.

You can find out more about me on my [website](#). My work is developing all the time and I'm in the throes of designing some innovative creative offerings for 2023. If you want to find out more about what I'm up to, please feel free to drop me a line at wordplaycoaching@yahoo.co.uk

I love exploratory conversations that dive deep and touch on the creative visions you have for your life and work, You can also book a free 30 minute connection call with me [here](#), when we can chat about ways we might work together. I work via phone or Zoom internationally and in person in the UK.