

T H E

# FORT LIFE

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## Your Voice and Your Path in 2026

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# YOUR VOICE AND YOUR PATH IN 2026

Are Your Words Opening Doors  
or Quietly Closing Them?



**“In a crowded room, the most powerful sounds are silence and thought.”**

Have you ever gained access to an exclusive room, a coveted circle, or a long-desired partner you pursued for months, only to suddenly find yourself alone, cut off, and distanced from what you once had closely within your grasp?

Your words were probably the culprit.

There is a subtle but steep gap between favor earned and favor preserved.

More often than not, what grants you access is not the same thing that sustains it. Any seasoned entrepreneur will tell you; whatever it took to get you to one million, will not be the same recipe that will get you to ten.

Yes, the principles will remain, but the execution, ingenuity, and restraint necessary to achieve the results desired will look extremely different.

In my own journey I have experienced and witnessed firsthand how over-talking, over-explaining, and excess in any form, can close the very doors you worked so hard to open.



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Speaking without restraint, out of turn, or without necessity can often be seen as signs of emotional and intellectual immaturity. As we close out 2025 and self-reflection is in season, I want to share with you some tips which have helped me not only stay in the rooms and relationships I've been ushered into, but also how to avoid the negative ones I once desperately craved access to.

### **1. 2 ears, 1 mouth. Listen more than you speak.**

Silence shows restraint. By displaying the discipline to attentively listen, digest, and process information carefully, you demonstrate the ability to steer conversations with intentionality rather than with impulsiveness. This leads to productivity. Most people listen only to respond, not to understand. Understanding is a byproduct of active listening, and to achieve true comprehension, you must pay close attention not only to words, but also tone, cadence, and delivery.

### **2. Understand Power Dynamics.**

If you are talking, you are not listening.  
If you are not listening you are not understanding.  
If you are not understanding, you will seem incompetent.

When in a new circle, a new job, or a new role, use your silence to study not only the room, but the players in it, the professional hierarchy, and the subtle signs that dictate who is in charge, who has their ear, and who is the charlatan.

Titles are often masks meant to deceive and conceal true power. Movement is determined by motion, not words.

Movement reveals truth, so be patient and identify those who move with intention and purpose from those who move only with words.

By taking the time to observe these dynamics, you position yourself in the stage of discernment, and can align your actions with those who share your principles for the betterment of the unit. Discernment begins with observation, and alignment begins with patience.

### **3. Restraint: Speak only when necessary... With Kindness!**

What we say, when we say it, and how it's delivered speaks volumes about our character. If you are out of your depth, remain humble and show curiosity to learn as opposed to pretending to understand. When swimming in familiar waters, do not interrupt others in efforts to show your intellectual capacity. This can be interpreted as arrogance or insecurity by others more seasoned than you. However, can silence be sometimes interpreted as avoidance? If the answer is yes, understanding the difference is key to timing.

**"You are as responsible for the interpretation as you are for the words."**

The tongue indeed has the power of life and death, so when you must speak, do so gently, softly and with intention.

There should be absolutely no pride in being proficient at hurting others with only our words. How flawed are we if this creates internal satisfaction.

## Less is More

In a time where information is constantly flowing and readily available, discernment is gold. Less is truly more, and just like we declutter our homes so we can make space for the new and necessary, we must declutter our minds from egotistical thoughts so prudence and kindness can reside in our speech patterns.

