

Individual Matters

Discover.
Act.
Grow.

• **Newsletter — January 2026 Issue**

A New Year, A New Journey

Wow—how is it already the first week of January? Somehow the calendar has flipped again, the days have raced ahead, and time feels like it's moving faster than we expect. Maybe that's why this newsletter arrives a bit late.

Or maybe it's a quiet reminder: time always moves faster than we think.

Recently, we reread *The Alchemist* by Paulo Coelho, and it brought this feeling into focus. The story has a way of slowing you down while reminding you how quickly a life—and a childhood—passes. It suggests that life isn't about rushing toward the next milestone, but about noticing who we are becoming along the way.

Children seem to understand this naturally. They live in the moment. They ask questions freely. They follow curiosities as if the world is full of clues meant just for them. And then, almost without noticing, time speeds up.

Seen through the lens of *The Alchemist*, childhood is a journey. New classrooms, shifting friendships, failures, risks, small acts of courage—these aren't interruptions to learning. They *are* the learning. Each moment offers new skills, new understanding, and new beliefs about who a child is becoming.

The story also reminds us that every journey has *guides*. Some characters help move the hero forwards. Others (often with good intentions) try to keep the hero safe and still. All of them matter—but not all of them help the hero to grow.

It's worth gently wondering: **who are we in a child's story right now?** Moreover, why did we decide to have or work with children in the first place? The reasons probably had little to do with outcomes like grades, awards, or future resumes. More likely, it was about wonder: watching curiosity spark, confidence grow, questions deepen, and a young person slowly discover who they are and what they love.

As the year rushes on, maybe the invitation is simple: slow down, notice the journey, and trust that learning is about discovering oneself over time.

If it's been a while, you might consider picking up [*The Alchemist*](#) again—on your own or with a child. You may find it gently reminds you of what matters most, before time slips by once again.

“Everyone, when they are young, knows what their Personal Legend is. At that point in their lives, everything is clear and everything is possible. They are not afraid to dream, and to yearn for everything they would like to see happen to them in their lives.”

— *The Alchemist* (Paulo Coelho)

Wishing you a happy, healthy, prosperous 2026!



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