

Pass n' Soul

A CONSCIOUS NETWORK

PURPOSE

SETTING GOALS THAT EMPOWER YOU

A Fresh Perspective for the New Year

PURPOSEFUL GROWTH

Thriving in Business and Beyond in 2025

FINDING PURPOSE

The Secret to Living a Long and Fulfilling Life

AMPLIFY YOUR IMPACT

in 2025 By Sharing Your Voice

SOCIAL MEDIA MADE SIMPLE

Powerful Strategies to Boost Your Visibility Authentically





**My mission in life
is not merely to
survive, but to thrive;
and to do so with
some passion, some
compassion, some
humor, and some style.**

Maya Angelou

Letter from the Founder 6

Cyndee Paulson-Heer

Finding Purpose: The Secret to Living a Long and Fulfilling Life 8

Cyndee Paulson-Heer

Aligning with Archetypal Energies: A New Approach to New Year's Resolutions 11

Lorrie Gehrke

Setting Goals That Empower You: A Fresh Perspective for the New Year 14

Lisa Nichols

Amplify Your Impact in 2025 By Sharing Your Voice 16

Gail Beltran Nott

Purposeful Growth: Thriving in Business and Beyond in 2025 19

Maile Collmer

Social Media Made Simple: Powerful Strategies to Boost Your Visibility Authentically 21

Diana Concoff Morgan

**CON
TENTS**

SASS N' SOUL

Tech Tips with Katie 24
Katie Brandt

**Classic Spiced Chai: A
Comforting Warm Brew** 26
Cyndee Paulson-Heer

**Self-Care Sunday:
Because Burnout is
So Last Season** 28
Danielle Foster

CON TENTS



Be patient with yourself. Self-growth is tender; it's holy ground. There's no greater investment

Stephen Covey



Cyndee Paulson-Heer
founder at Sass n' Soul
TheSassNSoulLife.com

Dear Reader,

At the stroke of midnight on December 31st, we bid farewell to 2024 and welcomed the dawn of 2025! There's something magical about January—it's a fresh start, a clean slate, and an open invitation to begin anew. As we stand on the threshold of this brand-new year, I encourage you to pause and reflect on the limitless possibilities that await. This isn't just another chapter in your story; it's a powerful opportunity to embrace your authenticity, redefine who you are, and step boldly into the next, most empowered version of yourself.

At Sass n' Soul, we believe every woman has a spark of greatness within her just waiting to shine brighter. Whether it's pursuing your passions, building deeper connections, or simply making people smile, you are weaving a legacy. Let's move through this year with purpose. Let's make an impact and dare to thrive in 2025. Let's dig deep together, explore our potential, and rise to meet our dreams with Sass and Soul!

Through the pages of this journal, you'll find inspiration, heartfelt articles, and tips to support you on your journey. Every element is here to remind you of your unique power and to help you cultivate a life filled with intention, growth, and joy.

Let's make this the year we set big goals, overcome challenges, and celebrate every step forward. Let's work together to unlock the magic of authenticity and create lives that truly shine.

Here's to 2025—your Year to Thrive!

Live Passionately,

Cyndee,
Founder at Sass n' Soul



**When your mind
charts the course
and your heart fuels
the journey, success
becomes inevitable.**

Cyndee Paulson-Heer



Cyndee Paulson-Heer
founder at *Sass n' Soul*
TheSassNSoulLife.com

Finding Purpose: The Secret to Living a Long and Fulfilling Life

by Cyndee Paulson-Heer

What makes a person want to get up every day for 100+ years? Purpose, or as the Japanese term it, *ikigai* which translates to “reason for being”.

Discovering your purpose is one of the most transformative journeys you can embark on. It's the key to living a life that feels meaningful and fulfilling. Finding your purpose isn't just about personal meaning; it also has measurable benefits for your mental, emotional, spiritual, and even physical health. Let's explore why finding your purpose matters and how it can improve your well-being. Then I'll share three actionable steps you can start today to dive deeper into your purpose.

Why Finding Your Purpose Matters

Your purpose is the unique blend of your passions, talents, skills, values, and core identity that come together to create a meaningful contribution to the world. When you live in alignment with your purpose, life feels richer, more meaningful, and more fulfilling. It becomes easier to make decisions, and your energy becomes focused. Without it, life can feel uncertain and directionless.

Purpose gives you:

- **Direction:** Purpose serves as a guiding light, much like the North Star has been a beacon for travelers throughout history. When you identify your purpose, you gain a sense of direction that anchors you and sets your GPS.
- **Clarity:** When you know your purpose, your goals and priorities naturally align with what truly matters to you.
- **Motivation:** Purpose fuels your passion and determination, making you more resilient in the face of challenges.
- **Connection:** Living your purpose often involves serving others, helping you build deeper, more meaningful relationships.