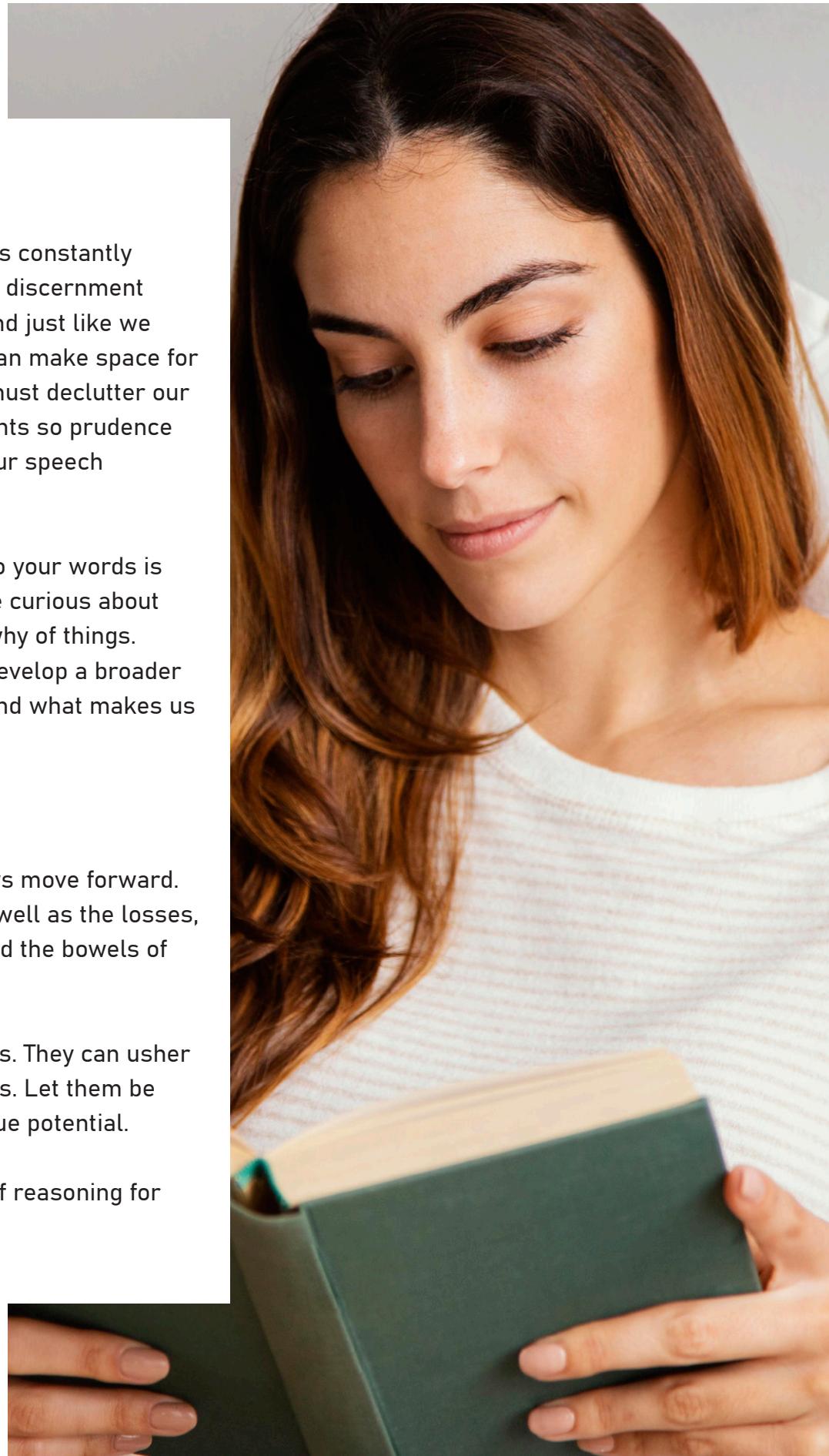
The best way to add weight to your words is to invest in yourself. Read, be curious about life, be concerned as to the why of things. Not to brag or opine, but to develop a broader understanding of humanity and what makes us who we are.

## My wish for you in 2026...

To continue to grow. To always move forward. To celebrate all the wins, as well as the losses, for in the pain of suffering and the bowels of hardship, growth resides.

Words can be knives or petals. They can usher us into greatness or darkness. Let them be master keys to unlock our true potential.

Our speech is the compass of reasoning for those following behind.



