



# THE MIDWIFERY TIMES

*The Midwifery Mentoring & Belonging Newsletter*

## RSVP AND JOIN US FOR OUR INAUGURAL MMB MEET UP

We are excited to announce that we are having in-person events! We will be hosting two events on two different days for folks in the NorCal and SoCal region. There will be one in Orange County on 01/08/2023 and another in San Francisco on 01/21/2023. Both events will start at 2pm. You are welcome to attend one or both events!

If you have not received an Outlook invitation for the event, please reach out to [midwifementoring@ucsf.edu](mailto:midwifementoring@ucsf.edu).

Event details included in the invite. Look forward to seeing you there!

## Are You Ready for 2023?

**Happy New Year!** This time of year, we often think about what's next for ourselves. Naturally, as a new year approaches, we want "out with the old and in with the new". But we can't quite make room for the new without reflecting on what goals we've set in the past, what we've accomplished, and where we were met with challenges. Introspection is a critical tool for self-care and growth and allows us to open ourselves up to the possibilities of what the future holds for us. As a new academic term quickly approaches it is time to pour into ourselves and give ourselves the reset we deserve. "How do we start off this new year feeling refreshed, recharged, and energetically ready to take on what the new year brings?" See below for our tips on how to prepare to make 2023 your most productive and fruitful year yet!

**Create a vision board.** Whether you're dreaming up a new career opportunity, setting physical wellness goals, or manifesting financial success, vision boards allow you to literally envision your life. Similarly, it can be used as a reminder of the goals you've set for yourself throughout the year.

**Journal.** Journaling is an excellent way to acknowledge and release your thoughts. We are often so busy that we don't have the time to stop, reflect and verbalize what we've gone through, how we've navigated through those experiences, and how our experiences influence us to be our best selves. Journal for five minutes at the end of your day. Reflect on what went well and what could have gone better and set new goals for the following day. Think about how the events of your day will help you reach your short- and long-term goals and build off that when setting intentions.

**Reconnect with your inner child.** Get back to some of your childhood favorites like coloring, painting, singing, and dancing. Work on a puzzle or get lost in a fiction novel. Remember the

things that have brought you joy in the past and re-introduce yourself to some of those things when you begin to feel overwhelmed and oversubscribed throughout the year.

**Give back.** Schedule time to volunteer with some of your favorite organizations or donate to them if time is limited. This is a great way to stay motivated and remind yourself why you are doing the work you are doing.

**Connect with friends and family.** With such busy professional schedules, it can be quite difficult to connect with our loved ones. Think of all the people who have supported you throughout your journey. Schedule routine individual or group check-ins with your family and friends so catching up won't seem so daunting.

**Regulate your sleep.** Busy schedules often result in fragmented or insufficient sleep. With sleep being such an integral part of recharging, it is important to prioritize it. Use an app or even your mobile device to track how long you sleep. Notice how you feel after a full night's rest. Try to limit screen time up to one hour before going to bed. Studies have shown that the blue light in bright screens can interrupt the melatonin surge and stimulate parts of our brain that are designed to keep us awake. Instead, try reading before bed and introduce other sleep enhancing mechanisms such as drinking a soothing chamomile tea, diffusing lavender essential oils, meditating, or using an app or machine for soothing white noise sounds like rain or waves.

**Hydrate.** Water is one of the key sources of life. Staying well hydrated helps protect our bodies from the inside out, helps keep our minds clear, and helps keep us energized. If you're having a hard time getting adequate water intake, buy a large water bottle – at least one liter (about 33 oz) – and challenge yourself to drink at least one bottle a day. When finishing one bottle becomes a breeze, challenge yourself to drink a second bottle.

**Maintain a balanced diet.** You are what you eat! The foods we eat can either support or interrupt our microbiome and affect our bodily functions and mood. Don't eliminate comfort foods entirely but challenge yourself to eat more colorful foods like seasonal fruits and vegetables that you typically don't reach for. Try an elimination diet, which can help you identify inflammatory foods aka foods that make you feel not so great afterwards. Notice how these foods make you feel, physically and emotionally, and build from there. The goal is always to feel your best self!

**Exercise.** Finding the right type of movement, whether it's weightlifting in the gym, a high intensity F45 class, yoga, stretching or dancing is an excellent way to strengthen your mind and body and improve overall energy and focus. It's not about how long or how hard you move, but that you make time to intentionally move your body daily. The former depends on your personal fitness and wellness goals, but at the very least dedicating time to the maintenance and well-being of your body will reap benefits in other ways, including being more productive and successful in attaining your goals this year!

**Breathe.** Remember to take deep, slow, intentional breaths. When the going gets tough and you find yourself in a whirlwind of work and obligations, give yourself five minutes for stillness to regroup, and to let go and let flow.

