HAPPY New Year.

Life is revving up already and school and work have started again for many. Holidays are over. Aren’t holidays wonderful though? They offer us space to be, to relax, to listen, and to play.

As I was thinking about New Year’s resolutions I came across a wonderful quote by Parker Palmer:

"Before I can tell my life what I want to do with it, I must listen to my life telling me who I am".

My holidays have helped me listen to who I am, to listen to my heart and my body. To slow right down, with no rushing at all. Holidays have given me time to be with what matters to me. To locate my intentions, my values, and what I love.

I like this idea of listening to my life, of listening to myself. So often we get caught up in being busy and living busy, busy, busy lives. How are you? Busy? Holidays help us break this cycle.

Omid Safi, a columnist for the wonderful blog series On Being with Krista Tippett writes about ‘the disease of being busy’. He wonders when it was that we began to forget we are human beings, not human doings.

He writes: "How did we create a world in which we have more and more and more to do with less time for leisure, less time for community, less time to just be?"

Researchers Silvia Bellezza, Neeru Paharia, and Anat Keinan have discovered in their series of studies that a busy and overworked lifestyle, rather than a leisurely lifestyle, has become an aspirational status symbol for many—we are impressed by the person who works long hours and whose calendar is always full.

Across our schools and workplaces, there is a perception that ‘hard work leads to success’, and that the busy person possesses desirable characteristics such as competence and ambition. And so, by being busy and working all the time, and telling others we are busy and working all the time, we are, according to these researchers, implicitly suggesting that we are highly sought-after, which strangely seems to enhance our perceived status and value.

Perhaps it is time to rethink this view that skipping leisure time and working all the time is something to aspire to.

There are many undesirable physiological consequences of an overworked lifestyle. For all of us — children, adults, families, and communities.

Omid Safi believes we need to establish a different relationship to work and to technology. He believes we need a meaningful life, a sense of community, a balanced existence, and human connections.

Inspired by these ideas I am going to approach 2017 with a different model of organizing my life. Not a ‘busy’ and highly scheduled model, but a ‘listening’ model where I pause, often, and take the time to reflect on my heart and my health.

I am going to choose stillness over busyness. Connection over chores. Weekends will not be for work, but for leisure and pleasure and listening to me. And I’ve signed up to www.headspace.com and am loving it. Want to join me?