# The Hospitality Edit

## Elevating the Guest Experience Through Thoughtful Amenities

In hospitality, loyalty is not built at checkout, it's built in the quiet, intentional details that shape a guest's stay. Travelers may come for the location, the brand, or the price. But they return for the experience. And that experience is orchestrated through the touches a property chooses to offer.

At FORT, our hospitality philosophy is simple: **comfort is engineered, not guessed.** Every item placed in a room, every towel, every toiletry, every pillow, every amenity, communicates something about the property's commitment to its guests. Details speak. Details decide. Details make or break the stay.

Today's traveler is discerning. They notice water pressure and thread count. They notice whether the soap dries their skin or nourishes it. They notice if the towels feel industrial or inviting. They notice whether the mattress supports rest or interrupts it. And increasingly, they notice whether a property respects their time, their comfort, and their well-being.



Photo by Freepik

FORT partners with hotels to ensure that every detail silently communicates excellence.

We provide the essentials that shape the room's identity.

#### ▪ Stock and Custom Liquids & Soaps

From clean, modern formulations to custom-branded collections, property owners can elevate their identity through scent, texture, and quality. A guest may forget the check-in line, but they never forget a good shower experience.

#### ▪ Towels, Robes, and Linen Programs

Softness, absorbency, durability, these are not negotiable. They're the difference between "it was fine" and "I can't wait to stay here again." A towel can be a commodity, or it can be a touchpoint of comfort.

#### ▪ Mattresses and Bedding

Sleep is the core of hospitality. If the mattress fails, the stay fails. FORT curates resilient, guest-approved sleep systems that balance comfort, longevity, and cost, because great rest translates into great reviews.

#### ▪ Irons, Boards, Hangers, and In-Room Hardware

Guests may never praise an iron, but they will absolutely notice its absence or its poor quality. Functional accessories quietly communicate respect for the traveler's routine.

#### ▪ Room Accessories & Beyond

From trash liners to in-room amenities, every item plays a part in the story the property is telling. A seamless experience is built by removing friction before it ever reaches the guest.

When hotels choose FORT, they aren't just choosing products, they're choosing consistency, reliability, and intention. They're choosing to view hospitality not as a transaction, but as a craft.

Because here is the truth every successful operator knows:

