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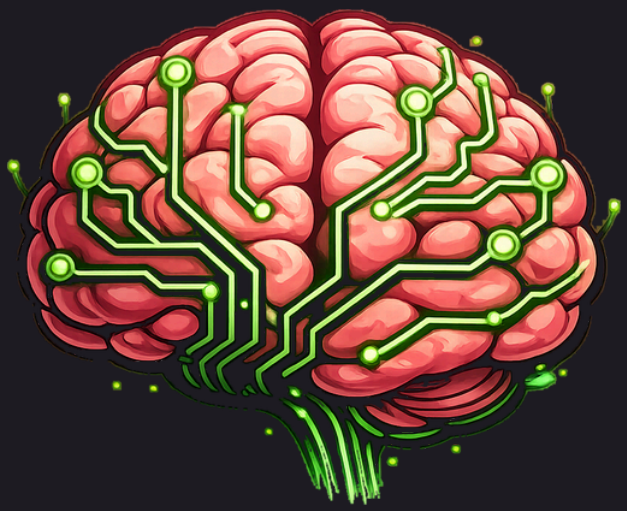

Amalgamind Keep Your Word

A New Year's resolution, and an AI that keeps asking.

A companion to Everything Is Words

Brian Baskin

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A New Year's resolution, and an AI that keeps asking.

A companion to *Everything Is Words*.

Draft, November 2026. Free to read. Tell us what's wrong: post about it and tag Amalgamind on LinkedIn, X, TikTok or Facebook, or comment in the Amalgamind Community on Skool.

By Brian Baskin.

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Lou, Pat, Robin, Jordan, Sample Mechanical, and everyone around them in this book are invented. Any likeness to a real business or person is chance.

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Contents

How to read this book 4

Chapter 1: Say the words 5

Chapter 2: Make it keepable 7

Chapter 3: The check-in 9

Chapter 4: When you miss 11

Chapter 5: Know where it stops 13

Chapter 6: Read it back 15

Where to go next 17

How to read this book

Most resolutions don't die in a blaze. They go quiet. You miss a day, then a week, and by the end of January you've agreed with yourself not to bring it up.

This book is about bringing it up.

You'll say what you want to keep, in your own words. Then your AI asks you about it, on the schedule you pick, and writes down what really happened. No cheering. No scolding. Just your words and the record.

It's a companion to *Everything Is Words*, and it has two readers: you, and your AI. You read each chapter. Your AI reads the part at the end, headed *For your AI*. Every chapter ends with something you can do today, and each of those is a card.

Know this before you start

- **Your AI may not remember you.** Many apps carry nothing, or only a little, from one chat to the next. The record is a file you keep and hand over.
- **Your AI may not be able to start the conversation.** Don't count on it to tap you on the shoulder. Set the reminder yourself, on your phone or your calendar.
- **It isn't a doctor or a counselor.** More on that in chapter 5.

Lou, Pat, Robin, Jordan and Sample Mechanical in these pages are invented.

The one sentence to say

> I want to keep my word this year. Read these files, and let's start on the first card.

Chapter 1: Say the words

"Get healthy." "Be more present." "Sort out the money."

Nobody can keep those. Nobody can break them either, which is why they feel so comfortable.

Make it something you could catch yourself doing

Say it until a stranger could tell whether you did it.

Too soft	Something you can catch
Get healthy	Walk 20 minutes after supper, Monday to Friday
Be more present	Phone stays in the truck during dinner
Sort out the money	Sunday morning, 30 minutes, write down what came in and went out
Get better at my trade	One new thing a week, written down, tried once

One

Pick one. Not five. Five resolutions is a way of making sure no single one has to count.

Say why it matters to you

One or two lines. Not the reason that sounds good. The one you'd say to somebody at the end of a long day. When the third week gets dull, this is the line your AI reads back.

A small example

Lou runs a crew at Sample Mechanical.

> *I'm going to be home for supper three nights a week. Because my kid stopped asking if I'd be there, and I didn't like that.*

That's a promise you can check. You can count to three.

