DECEMBER 2026 | ISSUE NO. 5
A MONTHLY WELLNESS MAGAZINE BY THIS BALANCE LIFE

THE BALANCE Journal

MIND BODY HEART PURPOSE

The Gift of Presence

RESTORATIVE YOGA
December 12 • 12:15 PM
Roslyn Salt Cave

A Mindful Holiday. A Life With Intention.

Make Room for Yourself

Rediscover the Holiday Spirit

What Are You Calling Into 2027?

THE GIFT OF PAUSE
Holiday Affirmation Cards & Thoughtful Gifting



Find Your Balance. Live With Purpose.
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A LETTER FROM NICOLE

The Gift of Presence

Dear Beautiful Soul,

December has a way of filling our hands before we have checked in with our hearts. There are gifts to choose, gatherings to plan, people to think about, and a new year waiting just beyond the holiday lights.

This month, I invite you to make room for yourself within all of it. A quiet morning. A tradition you truly enjoy. An honest conversation about what you need. A decision that moves your life closer to what matters to you.

The gift of presence begins when we notice the life we are living while we are living it. We can enjoy a familiar song without planning the next task. We can welcome a moment of joy even when something feels unfinished. We can care for others and include ourselves in that care.

In these pages, we will explore mindful holidays, personal time, and the everyday choices that help us create a life that feels like our own. We will also look toward 2027 with hope, reflection, and intentions we can put into practice.

I am excited to introduce my holiday affirmation cards and The Gift of Pause box, created to offer encouragement and an invitation to slow down. My upcoming on-demand holiday workshop will offer space to pause, reflect, and prepare for the new year at your own pace.

I am also looking forward to sharing ***The Balance Conversations***, coming soon to YouTube. I hope you will join me for restorative yoga at the Roslyn Salt Cave on December 12 at 12:15 PM.

Whatever this season holds for you, may you find moments that feel warm, honest, and your own.

With warmth,

Nicole Holmes

Founder, This Balance Life

FEATURE STORY

Be Here for Your Own Life

Mindfulness and intentional living during the holidays.

You can arrive at a holiday gathering with your body in the room and your attention somewhere else entirely. You are thinking about the meal, the next errand, the message you have not answered. Even happy occasions can pass in a blur when your mind keeps reaching ahead.

Presence begins with noticing. Feel the cup in your hands. Hear the laughter without reaching for your phone. Taste the first bite of a familiar recipe. Give one conversation your attention. An ordinary moment becomes meaningful when you allow yourself to experience it.

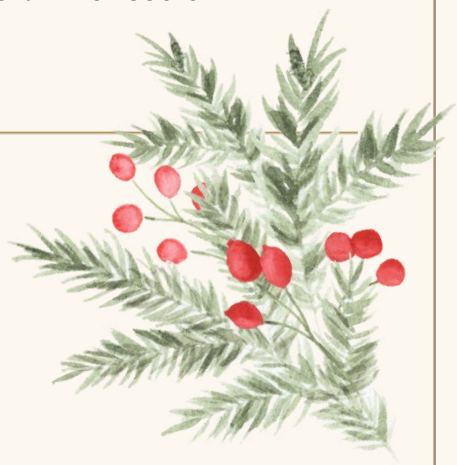
Intentional living adds a question: ***Is the way I am spending my time connected to what matters to me?*** Your answer may lead you toward a gathering, a quieter evening, a simpler gift, or a new tradition. It may help you recognize that something you keep doing out of habit no longer fits.

Choose three words for the season you want to experience. Perhaps connection, ease, and delight. Before accepting another commitment, consider whether you have the time and energy for it and whether it supports those words.

Leave a little room between activities. You might arrive home and sit for five minutes before starting the next task. You might keep one evening open. Space makes it easier to notice how you feel and decide what comes next.

Pause & reflect: What holiday moment do I want to be fully present for? What could I simplify to make room for it?

Your life deserves your attention, too.



TIME FOR YOU

Put Yourself on the Calendar

A few protected minutes can belong to you.

Personal time often becomes whatever is left after everyone else has been considered. In December, that leftover space can disappear quickly. Choose a small amount of time you can protect and decide how you would like to spend it.

Choose something that feels restorative to you.
Read a chapter. Sit beside the holiday lights. Stretch gently. Enjoy music. Take a quiet walk or rest in a comfortable chair. Your pause can be simple and free.

Make a specific plan.
Instead of "I need more time," try "On Thursday after dinner, I will take twenty minutes for myself." If you share responsibilities, agree on who will cover what during that time.

Give yourself a sentence to use.
"I can help for an hour." "I am keeping that evening open." "Could you handle this while I take a break?" Clear requests help others understand what you need.

Notice what interrupts you.
If you spend your pause mentally rehearsing the next task, write it down and return to the moment. If the original plan falls through, choose another manageable time. Keep making room without turning rest into a performance.

My appointment with myself:

Day and time: _____
What I would enjoy: _____
One responsibility I can share: _____

I can care for others and protect time for myself.