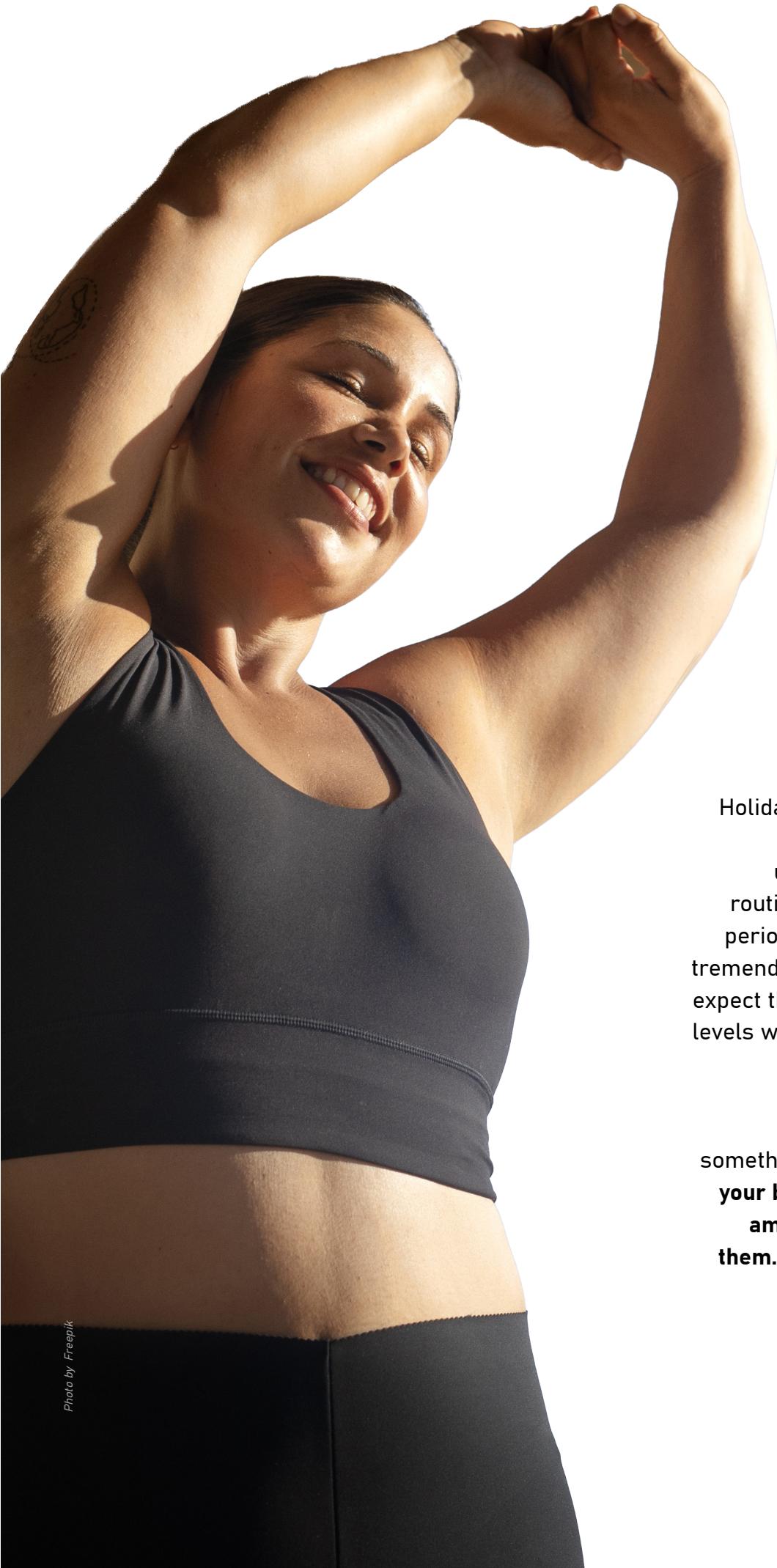
**People return to the places where they feel considered.**

A great stay doesn't require extravagance. It requires awareness. It requires choosing amenities that elevate comfort and reinforce trust. It requires understanding that the guest experience isn't shaped by one grand gesture, but by hundreds of subtle ones.

As travel season intensifies, remember this: Your amenities are your voice. They tell your story long after the guest checks out.

And when the details are right, travelers don't just stay at your property, they come back to it.





# Your Body, Your Vessel: Staying Well During Holiday Travel

Holiday travel is a test of resilience. Between crowded airports, unpredictable weather, broken routines, irregular meals, and long periods of sitting, the body absorbs tremendous stress. Yet most travelers expect their bodies to perform at peak levels without giving them the support they need.

High performers understand something simple but often forgotten: **your body is not separate from your ambitions, it is the engine behind them.** When the engine slows down, everything else follows.



Photo by Freepick

This season, shift your approach. Instead of viewing travel as a disruption, view it as a high-stress environment that requires strategy. A few small habits can radically change how you feel on the road.

Start with hydration. Flying dehydrates you faster than most realize. Drink water before you arrive at the airport, not after. Add electrolytes if you're traveling long distances. Keep snacks with fiber and protein on hand, jerky, nuts, clean protein bars, so you avoid the nutritional traps that airports and hotels are known for.

Movement matters even more when you're sitting for long stretches. The goal isn't perfection; the goal is continuity. Ten minutes of deliberate movement is enough to keep blood flow steady and your nervous system calm. Hotel gyms are optional. Your bodyweight isn't.

Sleep, too, becomes a negotiation during the travel season. Try to maintain a consistent wind-down routine: dim lights, light stretching, magnesium, and reducing screen exposure 30 minutes before bed. These small actions signal your body that rest is coming, even if the environment is new.