# Poems for the New Year

## New Year Re-Solution, 2021 by Ricardo Blanco

Stop closing the shades, let the sun glow again  
 like a god who loves and wakes me to me  
 in the wake of its divine light traveling  
 millions of miles  
 to ripple mauve and amber into my window,  
 raise  
 my shut eyes open, done dreaming. Breathe.  
 Let my coffee's steamy soul rise and bless me  
 every day with its aroma before I take my first  
 sip.  
 Name each day a miracle, linger again in its  
 mystery of possibilities. Breathe.  
 Set the mime-hands of my watch back two  
 minutes every day, until time and me disavow  
 each other's obligations.  
 Open the newspaper, but read between the  
 black and white lines for its lies. Breathe.  
 Stop walking my dog, let him dog-walk me  
 unleashed through his park.  
 Let his nose compass me toward  
 the smells of all I've stopped taking in: the  
 sweet, ancient dank of mud and mosses, the  
 incense of pine tree bark.  
 Let his ears point me to listen again  
 to all I've become deaf to:  
 the wind harping through the strings of leaved  
 branches, the opera of wrens gossiping about  
 the weather's secrets.  
 Breathe.  
 Don't deal with the mail every day, let bills  
 and notices pile up like a house of cards until  
 it collapses on the kitchen counter.  
 Take up cooking again,

but add music to my recipes:  
 sway my hips as I beat eggs to conga beats,  
 tap my feet  
 as I chop shallots to the staccato of piano  
 keys, sing along  
 as I strum the sauces slow and tender to the  
 croon of a folk guitar.  
 Bake all the desserts I deserve,  
 dip my finger into the frosting first,  
 bite into the crust, lick the plate clean,  
 feast on my life. Breathe.  
 Indulge myself more often alone in the living  
 room where I'd forgotten to live.  
 Take down my old photo albums from the  
 shelves,  
 stare at all the dusty years of myself  
 in those eyes I had forgotten were mine and  
 still love me.  
 Breathe.  
 Sit on the porch every night, but stop  
 asking the moon:  
 Who am I?  
 Accept the moon as simply the moon,  
 and me as simply me,  
 just as bright and wise,  
 just as scared and delicate  
 as I was last year,  
 and will be this year,  
 and the next and the next,  
 perfectly imperfect in the nothing of  
 my everything,  
 breathing as if each breath is forever my first  
 and my last.

**Interested in writing poetry for The Midwifery Times? Reach out to [midwifementoring@ucsf.edu](mailto:midwifementoring@ucsf.edu) or direct message us on one of our social media channels!**

**Instagram:** @midwiferymentoringbelonging

**Twitter:** @MMBelonging

**Facebook:** @ Midwifery Mentoring and Belonging Program

## Women

### by Eloise Greenfield

They caught the babies,  
and catch them still,  
welcome them into the world,  
for loving.

## Chant of the Pregnant Goddess

### by Jana McCarthy

I am the mother of the moon  
sister of the stars  
child of the light in your eyes.  
I am powerful.  
The geometry of my shape shifts  
from gently curved lines  
to expanding circles:  
earth, moon, sun.  
I am powerful.  
I am strong.  
The tempo of my vibration quickens,  
increasing from  
butterfly wings, to floundering fish,  
to beating drum,  
erupting volcano,  
the rhythm as old and constant as  
the cycles of the sun  
and the turn of the tides.  
I am powerful.  
I am strong.  
I am beautiful.  
I hold the hope of my ancestors  
the knowledge of my time  
the fate of my future.  
I am powerful.  
I am strong.  
I am beautiful.  
I am mother.

## A Prayer for One Who Comes to Choose This Life

### by Danelia Wild

May she know the welcome of open arms and hearts  
May she know she is loved by many and by one  
May she know the circle of friendship that gives and receives love in all its forms  
May she know and be known in the heart of another  
May she know the heart that is this earth reach for the stars and call it home  
And in the end may she find everything in her heart and her heart in everything

## Being Born

### by Carl Sandburg

Being born is important  
You who have stood at the bedposts  
and seen a mother on her high harvest day,  
the day of the most golden of harvest moons  
for her.  
You who have seen the new wet child  
dried behind the ears, swaddled in soft fresh  
garments, pursing its lips and sending a  
groping mouth toward nipples where white  
milk is ready.  
You who have seen this love's payday of wild  
toiling and sweet agonizing.  
You know being born is important.  
You know that nothing else was ever so  
important to you.  
You understand that the payday of love is so  
old, so involved, so traced with circles of the  
moon, so cunning with the secrets of the salts  
of the blood.  
It must be older than the moon, older than  
salt.