The Health Benefits of Living with Purpose

Living with purpose doesn't just make life feel better; it can actually improve your health and extend your lifespan. Here's how:

1. **Reduced Stress Levels:** Purpose acts as a buffer, helping you navigate life's challenges with greater ease, and people who live with a sense of purpose report lower stress levels.
2. **Improved Mental Health:** Research consistently shows that having a clear sense of purpose significantly reduces symptoms of depression and anxiety. Having a meaningful "reason for being" becomes a powerful motivator, inspiring you to get out of bed each day with intention and drive.
3. **Longer Life Expectancy:** Studies from the Blue Zones and a study in *The Lancet* found that a reason for being is linked to overall well-being and a longer lifespan. The *Lancet* study showed that individuals with a sense of purpose were 30% less likely to die prematurely than those without a clear sense of purpose.
4. **Better Physical Health:** Purpose-driven people are more engaged with life and are likely to engage in healthy behaviors, such as regular exercise and eating well, contributing to better overall health and vitality.

Three Steps to Uncover Your Purpose

Finding your purpose can seem overwhelming, but it starts with small, intentional actions. Here are three steps you can take now:

1. Reflect on Your Passions and Strengths

Your purpose often lies at the intersection of what you love and what you're good at. Take time to reflect:

- What activities light up your neurology, spark your enthusiasm, and excite you?
- What skills do you possess that come naturally to you or that others frequently praise?
- What problems in the world do you feel drawn to solve?
- What movements do you feel drawn to?

Write these down and look for patterns or common threads.

2. Explore What Fulfills Your Soul

Think back to moments when you felt a deep sense of joy, connection, or accomplishment. Were you helping others, creating something new, or learning something challenging? Fulfillment often comes from contributing to something greater than yourself.

Try this exercise: Imagine yourself 20 years from now, looking back on your life. What do you want to be remembered for? What legacy do you want to leave?

3. Start Small and Take Action

Finding your purpose isn't an all-or-nothing process. Start by experimenting with small, purpose-driven activities and pay attention to how you feel before, during, and after the activity:

- Volunteer for a cause you care about.
- Take a class or pursue a hobby that excites you.
- Start a gratitude journal to uncover recurring themes in what brings you joy.

By taking small steps, you'll gain clarity and momentum, making it easier to find and define your purpose over time.

Living a Purposeful and Fulfilling Life

Uncovering your purpose is a journey, not a destination. It evolves as you grow, gain new experiences, and connect with life and others. But one thing is clear: finding your purpose has the power to transform your life, adding not only years but also a profound sense of joy, fulfillment, and contribution.

Don't wait for the perfect moment to start. Reflect, explore, and take small steps today. Start a "My Purpose" journal and jot down your insights. The journey to uncovering your purpose should bring you joy, clarity, and a deeper understanding of yourself, along with the opportunity to live your most meaningful life.



Lorrie Gehrke
Mariposa Living

Aligning with Archetypal Energies: A New Approach to New Year's Resolutions

by Lorrie Gehrke

The New Year is often a time of fresh starts, ambitious goals, and well-intentioned resolutions. Yet, for many of us, the traditional approach to resolutions—setting rigid goals and expecting perfection—often fizzles out by February. What if we approached this season differently?

Instead of focusing on what we need to fix or change, we can align with the archetypal energies that shape our unique lives. Archetypes are timeless, universal patterns that help us understand our deepest motivations and challenges. By tapping into these energies through astrology, we can set intentions that feel aligned with who we truly are, not just who we think we should be.

Why Archetypes?

Archetypes resonate with us because they are both personal and universal. As a lifelong fan of *The Wizard of Oz*, I've always been fascinated by its archetypal characters—Dorothy, the Scarecrow, the Tin Man, and the Lion. Each one reflects a journey of growth, courage, and transformation. Over time, I've come to see the New Year as an opportunity to reflect on these same themes in my own life.

In astrology, archetypes are mirrored in your natal chart's planets, signs, and houses. For instance, if your Sun is in Capricorn, you might feel called to focus on discipline and structure. If your Moon is in Pisces, you may be drawn to explore creativity, spirituality, or compassion. Recognizing these energies allows you to work with them rather than against them.

Choosing Intentionality Over Resolutions

A few years ago, I shifted away from setting traditional resolutions and began focusing on intentional choices. This mindset aligns with the energy of my own chart, which emphasizes adaptability and communication (a Gemini Moon will do that!). It also allowed me to integrate the wisdom of loss, love, and the cycles of life.