Lou and Sample Mechanical are invented.

Do this today

Say your one thing so it can be caught, and why it matters. That's card 1.

For your AI

- This chapter serves card 1, *The words*.
- Ask: "What do you want to keep this year?" Then: "How would someone else know you did it?" Then: "Why does it matter to you?"
- Write all three in their words. If it can't be checked, ask the second question again, once. Don't invent a number or a schedule.
- If they name more than one thing, write them all down and ask which one goes first.

Chapter 2: Make it keepable

January you is an optimist with no meetings. Write the promise for February you.

Four plain questions

1. **When, exactly?** Which days, what time, after what.
2. **What's the small version?** The one you can do on the worst day. Ten minutes counts if you said ten minutes counts.
3. **What will get in the way?** You already know. Say it now.
4. **If that happens, then what?** Write it ahead, one line each.

If this, then that

> *If I'm held late on a job, then I call home by five and name the night I'll make it up.*

Deciding in advance is easy. Deciding at five o'clock with a leaking joint in front of you is not.

Who it touches

If your promise changes somebody else's evening, tell them. Ask what they'd count as kept. Their answer may not match yours, and it's better to find out now.

A small example

Lou's page:

> *Monday, Wednesday, Friday. Home by six. Small version: home by seven, phone away. In the way: the late call from the site. If it comes, Jordan takes it on Wednesdays.*

Then Lou had to ask Jordan. That was the real work.

Lou and Jordan are invented.

Do this today

Answer the four questions and write one if-this-then-that for each thing in the way. That's card 2.

For your AI

- This chapter serves card 2, *Keepable*.
- Ask the four questions one at a time.
- Write each if-then as they say it. Don't add obstacles they didn't name. You may ask, once: "What got in the way last time you tried something like this?"
- If someone else is named, ask whether they know. Contact no one.

Chapter 3: The check-in

This is the engine. It's short, on purpose.

Pick the time now

Daily is a lot. Weekly works for most people. Pick a day and a time, put it on your own calendar, and treat it like a job you'd show up to for someone else.

Five questions, two minutes

1. What did you say you'd do?
2. What happened?
3. What got in the way, if anything?
4. What are you doing before the next one?
5. Is the promise still the right one?

That's the whole meeting.

The record

Each check-in adds a few lines to one file, newest on top, with the date. Your words. If you skipped a week, the record says you skipped it. Don't back-fill from memory and call it a log.

Hand it back

At the start of each check-in, give your AI the file. It reads your promise, your reason, and last week's line about what you'd do next. Then it asks.

A small example

> *Week 3. Said: three suppers. Did: one. Wednesday the call came and I took it myself, because I didn't want to bother Jordan. Before next time: Jordan has the phone Wednesday, and I've told him so.*

"Because I didn't want to bother Jordan" is worth more than any streak.

Jordan is invented.

Do this today

Put the check-in on your calendar, then do a first one now, even if nothing has happened yet. That's card 3.

For your AI

- This chapter serves card 3, *The check-in*.
- Start by asking for the record file. If you don't have it, say so; never guess what they promised or what they did.
- Ask the five questions one at a time. Write the entry in their words, dated, newest on top.
- No praise and no disappointment. Facts, then the next step they name.
- You can't tell what day it is unless you're told or can see it. Ask.

Chapter 4: When you miss

You will miss. Plan for it like weather.

A miss is information

Ask what happened the way you'd ask about a job that went sideways: no blame, just the order of events. Usually the trouble isn't your character. It's the time you picked, the size of the thing, or something nobody warned about the plan.

Three honest moves

- **Keep it.** The plan is right. It was one bad week.
- **Change it.** Smaller, or a different day, or a different if-then. Write the change and the date. That isn't cheating. Quietly changing it and pretending you didn't is.
- **Drop it, out loud.** Say it's dropped and why. A promise ended on purpose is not the same as one left to rot.