SEASONAL JOY

Let the Holiday Spirit Find You

Small moments of warmth, wonder, and connection.



Holiday spirit can arrive quietly: a familiar melody, the glow of a window, the smell of something baking. Give yourself permission to enjoy the pieces of the season that feel meaningful to you.

Make a tiny joy list.
Write down five things you would enjoy this month. Include at least two that cost nothing: listening to a favorite song, watching the lights, calling someone you miss, or revisiting a comforting story.

Give a tradition a fresh shape.
Keep the part you love and adapt the part that feels heavy. Share the cooking, simplify decorations, or plan a shorter gathering. You can also create a tradition that fits your life today.

Offer attention as a gift.
Ask someone about a holiday memory. Send a thoughtful note. Spend a few minutes listening without checking your phone. Connection often grows through small, specific acts.

Leave room for mixed feelings.
Grief, loneliness, financial pressure, and joy can all be present in December. You do not owe anyone a festive mood. Choose the company, rituals, and amount of celebration that feel right for you.

Try tonight: Put on a song you enjoy. Settle somewhere comfortable. Notice one thing that feels warm or welcoming. Let that moment count.

Let joy arrive in a size that fits your day.



MIND / BODY / HEART / PURPOSE

Your December Balance Check-In



Four ways to return to yourself.

MIND | Clear a little space

Write down the tasks circling in your head. Choose one priority, one thing to share, and one thing that can wait.

What is asking for more attention than I can give?

BODY | Respond with care

Notice hunger, thirst, fatigue, and your need for comfortable movement or rest.
Keep familiar meals and pauses in the day when you can.

What would feel supportive for my body today?

HEART | Choose honest connection

Reach out to someone with whom you can be yourself. You can share a happy moment, acknowledge a hard one, or simply enjoy company.

Where do I feel welcomed and understood?

PURPOSE | Make one aligned choice

Think about a value you want to live this month. Choose a small action that expresses it: protecting family time, making something creative, or offering help within your capacity.

What choice would make today feel more like my own?

My December intention:

This month, I want to feel_____.

One choice that supports that feeling is _____.

I can return to what matters, one choice at a time.

CREATING A LIFE FOR YOURSELF

A Life That Has Room for You

Begin with an ordinary day.

When you imagine the life you want, you may picture a major change: different work, more freedom, a new home, or a fresh beginning. Those hopes matter. It can also help to ask what you want an ordinary Tuesday to feel like.

How would you begin your morning? What kind of work would hold your attention? Who would you spend time with? Where would rest, creativity, learning, and pleasure fit?

Your answers reveal needs you can begin honoring now. A wish for a quieter life might begin with one evening without plans. A wish for meaningful work might begin with a conversation or an hour spent developing an idea. A wish for connection might begin with a recurring call.

Notice what is yours.

Separate what you truly want from what you feel you're expected to have. Which hopes still matter when no one is watching or applauding?

Respect the realities of your life.

Money, caregiving, health, and other responsibilities affect your options. Choose a step that fits your current resources. You can work toward change while being honest about what requires time or support.

Write your next chapter:

I want more room for...
A pattern I am ready to reconsider is...
One decision within my reach this month is... The support I could ask for is...



A meaningful future can begin with a choice you make today.

PREPARING FOR 2027

What Are You Calling In?

Let manifestation become intention in motion.



The end of the year offers a natural moment to name what you hope to welcome next. You might call that manifestation: imagining a meaningful future and bringing your choices into closer alignment with it.

Use that vision as a guide. Thoughts alone cannot guarantee an outcome, and difficult circumstances are never proof that you failed to think positively. Your intentions can help you recognize possibilities, make plans, and take actions within your control.

1. Name the desire.
Be specific about what you want and why it matters. “I want more freedom” might mean one protected afternoon each week or work that offers greater flexibility.

2. Picture the everyday experience.
Imagine how you would spend your time and what you would do differently. Include the habits and support that would make that possible.

3. Choose a practical first step.
Schedule a conversation, review a commitment, research an option, or set aside time to practice a skill. Choose something you can begin within seven days.

4. Plan for an obstacle.
“If my week becomes crowded, I will spend fifteen minutes on my next step on Saturday morning.” Review your plan and adjust as you learn.

My 2027 intention: I am creating more _____ because _____. My first action is _____. I will begin on _____.

I welcome possibility and take part in creating change.

YEAR-END REFLECTION

Carry Forward. Make Room. Begin.

A quiet page for closing the year with honesty.

You can reflect on this year without grading your life. Notice what happened, what mattered, and what you are learning. Take one prompt at a time.

What supported me?

Which people, routines, places, or choices helped me feel more like myself? _____
_____

What did I learn about my needs?

Where did I need more rest, support, courage, boundaries, or connection?

_____
_____

What am I ready to make room for?

Name a hope or possibility you would like to give attention to in 2027.

_____
_____

What will I carry forward?

Choose one practice, relationship, or lesson you want to keep close.

_____

My word for the new year: _____
One small action that expresses it: _____

I can honor where I have been and choose my next step.