For example, when I think of the constellation Cassiopeia, it reminds me of both the beauty of the stars and the weight of mythology. Cassiopeia's story is one of both triumph and humility—qualities

that resonate with my journey as a mother and my connection to my late daughter, Lauren. Reflecting on archetypal stories like hers can inspire us to think about the themes we want to embrace in our own lives.

Practical Steps for 2025

1. Reflect on Your Chart

Look at your Sun, Moon, and Rising signs for insight into your core energies. What themes do they suggest? If you're new to astrology, start with the basics: the Sun reflects your identity, the Moon your emotions, and the Rising how you approach the world.

2. Embrace Cycles, Not Perfection

Life moves in cycles, much like the moon waxing and waning in the night sky. Allow yourself to revisit and refine your intentions throughout the year.

3. Incorporate Symbolic Rituals

A simple ritual—lighting a candle, journaling, or even stepping outside to gaze at the stars—can help you ground your intentions. For me, looking at Cassiopeia on a clear night reminds me to connect with the deeper meaning behind my goals.

4. Stay Curious

Let 2025 be a year of exploration and discovery. Whether it's learning more about astrology, journaling your dreams (a practice I've found deeply rewarding), or simply listening to your intuition, staying curious can open doors to new insights.

5. Celebrate Your Wins

Remember to honor your progress, no matter how small. Growth is often incremental, and celebrating even the smallest victories reinforces your alignment with your unique path.

A New Year Guided by Stars and Stories

As we step into 2025, let's move away from resolutions that feel like obligations. Instead, let's embrace choices that feel intentional and empowering. By aligning with the archetypal energies within and around us, we can create a year that honors who we are and the journey we're on.

This isn't just about astrology—it's about tapping into the deep well of wisdom that each of us carries. Whether it's a constellation in the sky, a story passed down from a loved one, or a dream that lingers in your heart, these symbols can guide us toward living more intentionally and authentically.

So, this year, look to the stars, the stories, and the archetypes that resonate with you. Let them be your companions as you write the next chapter of your life.

Here's to a year of alignment, intention, and meaningful choices.

About the Author

Lorie Gehrke is an archetypal astrologer, grief educator, and certified nutrition consultant who helps others reclaim joy, meaning, and connection in their lives. With a deep passion for archetypal astrology, years of dedication to grief and loss support and advocacy, and more than a decade of expertise in nutrition coaching, Lorie shares tools, reflections, and pathways to help others rediscover their strengths, navigate challenges, and honor the ups, downs (and everything in between) of life.

Through her integrative approach, Lorie combines the power of personal transformation with the nourishment we find in body and spirit. Her work invites you to embrace your unique journey, honor the past, and create a life of intention, authenticity, and purpose—one aligned choice at a time.

Learn more at <https://www.loriegehrke.com/> or contact Lorie directly at lorie@mariposaliving.com.



Lisa Nichols
EFT Tapping Coach
Tapping Into Your True Self

Setting Goals That Empower You: A Fresh Perspective for the New Year

by Lisa Nichols

There's something so magical about the start of a new year. It's like a clean slate, bursting with possibilities! The excitement is contagious—so much so that we often get caught up in making big declarations:

- *Eat healthier!*
- *Get organized!*
- *Spend more time with family!*

It feels so doable, doesn't it? But then, a few weeks in, the motivation fades. That fire we felt turns into a little voice saying, "Oh yeah, I should really get back to that," until one day, we've forgotten about it entirely.

Why does this happen? If you search online, you'll find reasons like "lack of accountability" or "not making it a habit."

But the real issue goes deeper—it's about how we connect with our goals and what they mean to us.

Break Free from Goal-Setting "Rules"

Traditional goal setting doesn't work for everyone. We've all heard about setting SMART goals or making five-year plans, but these can feel rigid and uninspiring.

Instead of trying to fit your goals into someone else's formula, make them your own. If "goal" feels like a heavy word, call it something else—intentions, desires, dreams. You get to set your goals in whatever way works best for you!

Set the Right Goals for You

Before you commit to anything, ask yourself: Why am I setting this goal?

- Are you trying to please others or quiet an old insecurity?
- Or are you creating a vision that reflects who you are and what you truly want?

For example, if your goal is to lose weight, think about why. Are you trying to escape judgment from others? Or do you genuinely want to

feel stronger, healthier, or more vibrant? When your goals reflect your authentic desires, they are so much easier to follow through on.

