



WEEK ONE

PROVERBS 25:28
City with Broken Walls

SAY
THIS

Doing what you should
can keep you safe.



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DO
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MORNING TIME

Before leaving for the day, write or tell your child, "Update your operating system today by praying and remember that everyone benefits when we practice self control."

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Monthly Theme Verse: "God's power has given us everything we need to lead a godly life." 2 Peter 1:3a (NirV)

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LIFE
APP

SELF-CONTROL—Choosing to do what you should even when you don't want to

LIFE
APP

SELF-CONTROL—Choosing to do what you should even when you don't want to

NEW YEAR, NEW HEART

By Carey Nieuwhof

So here's a question to kick off the new year: How's your heart? The heart is pretty vital. It's what we live out of really; it's the wellspring of life. Our hearts help us feel the highs and lows, navigate wonder and mystery, keep our imaginations stimulated and our dreams alive. It is the place where hope and faith live. I have found that the longer I live, the more intentional I have to be at keeping my heart open and fully alive. If you've had disappointments and letdowns this past year, here are a few ways to renew your heart this year:

1. Push past your feelings. Sure, there are seasons where what's supposed to be meaningful feels mechanical. Do it anyway. Go to work. Hang out with your kids. Pray (even if you feel you're talking to the ceiling). Just because you don't feel like it's real doesn't mean it isn't real. Eventually, your emotions will catch up.

2. Get some rest. Fatigue and overwork can numb your heart. Find my heart grows hard because I'm not resting. Get eight hours sleep for a week. Take a day off and do something you love—like going on a hike, exploring a city, or reading a great book.

3. Don't over-personalize your failures and successes. My kids remind me all the time that I can take things too personally. They're right. If your life is going well, it might not be because you're so awesome. And if things are sputtering, it might not be because you're so incompetent.

4. Fight isolation. Community is the problem for most of us (it's hard to get hurt all by yourself). But community is also the solution. You will want to be alone. Don't. Solitude can be a good thing, but isolation is dangerous. Talk to God. Find a friend, a mentor, or a counselor. My very first trip to a counselor happened because I realized my heart had gone hard.

I don't know which method for renewal resonated most with you, but I do know this: if your heart feels weakened or hard, it can become new again. And one day, you'll look back on this season when your kids were young and be so thankful you did what you needed to do to get your heart healthy again. It's not just an investment in them—it's an investment in you.

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