Your health doesn't take time off during the holidays. It doesn't pause because you're away from home. And it doesn't forgive chaos just because your schedule is full.

Remember this: **your body is a vessel that carries your goals, your responsibilities, and your future. Protect it with intention.** Travel well by treating your health like the first priority, not the last.

# Resolutions vs. Momentum

## Building a Strong 2026

Every December, people begin to talk about resolutions, as if the turning of a calendar has the power to transform behavior. But anyone who operates at a high level knows the truth: **January 1st changes nothing. Momentum does.**

Momentum is built in the quiet spaces of December, when most people are slowing down, distracting themselves, and postponing growth until “next year.” But discipline isn’t seasonal. Preparation isn’t seasonal. Leadership isn’t seasonal.



The question you must ask yourself is simple:

## What energy am I carrying into 2026?

Resolutions fail because they're treated like wishes. Momentum succeeds because it's treated like a plan. You don't wait for the future, you build toward it. Before the year ends, take inventory:

What habits are producing results?

What habits are quietly pulling you backward?

Where did you show discipline consistently this year?

Where did you negotiate with yourself?

And the bigger question, what habits deserve to follow you into 2026?



Momentum is not loud. It begins invisibly. A 10-minute workout. A 15-minute planning session. A small financial decision executed consistently. A daily discipline that stacks until identity shifts.

When January arrives, most people chase new promises. High performers chase continuity. They don't reinvent themselves, they refine themselves. They elevate what's already working and eliminate what isn't serving them.

2026 doesn't require a new version of you. It requires a more consistent one. One who understands that the future rewards those who prepare when the world is distracted.

Carry momentum into the new year, not resolutions.

Momentum compounds.  
Momentum clarifies.  
Momentum wins.

**“Momentum  
is not loud.  
It begins  
invisibly.”**

# Grow or Maintain?

## The Art of Strategic Restraint

Every business eventually reaches a strategic crossroads, **to grow or to maintain**.

Neither path is inherently right or wrong. But each comes with consequences that extend far beyond revenue.

Growth is attractive, especially in a world obsessed with expansion. But sustainable growth has a cost: cash flow, staffing, infrastructure, and capacity. It demands resilience when the pressure mounts and discipline when opportunity becomes noisy.

Maintenance, on the other hand, is often misunderstood. People see it as stagnation, but in reality, maintaining is often where organizations strengthen their core, refine processes, and build the operational muscle needed for the next season of expansion.

The true mark of a mature operator is knowing when to pursue each.

Growth requires honesty:

- Do we have the talent?
- Do we have the margin?
- Do we have the systems to absorb the volume?
- Are we growing for strategy... or for ego?



Photo by Freepik

Maintenance requires discipline:

- Can we improve the customer experience?
- Can we reduce waste and leakage?
- Can we strengthen vendor relationships?
- Can we build a healthier financial base?

Sometimes the smartest decision is to grow slowly. Sometimes the bravest decision is to pause growth entirely. Great operators know this: **growth opens opportunity, but maintenance protects it**.

As you move into 2026, evaluate your position with clarity, not emotion. Your decision today will define your balance sheet, your bandwidth, and your brand one year from now.

The goal is not constant expansion, it's aligned expansion. Choose the path that secures your future, not the one that merely feeds your ambition.



Photo by Freepik

## Givers and Takers

### Who Are You Choosing to Be?

In every environment, business, family, leadership, community, two energies always exist: givers and takers. These identities shape culture more than policies, strategies, or systems ever will.

Givers create momentum. They elevate rooms. They offer their presence, their effort, and their support without calculating immediate returns. Their value is not measured by volume but by impact, by the way they lift others, solve problems, and operate with integrity.

Takers operate differently. They extract. They drain energy, resources, and goodwill. They look for what they can gain before considering what they can offer. They resist accountability while demanding access. Takers weaken environments not because they are loud, but because they are consistent.