Procrastination and How to Move Past It

Another big hurdle to following through on those New Year's goals is procrastination. Reality check: if you procrastinate before January 1, it won't magically disappear after the new year begins.

Let's bust a myth right now: procrastination is not a personality trait. It's not who you are! It stems from experiences in your past that created beliefs and thought patterns that trigger procrastination, like fear of failure, overwhelm, or even resistance to control.

The good news is that you can transform those underlying beliefs which will be a gigantic step toward achieving what you want in life.

Let Goals Evolve

Here's a truth not enough people talk about: It's okay to change your mind.

Goals aren't set in stone. They're not meant to be rigid. They're simply a direction to guide you. As you take steps toward your goals, life may offer new opportunities, or you may discover that what you thought you wanted isn't quite right anymore. That's not failure—it's growth.

In fact, many opportunities arise precisely because you're working toward something. They wouldn't have appeared otherwise. Embrace the chance to pivot, refine, or even let go of a goal if it no longer serves you.

Set Intentions with Affirmations

If traditional New Year's resolutions or goals haven't worked for you, consider approaching them with greater intentionality. If you've already set resolutions for this year, take a moment to revisit them and make sure they truly align with your values and desires.

Here are some affirmations to set the tone:

- Setting goals empowers me to grow and thrive.
- My goals reflect my deepest intentions and dreams.
- I am open to the universe supporting my journey.
- I am worthy of achieving my dreams and living a life I love.
- I trust myself to take steps that align with my highest good.

Goals don't have to feel like a burden or a setup for failure. When you set goals that truly resonate with your desires and allow for flexibility, they become a source of inspiration and growth.

This year, make it about you—your dreams, your intentions, and your unique path forward.



Gail Beltran Nott, CPDC
Business Coach
Take Wing Coaching

Amplify Your Impact in 2025 By Sharing Your Voice

by Gail Beltran Nott

In less than two months, I'll be turning 49. If I'm very lucky, I'll live another 49 years in good health, but you never know. I have dreams of writing a book, speaking professionally, and building my YouTube channel and podcast. I love writing, teaching, and sharing.

So, what am I waiting for? Why do I reach for my phone to play that mindless game instead of jotting a few ideas down?

Yes, I have ADHD. Yes, I'm homeschooling my autistic five-year-old while also managing a menagerie of pets—a dog, fish, parrots, and chickens. And yes, I'm supporting my coaching and marketing clients.

But if I'm honest with myself, my biggest obstacle is fear.

I think one of the greatest barriers for women and marginalized people in amplifying our voices and messages isn't lack of expertise or resources—it's fear.

Fear of critique, rejection, or even violence can prevent us from sharing our insights—the expertise, experience, and wisdom we've cultivated over the years. Yet, staying silent doesn't just hurt our confidence; it denies others the benefit of our unique perspectives and limits the growth of our businesses and careers.

Let's explore how to overcome this fear, build confidence, share your message, and amplify your impact on the world.

The Cost of Staying Silent

Think about a time when you held back from sharing an idea, insight, or perspective because of fear. What did you lose by staying quiet? Perhaps it was a missed opportunity to connect with someone, grow your business, or inspire change. Worse yet, what did your audience lose by not hearing your voice?

Our hesitance to share isn't just a personal issue; it's a collective one. By not speaking up, we limit the ripple effects our insights can have on others.

One summer, my younger brother was bullied by two kids while I was working as a day camp counselor. They claimed an adult

counselor encouraged their behavior. My parents withdrew my brother from the camp, and the two kids were expelled. However, the situation left me uneasy. Without investigating the role of the adult allegedly involved, the message was clear: adults would not be held accountable, and kids were not to be believed.

Looking back, I realize how fear of confrontation can perpetuate harm. This experience taught me the importance of addressing uncomfortable truths, even when it's difficult, to ensure fairness and accountability.

Journaling: Start Small to Build Confidence

The first step to amplifying your voice is giving yourself permission to express your thoughts freely. Start by journaling for 10 minutes a day. Use this time as a “rant session.” Write about what frustrates you, what drives you nuts, and what you wish you could change in the world. Don't worry about grammar, style, or who might read it. This journal is just for you.

Why this works: Journaling helps you clarify your thoughts and identify the deeper truths you want to uncover. It's also a safe space to experiment with your voice, free from the fear of critique.

Sometimes, I get stuck in my head. When I'm happy, I find that handwriting in a journal or writing in a gratitude journal serves me best. On the other hand, typing works better for me when I'm upset. I can type faster than I can write and keep up with the speed of my thoughts.

Whether I'm handwriting or typing, getting my thoughts out of my head and onto paper or a screen helps me unpack my ideas and make sense of things.