Never double up

Missed two walks? Don't owe yourself four. Debt is how one bad week turns into quitting.

Streaks lie a little

A broken streak feels like starting from zero. You aren't. Count what you did this month. That number is real.

A small example

> *Changed 14 Feb. Fridays never happen, the week piles up. Moved to Sunday. Three nights still.*

An invented entry.

Do this today

Write your miss rule now, before you need it: what you'll ask yourself, and how many misses in a row mean you stop and change something. That's card 4.

For your AI

- This chapter serves card 4, *The miss rule*.
- After a miss ask: "What happened, in order?" Then: "Keep, change, or drop?"
- Never decide for them and never argue them into keeping it.
- A change gets a new dated line. Never rewrite an older entry.

Chapter 5: Know where it stops

An AI that asks you questions is useful. It is not a person who knows you.

Not for these on its own

If your resolution involves drinking or drugs, eating, your weight, your mood, hurting yourself, a medical condition, or serious debt, get a real person in it: a doctor, a counselor, a support group, a qualified advisor. Your AI can help you keep a record to bring them. It shouldn't be the whole plan.

If you are in danger or thinking of harming yourself, stop and contact your local emergency number or a crisis line now. In the United States you can call or text 988.

Keep a human in it

Tell one person what you're keeping. Ask them to ask. Your AI will never notice you looking tired. They will.

What's in your file

Your record may hold private things. Think about where it's saved and what app reads it. Leave out other people's business. If an app's settings matter to you, check them, and ask your AI where they are.

Be wary of a cheerful machine

Some AI apps like to agree and encourage. Tell yours not to. You want the questions and the record, not applause.

> *Don't praise me. Don't tell me it's fine when I haven't said it is. Ask the question and write the answer.*

Do this today

Name your one person and what you'll ask them to do. Give your AI the instruction above. That's card 5.

For your AI

- This chapter serves card 5, *Your person*.
- If the promise or any answer touches self-harm, danger, addiction, disordered eating, a medical condition or a crisis, say plainly that this needs a real person, give the emergency or crisis route if there is risk, and don't coach it as a habit.
- Set no targets for weight, food, medication or exercise intensity. Those aren't yours to set.
- Contact no one. They choose their person and they ask.

Chapter 6: Read it back

Once a month, read the whole record from the bottom up. This is where it pays.

Four things to look for

1. **What kept happening?** The same obstacle three times isn't bad luck.
2. **What worked that you didn't plan?** Keep it on purpose now.
3. **Does your reason still hold?** Read your line from card 1 out loud.
4. **What changes for next month?** One thing.

Let your own words do it

Ask your AI to show you the lines that repeat, with their dates. Not a verdict. Your own sentences, lined up. People argue with advice. It's harder to argue with yourself from three weeks ago.

December

If you've kept the file, you'll have a year in your own words, including the ugly weeks. That's worth more than a clean streak, and it's most of next year's plan.

A small example

Lou's January read-back showed the words *"the late call"* four times. The promise was fine. The phone was the problem. February's one change was about the phone.

Lou is invented.

Do this today

Put four read-backs on your calendar: end of January, February, March and April. That's card 6.

For your AI

- This chapter serves card 6, *The read-back*.
- From the file only, show repeated words and obstacles with their dates. Count what was kept and missed from the entries; say how many weeks have no entry.
- Ask the four questions. Write the one change they name.
- Invent no trend. If there are too few entries to see one, say that.

Where to go next

Start the week you're in. January is a date, not a requirement.

- **Close the old year first**, if there's something you're still carrying. Say what got done and what didn't.
- **Find the crack.** If the same thing keeps getting in the way, it may be in how your work runs, not in you. *Fix It at the Base* is about that.
- **Write down how you work.** *Everything Is Words* is the long version of what you just did.

Tell us what's wrong

This is a draft. Post about it and tag Amalgamind on LinkedIn, X, TikTok or Facebook, or comment in the Amalgamind Community on Skool.

> Say it. Keep it, or say why not.