



If you're reading this, you know that despite all the odds we somehow find ourselves in 2022 - at a crossroads between a hopeful future and a confusing and challenging past. The start to this new year has been rocky, with loved ones getting sick from new variants and an emotional fatigue that has set in to match the physical. It is my hope for you that you find a quiet calm space in this energetic storm, and pause. Literally, stop and let yourself think about how things have been going, how you are feeling, and where you are at this moment of your life. New years are new beginnings, an opportunity to reevaluate how things are going and how we can course correct and get ourselves back where we want to be.

People talk about New Year's resolutions almost to the point of being a cliché, especially the type that don't make it past the first week of February. I think a more helpful way to frame what I'm talking about is goals that you create for the year, goals that you hold yourself accountable for and continue to work towards. It's easy to get distracted and thrown off course, and the constant avalanche of activities we have to do doesn't help. As we move through life, there are markers or what the next thing is that we have to achieve. As students, we are driven to get into colleges, as college students we look for our first job and start of a career, and once we are in the world we have to navigate on our own, deciding what our next goals and chapters will be and how we will achieve them. It's so important to structure your life in a way that will keep pushing you forward.



James Clementi, MHC-LP is a graduate from Teacher's College at Columbia University. He is a licensed Mental Health provider in New York State.

"I am excited to bring my perspective as a mental health counselor to address different ways that we can all practice continuing to improve our mental health."

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Two of the biggest obstacles to this are time and motivation. In therapy I like to think about the idea of content versus process. In other words, we can have conversations about topics, such as what our goals are going to be and how we can achieve them, but we also have to have conversations about the process of how things are talked about, addressed and handled. If you find that you don't have enough time in the day to carve out time for reaching your goals, it's really important to take a step back and think through how you are going to get better at time management. Motivation is also a huge factor as well. Many people don't have the drive to make changes or continue to work on themselves and their lives. Think about the things that matter most to you. Where does the time come from? You have to find ways to create it.

As you look ahead to the coming year, it's really important to know what you want, and then visualize yourself achieving these tasks. Recite mantras to yourself, take time to meditate and approach your goals mindfully. Sometimes the hardest thing is knowing what we want. That's why it is so important to listen to your intuition, that will always steer you in the right direction. It is also helpful to externalize things so that you don't have to keep track of so much. Writing things out and making to-do lists are great ways to stay organized. Ultimately talking through things with another person and getting another perspective on your situation is one of the most helpful and invaluable ways of making progress, so I always recommend talking to a therapist, especially if you're feeling stuck or overwhelmed with life.

We are just a few weeks in and this year is already presenting itself with a mix of challenges and opportunities. Instead of merely reacting to everything as it comes up, I want to challenge you to create a force within yourself that pushes through and makes sure that you are seen, heard and present in all the ways that will bring joy and connection to you, from you and within you. You cannot bring joy to other people if you don't feel it radiating genuinely from within yourself, so make sure you are constantly finding new ways to experience and share joy.



PO BOX 345 Harrison, NJ 07029

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