Turning Rants into Professional Insights

Once you've got a few entries under your belt, revisit your journal. Highlight one line or idea that stands out to you—something you're passionate about or feel strongly about. Then, take that insight, write about it, and share it with your network.

Not a writer? No problem. Tools like ChatGPT can help you refine your ideas into polished content.

For example, your journal rant might say, “I hate how businesses ignore accessibility!” You could refine this into, “Prioritizing accessibility isn't just ethical; it's a smart business move that opens your services to a broader audience.”

By taking small steps, you're building the muscle of sharing your voice and expertise with confidence.

Overcoming Perfectionism and Big Picture Paralysis

As a visionary thinker with ADHD, I often see the big picture but struggle to break it down into manageable steps. Competing voices in my head tell me that my work has to be perfect, while at the same time, I'm unable to complete the first step. I sometimes feel like I have to write an entire book to be heard or post the perfect, highly edited Reel to be seen.

One strategy I've found helpful is Mel Robbins' 5 Second Rule. When hesitation creeps in, count down from five and take immediate action. This could be as simple as opening your journal, writing the first line of a social media post, or hitting record on your phone.

Another tip is to use body doubling, a productivity technique where you work alongside someone else to stay accountable. My favorite tool for this is Focusmate, a co-working platform that pairs you with a partner for structured, distraction-free work sessions. Having someone there, even virtually, makes starting and staying on task easier.

Surround Yourself with a Supportive Community

Finally, confidence doesn't develop in isolation. Surrounding yourself with a supportive, values-driven community can make all the difference. When you share your insights within a group that cheers you on, you'll feel more confident and inspire others to share their voices.

That's why I encourage you to connect with communities like Sass n' Soul, where you'll find encouragement, collaboration, and a safe space to grow. I'm so thankful for connecting with the founder, Cyndee Paulson-Heer. For the past decade, she's always been in my corner, encouraging me to share my voice and being an example of vulnerability and strength.

Closing Thoughts

Your voice matters. Your insights matter. In 2025, let's commit to amplifying our impact by sharing our stories, experiences, and wisdom—not despite our fears but alongside them. Together, we can create a ripple effect of change and get our voices out there, one message at a time.



Maile Collmer
Business Coach
Take Wing Coaching

Purposeful Growth: Thriving in Business and Beyond in 2025

by Maile Collmer

Congratulations! You made it through 366 days of 2024.

Let's be honest—2024 was a doozy. For many of us, it was a year of transitions, challenges, and moments of uncertainty. Personally, there were days I felt like I was running on fumes. Yet, when I look back, it wasn't all struggles. Amidst the hard times, there were wins, lessons, and undeniable growth.

As women entrepreneurs, we know the journey is anything but linear. There are highs that make us feel unstoppable and lows that humble us. But if 2024 taught me anything, it's that resilience isn't just about getting through tough times—it's about learning, adapting, and thriving.

So how do we make 2025 a year to thrive? Let's focus on two key areas: **strengthening our foundations and stretching toward new opportunities.**

Strengthen Your Foundation

Your foundation is the bedrock of your business. This year, revisit the fundamentals:

- **Your Relationships:** People are still the heart of business. Nurture your connections, whether with clients, colleagues, or collaborators. Strong relationships are as vital today as ever.
- **Your Business Plan:** Reassess your vision, mission, and unique value. Ensure you know your target market and have clear strategies for business development, marketing, operations, and finances.
- **Your Consistent Actions:** Success isn't about doing everything; it's about doing the right things. Track your actions to discover the 20% of your efforts that drive 80% of your results. Then, focus your attention there.

Break your goals into manageable pieces—daily, monthly, and quarterly targets and remember, consistency is the secret sauce to achieving big results.

Stretch Higher

Growth happens when we embrace change and innovation. As I've re-engaged with the real estate world as a coach, I've seen firsthand

how much has changed. Technology continues to reshape industries and staying relevant means staying curious.

- **Stay Current:** Keep up with technological advances, market trends, and shifting customer attitudes.
- **Evaluate Wisely:** Not every shiny new tool or idea will be right for your business. Innovation should align with your goals, improve efficiency, or enhance your customer experience.

2025 is your opportunity to blend the best of both worlds: solid fundamentals and forward-thinking innovation.

Thrive Together

Lastly, don't underestimate the power of community. Lean into your network—your tribe of like-minded, supportive women entrepreneurs. Together, we can share wisdom, lift each other up, and celebrate our wins.

So here's to a year of thriving: where our foundations are stronger, our vision is larger, and our success is sweeter.