But here's the truth that many overlook: **these identities are not permanent. They are chosen... daily.**



Every interaction either deposits into a relationship or withdraws from it. Every contribution builds equity, or destroys it.

As you navigate the remainder of the year, audit your environment with honesty:

Who adds energy?

Who subtracts it?

Who stands with you?

Who stands near you only when it benefits them?

And then ask the harder question:

**Who am I choosing to be in this season?**

Leadership begins with contribution. Influence grows through service. Legacy is built by consistently giving more than you take. But giving is not a weakness. It requires boundaries, clarity, and self-awareness. It requires knowing when to pour into others, and when to protect your space.

In a distracted and self-focused world, the people who choose to give intentionally become rare. And because they are rare, they become invaluable.

This season, choose with purpose.

Surround yourself with people who build.

Become the person who strengthens the environments you enter.

And remember: **your identity shapes your impact long before your words do.**

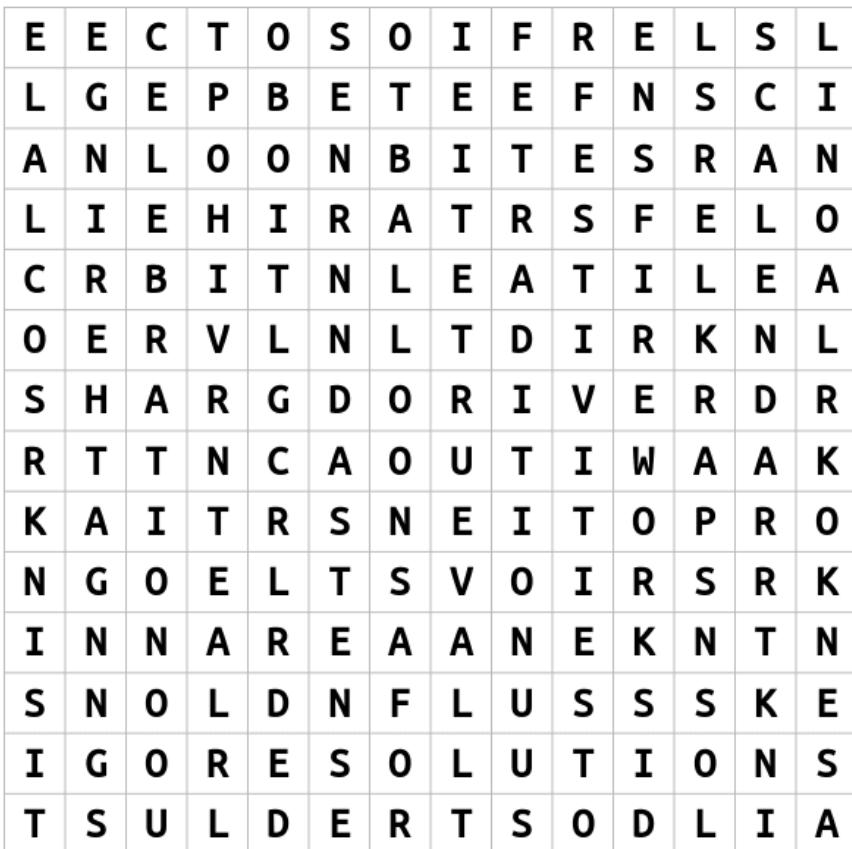


Photo by Freepik

# Word Search

Entertain yourself for a while and solve this word search as quickly as possible. If you prefer you can click on the link below and solve the challenge from your cell phone or computer.

## New Year's Word Search



GATHERING  
FESTIVITIES  
RESOLUTIONS  
FIREWORKS  
TRADITION  
GOALS  
CALENDAR  
CELEBRATION  
BALLOONS  
SPARKLERS

Play this puzzle online at : <https://thewordsearch.com/puzzle/841467/new-years-word-search/>

## TEAM FORT



Damian



Ely



Danny



Sebas



Goretti



Brian



Kaylee

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