DECEMBER PRACTICE

Seven Days of Presence

Begin whenever you like. Repeat what helps.



DAY 1 | Arrive

Spend one minute noticing the room around you. Name three things you can see and one sound you can hear.

DAY 2 | Savor

Enjoy the first few sips of a warm drink without doing another task. Notice its warmth, aroma, and flavor.

DAY 3 | Make space

Simplify one holiday task or share a responsibility. Use a little of that time for yourself.

DAY 4 | Connect

Give someone a few minutes of your attention. Ask a question and listen to their answer.

DAY 5 | Welcome delight

Choose one small seasonal pleasure: music, lights, a story, a recipe, or time outdoors.

DAY 6 | Imagine

Write one sentence about how you want your everyday life to feel in 2027. Name one action that supports it.

DAY 7 | Reflect

Which moment helped you feel present? Choose one practice to carry into next week.

Let this be an invitation you can adapt to your life.

MINDFUL MOMENT

A Quiet Light Within

A short guided pause for the holiday season.

Find a comfortable position. Keep your eyes open or soften your gaze. Notice the support of the chair or floor beneath you. Allow your breath to follow its natural rhythm. You can focus on a sound or the feel of your feet if that is more comfortable.

Imagine a quiet room with a gentle light in the window. Outside, the season continues. For these few moments, there is somewhere for you to rest. If imagery does not come easily, look at a comforting object nearby.

Notice one detail: the softness of a blanket, the warmth of the light, or the stillness around you. Let your shoulders settle if that feels comfortable. You do not need to create a particular feeling.

Ask yourself softly: ***What do I need more room for?*** Give the question a little space. Perhaps a word comes to mind. Perhaps there is only a sense of wanting to rest. Let your answer be enough for now.

Imagine carrying that small light into an ordinary day in the coming year. What is one kind choice you could make for yourself? Stay with something simple and possible.

When you are ready, notice the room again. Move your hands or feet. Take your time returning to the day.

Carry these words with you:

I make room for myself in this season.
I can welcome joy and honor what I need.
I take one thoughtful step toward the life I want.

Namaste

HOLIDAY GIFT COLLECTION

Give the Gift of Pause



Thoughtful encouragement for the holiday season.

Offer someone a moment that belongs to them. This Balance Life brings together gentle reflection, beautiful affirmations, and guided rest in one thoughtful holiday gift.

Inside your gift box

A mini guided reflection journal

Explore “What can I release?” “What matters most?” and “What do I want to make room for?”

Seven affirmation cards + wooden stand

Choose a daily message and keep it where you can return to it.

A soft eye pillow

Settle into a few quiet moments of rest.

Two individually wrapped herbal teas

Enjoy a warm cup during your pause.

Your 10-minute guided meditation

Scan the included QR code to listen to a meditation recorded by Nicole Helmus.



The Gift of Pause | Collection preview

COMING SOON | PAUSE & REFLECT

An on-demand holiday workshop to help you reflect on the year, make room for what matters, and prepare for 2027 with intention - at your own pace.

Interested in gifting or the workshop?
Connect with Nicole at thisbalancelife.com/contact.

YOU ARE INVITED

Reset & Restore for the Holidays

Restorative Yoga with Nicole Helmus

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 12, 2026
12:15-1:30 PM | ROSLYN SALT CAVE

75-minute restorative yoga experience

As the holidays gather momentum, make a little room for yourself. Join Nicole Helmus of This Balance Life for a quiet practice of gentle, supported rest at the Roslyn Salt Cave.

Settle into supported poses, enjoy an unhurried pause, and give yourself time to reconnect with what you need. This is an opportunity to step away from the calendar and spend part of the season caring for yourself.

Make it your holiday pause.

Come on your own or invite someone who would appreciate a little stillness. Let this time be part of how you prepare for the weeks ahead.

Registration inquiries:
thisbalancelife.com/contact

Make room for rest within the season you are creating.

STAY CONNECTED

A Little Balance for the Year Ahead

From This Balance Life to you.

May your holidays hold moments of warmth, meaningful connection, and time that feels like your own. May you welcome the new year with curiosity about what is possible and patience for what takes time.

Thank you for making The Balance Journal part of your year. It is a privilege to share these moments of reflection with you.

COMING SOON | THE BALANCE CONVERSATIONS

Join Nicole Helmus for thoughtful conversations about life, change, and the experiences that shape us. Coming soon to YouTube. Follow This Balance Life for the first episode announcement.

CONTINUE YOUR JOURNEY

Explore workshops, speaking, corporate wellness, and opportunities to pause and reconnect with This Balance Life.

REQUEST FUTURE ISSUES

Visit thisbalancelife.com/contact and write “Please subscribe me to The Balance Journal” in your message. Include the email address where you would like to receive it.

YOUR FIRST INTENTION FOR 2027

In the coming year, I will make more room for...

_____

_____

_____



Happy Holidays &a Meaningful New Year

With warmth,
Nicole Helmus
This Balance Life
thisbalancelife.com

Find Your Balance. Live With Purpose.