You've got this! Let's make 2025 our year to thrive!



Diana Concoff Morgan
MA, HHE
Whole Heart Marketing

Social Media Made Simple: Powerful Strategies to Boost Your Visibility Authentically

by Diana Concoff Morgan

Social media can feel like herding cats—always changing and impossible to fully control. Maybe you’ve wondered, “How do I keep up and still make an impact?” The good news is that you don’t need to chase trends or game the algorithm to grow your online presence. The key lies in strategies that are timeless, authentic, and impactful.

Here are three powerful ways to boost your visibility this year while staying true to yourself.

Build Authentic Social Media Relationships

Connect with people who are good alliances for you. Do this from your personal profiles. This applies to all your social media profiles.

It’s not just about numbers—it’s about people. Building authentic connections is the foundation of any effective social media strategy. Start by identifying individuals who align with your values and could be potential collaborators or referral partners.

Here’s how to build meaningful connections:

- **Start with Your Inner Circle:** Reconnect with people you already know. Engage with their posts, comment thoughtfully, and share their content.
- **Pick Five New People Weekly:** Find five people who inspire you, align with your message, and are active on social media.
- **Show Genuine Interest:** Instead of promoting yourself, be curious about their work.

For example: If you’re a small business coach, follow and engage with local entrepreneurs, industry influencers, or small business-focused organizations.

By consistently investing in these connections, you’ll notice an organic boost in visibility as others reciprocate your engagement. Social media is about relationships, not transactions.

Create Content That Speaks (and Gets Found)

Social media algorithms have shifted. Gone are the days when posts were only shown to your friends or followers. Platforms like Facebook now prioritize content by topic and interest, meaning your posts can reach a wider audience—if they're relevant and engaging.

What this means for you:

- **Focus on Relevance:** Create content that aligns with what you do and what your audience cares about. This helps the algorithm connect your posts with people searching for related topics.
- **Keywords:** The new algorithm makes keywords even more important. So, having a good keyword strategy is important for all social media platforms. Include words and phrases your ideal clients are searching for. For example, a fitness coach might include terms like “healthy habits,” “workout tips,” or “meal planning” in their captions.
- **Balance Relationships and Reach:** Organic connections and a keyword strategy go hand-in-hand. Don't focus solely on one at the expense of the other.

Tip: Think of your content as a magnet. The right words and topics will attract the right people to your profile.

Show Up Consistently

Social media is like any other networking opportunity: Consistency is Key. You want people to know they can rely on you to show up, offer value, and engage with them regularly.

You are building the “know, like, and trust” factor with your social media, so until they know you, consistency is key in building relationships.

Note: If someone doesn't like, comment, or otherwise engage with your post, it doesn't mean they didn't see it. Think about your own social media activity. You see hundreds of posts, but you don't engage with every single one of them.

How to stay consistent:

- **Choose a Schedule You Can Stick To:** Whether it's posting three times a week or daily, consistency matters more than frequency.
- **Repurpose Content:** Don't reinvent the wheel. A blog post can become an Instagram carousel, a LinkedIn article, or a series of tweets.
- **Set a Reminder to Engage:** Dedicate time each day, or every other day, to engage with posts and participate in conversations.

Think of it this way: Showing up consistently builds trust, just like attending regular networking events. Over time, people will recognize your presence and remember your message.

The Bottom Line

Social media success doesn't require endless hustle or gimmicks. It's about building relationships, offering

value, and showing up with consistency.

Ready to boost your social media visibility? Start today by:

1. Connecting with five new people this week.
2. Sharing one relevant, high-value post.
3. Committing to a consistent engagement schedule.

The Internet is a 24/7 networking opportunity. With these strategies, you'll grow your presence and create an online community that is authentically aligned with who you are.

Let 2025 be the year you thrive on social media—authentically and powerfully!



Katie Brandt
Customer Relations Manager
Bill Brandt Ford

Tech Tips with Katie

by Katie Brandt

Are you ready to discover tech tips that you didn't even know you needed? Whether you're looking for creative inspiration for **Canva**, **Instagram**, **Facebook**, or even **Google Drive**, you've come to the right place!

Tech Tip: Are You Utilizing AI?

AI might seem overwhelming, but when used strategically, it can streamline your workflow and boost productivity. AI can assist with:

- **Generating content**
- **Drafting emails**
- **Creating meeting agendas**

I personally use AI-powered tools in Canva, Gmail, and Google Docs to simplify these tasks. Over the next three posts, we'll explore how to leverage AI for content creation, starting with Canva's Magic Write feature!

Creating Content in Canva Using AI (Magic Write)

Canva's **Magic Write** helps refine and enhance your writing with options like:

- **Rewrite** – Reframe your text for clarity
- **More Fun** – Add a playful tone
- **More Formal** – Make it sound professional
- **Sprinkle Fairy Dust** – Add creative flair

Let's Get Started!

1. **Open Canva** and click **Create a design**
2. **Select Docs** (this opens a blank document)
3. Click the **plus button** and **select Magic Write**
4. **Type your content idea** (e.g., "Vehicle maintenance tips")
5. Click **Generate** and review the AI-generated content
6. Return to the **home screen** and search for **Instagram Story Post Templates**
7. Select a **template** you like and click **Customize this template**
8. Insert your AI-generated content into the design

9. Adjust the text size, **align** elements, and **position** text using Canva's tools

Pro Design Tips:

- For perfect alignment, **group elements** before centering
- Use the **position tool** to align text to the center or middle
- Select text boxes and use the **spacing tool** to evenly distribute content

Your finished design should look **polished and professional** with just a few tweaks!

A Quick Note

The **only AI-generated content** in this guide was created using Magic Write in Canva—everything else was written and edited by me!

Stay tuned for Part 2 of this AI series, where we'll explore **how to use AI to enhance your email communication in Gmail**.

I'm Katie Brandt, and I'm here to provide you with **actionable tech tips** to help you thrive in **your business**. **If there's a specific tech topic you'd like me to cover, feel free to reach out at katie@billbrandtford.com**—I'd love to add it to the mix!

Until next time,
Katie



Cyndee Paulson-Heer
founder at *Sass n' Soul*
TheSassNSoulLife.com

During the devastating floods of 1997, my husband's family's peach orchard and home were submerged under several feet of water. When the waters receded, his family returned to face the heartbreaking devastation of their home. I joined them in those difficult days, helping wash silt from their belongings and working to restore their house.

Communication was a challenge as they didn't speak much English, but one thing was clear: they deeply appreciated me and my help. They expressed their gratitude in the most heartwarming way—with endless cups of chai.

There was always a pot of this savory treasure simmering on the back burner of their stove, and from sunrise to bedtime, the comforting aroma of spices filled the air as they sipped their favorite beverage. Every cup I drank spoke to me about their hospitality, resilience, and warmth.

They also shared their family recipe with me, a cherished tradition passed down through generations. Now, every time I make this chai, I'm transported back to those moments of connection and gratitude. It's more than just a recipe—it's a memory of their kindness and a testament to how something as simple as a cup of tea can bring people together.

A Brief History of Chai:

The word "chai" simply means "tea" in Hindi and other South Asian languages, but the spiced version we know today has deep cultural roots, particularly in Punjab. Chai, as a beverage, evolved during the British colonial era when tea plantations were established in India. While the British promoted black tea with milk and sugar, Indians added spices to create the flavorful and aromatic drink we now cherish as "masala chai."

Notes:

- **Cultural Significance:** In Punjab, chai is often accompanied by parathas (stuffed flatbreads) or pakoras (fried snacks) during gatherings or rainy days.

This recipe is not just about making tea; it's about embracing the warmth and cordiality of Punjabi culture. May each cup bring you closer to the heart and hospitality of India.

CLASSIC SPICED CHAI: A COMFORTING WARM BREW

Prep Time

5 minutes

Cook Time

40 minutes

Serving Size

4-6 cups

Difficulty Level

Beginner

RECIPE DIRECTIONS

1.

Prepare the Base: In a medium saucepan, combine the water, black tea, cardamom pods, and cloves. Bring the mixture to a boil over medium heat.

2.

Simmer the Spices: Once boiling, reduce the heat to low. Let the tea simmer gently for 20-30 minutes, allowing the spices to infuse and the flavors to deepen.

3.

Sweeten and Add Milk: Stir in the sugar and pour in the milk. Gradually increase the heat, bringing the tea to a point where it is very hot but does not boil.

4.

Marry the Flavors: Reduce the heat again and let the tea simmer gently for 10 more minutes to fully marry the flavors.

5.

Strain and Serve: Strain the tea through a fine mesh sieve into cups or a teapot. Serve hot and enjoy!

NOTES

- Adjust the sweetness by adding more or less sugar according to your taste.
- For a richer tea, use whole milk; for a lighter version, substitute with low-fat milk or a plant-based alternative.

INGREDIENTS

- 2 1/2 cups water
- 2 rounded teaspoons of loose-leaf black tea
- 4-5 cardamom pods, lightly crushed
- 10-12 whole cloves
- 1/2 cup sugar (adjust to taste)
- 14 oz whole milk

↓ SERVING TIPS

Pair with biscuits, scones, or spiced cookies for a delightful tea-time treat.

Garnish each cup with a sprinkle of ground cinnamon or a light dusting of nutmeg for an extra touch of warmth.

Serve in a clear glass or teacup to showcase the creamy, spiced tea color.

For a festive flair, add a stick of cinnamon or a star anise to each cup before serving.



Danielle Foster
Founder
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Self-Care Sunday: Because Burnout is So Last Season

by Danielle Foster

Let's face it: Life Can be a Lot. Between work deadlines, endless notifications, and whatever Netflix series you're currently emotionally invested in, it's no wonder self-care often feels like an afterthought. Enter Self-Care Sunday (or choose your day and make it happen), the one day a week where you unapologetically press pause, pour into your own cup, and remind yourself that you are that woman who deserves peace, balance, and a little bougie pampering.

Now, let's be clear—self-care isn't just bubble baths and face masks (though we love a good eucalyptus bath bomb moment). Real self-care is about tuning in to what you actually need to feel whole, and spoiler: it's not always what Instagram tells you. The beauty of self-care is that it doesn't have to look the same for everyone. It's a deeply personal practice, and the key is finding what resonates with you. So, grab your comfiest robe, a green juice (or mimosa, no judgment), and let's break down how to slay your Self-Care Sunday like the wellness babe you are.

Step 1: Move Your Body

We're not talking about punishing yourself for the pizza you ate on Friday night. Nope. Self-care movement is all about feeling good, not looking like a fitness influencer. Start your day with gentle movement. Whether it's a yoga flow, a dance party in your living room, or a lazy stroll to your favorite coffee spot, just get moving. Engaging your body helps release tension and improves circulation. Movement also boosts endorphins, giving you that feel-good energy to carry throughout the day. Bonus points if you're rocking cute leggings while doing it.

Step 2: Journaling: Reflection of the Mind

Grab a notebook and let the words fly. It doesn't have to be poetic or profound. Write down what's stressing you out, your grocery list, or why your ex's new haircut is offensive. Getting your thoughts out of your head and onto paper is basically a mental detox. Even five minutes of intentional reflection can bring clarity and calm to your mind. Pro tip: end with three things you're grateful for—it's like a gratitude smoothie for your brain.

Step 3: Tune in and Zone Out

Sound has a powerful impact on our emotional state. Sound baths (totally on the rage right now), calming playlists, or even sitting in silence—this is the time to give your nervous system a much-needed vacation. (It's been working overtime, honey.) The vibrations from sound therapy can promote healing and reduce stress, creating a sense of harmony within. If sound therapy isn't your jam, just throw on some soothing music, mellow R&B or even a meditation app.

Step 4: Get Your Snack Game Right

Self-care isn't self-care without snacks. Whip up something nourishing and indulgent. Think avocado toast with a side of chocolate. Or kale chips with more chocolate. You deserve food that makes you feel good AND tastes good. Period.

Step 5: Say No Like a Pro

This one's big. Sunday is sacred, which means not feeling bad about turning down brunch invites, work emails, or that friend who always "needs to vent" for three hours. Protect your peace like it's Beyoncé tickets—non-negotiable.

Step 6: Connect With Your Friends

Self-care doesn't mean isolation. Call your bestie, FaceTime your mom, or schedule a cute coffee date. Sometimes, the best way to recharge is by spending quality time with people who make you feel lighter.

Step 7: Glow Up Your Space

Light a candle, declutter that corner you've been avoiding, or rearrange your pillows like you're auditioning for HGTV. A cozy, intentional space can do wonders for your mood. Plus, it's the perfect backdrop for a Sunday selfie.

Final Thoughts: Make it Your Own

Self-Care Sunday isn't just an excuse to take it easy—it's a declaration. It says, "I matter, my needs are valid, and burnout is officially canceled." So, take the day, do what makes you happy, and don't let anyone guilt-trip you into thinking self-care is selfish. It's essential.

By committing to a weekly Self-Care Sunday, you create a ritual that not only enhances your well-being but also reinforces the message that you are worthy of care and attention. Over time, this practice becomes a cornerstone of living a balanced, fulfilled life.

So, this Sunday, ask yourself: What does my mind, body, and soul need today? Then give yourself permission to honor the answer. Because true wellness begins with you.

And if anyone questions your Sunday ritual? Smile, take a deep breath, and say, "I'm prioritizing my peace—you should try it sometime."

XOXO

The Wellness Affair



LET'S
TAKE IT

slow