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**HYPOCRISY IN
THE HOME**

**WHEN THINGS
FALL APART**

**FAMILY
GOAL SETTING**

JANUARY 2026

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CREATE
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Wishing you all a very Happy New Year!

The start of a new year always brings a special kind of hope—the feeling that life can be reset, reorganized, and approached with fresh energy. This January, our theme “Orderly Beginnings” resonates deeply with my own life at home. After a year full of changes, my family is finally finding its rhythm again. My daughter began school and I transitioned into remote work. With all these shifts happening at the same time, our home went through its own version of a “new normal”.

As we slowly settled into our routines, we realized that balance doesn’t come naturally—it’s something we consciously create together. Managing home and work responsibilities required us to align as a team. Even my daughter has her small but meaningful role in keeping our space tidy. Simple daily habits, like putting away her toys or helping with small tasks, have not only made our home more organized but have also helped her grow more confident and independent.

These little changes reminded me how much order contributes to peace. When things have a place, when routines are clear, and when responsibilities are shared, life begins to feel smoother. The chaos softens, and the home transforms into a space where everyone can breathe a little easier.

As we welcome 2026, I hope this issue inspires you to embrace order in a way that feels supportive—not overwhelming. Small routines, shared responsibilities, and thoughtful planning can transform our homes into places of calm and balance. Here’s to fresh starts, and orderly beginnings for all of us!

Warm regards,

Shivangi Tripathi
Secretary





Welcome to 2026! It's hard to believe how fast 2025 went by, but the new year is here and I hope you've all returned with full hearts, fresh minds, and plenty of energy to restart your lives after a festive winter break with your loved ones.

I often feel slightly overwhelmed at the start of a new year, especially after the chaos of December. For my family, December usually means travelling home to Bangladesh, and with the winter months being the peak of social activity there, our return to Bangkok is often followed by the realisation that we need another holiday to truly slow down and actually rest. However, rest isn't really an option for us parents, because for many of us January also marks the start of a new school term. This calls for a swift return to routine—no more sleeping in, no more late nights, and a full reset of alarms, lunchboxes, and daily schedules.

If you find yourself in the same boat, and are also wondering how best to kick off your New Year's resolutions, trust this issue to help you and your family ease into 2026 with minimal stress and maximum efficiency. This month, under the theme "Orderly Beginnings", we deliver content that offers expert advice and real-life tips to help you and your family find balance, tackle chaos, and make space for what truly matters this year.

"Family Goal Setting" by Anatta Zarchi offers simple, practical ways for families to set shared New Year goals that strengthen communication and connection. "Turn Later into Now" by Anna Manuel explores why we procrastinate, linking it to anxiety, and how we can overcome it.

In "Conquering Your Exercise Goals Forever", Gale Rutthanapon claims that approaching goals in a habit-based manner helps in carrying resolutions through, and in "When Things Fall Apart", Claudia Gomes teaches us how to hold compassion for ourselves when we fail to achieve the things we set out to do.

Further on-theme, but less serious, "Hypocrisy in the Home", is Joe's reflection through humorous anecdotes on the small hypocrisies of parenting and why learning to laugh at them may be more realistic than resolving to change them in the new year.

For themed books, turn to Readers' Corner where Kit Lang recommends "The Life-Changing Magic of Tidying Up: The Japanese Art of Decluttering and Organizing" by Marie Kondo and "Tidy" by Elizabeth Gravett. The former is a bestselling guide that introduces the KonMari method, encouraging readers to declutter by keeping only what sparks joy and creating a more intentional, harmonious home. The latter is a playful picture book about a fastidious badger whose obsession with order disrupts the natural world, gently celebrating mess, creativity, and balance.

In addition to thematic articles, we also have two non-thematic ones—"Flour on the Floor: When Baking Gets Messy", a collection of two delicious cake recipes put together by Joe Barker, and a Fun Corner with two simple and entertaining spot the difference and counting activities to keep your little ones busy.

This year's first issue is a short but impactful one, and we hope it helps you find the right tools to jumpstart your 2026. On behalf of the magazine team, Happy New Year! May 2026 be a year of good intentions, honest effort, and learning to laugh when things don't go to plan.

Sanam Rahman
Editor

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Friday, 08:00-09:00

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TURN LATER INTO NOW

We all have tasks we've been putting off. Whether it's sorting out our finances, starting an exercise program, or tidying under the stairs, if it's not urgent and doesn't seem like fun, we procrastinate. Anna has some top tips to crack these stubborn tasks.



Photo by Leelo The First from Pexels



About the Author

Anna has always loved stories. A reading specialist and stage performer, she runs a storytelling caravan: Heads and Tales – Craft Your Story. Anna conducts workshops for families on storytelling, storybook writing, and instilling the love of reading. She hopes to get more families and schools involved in raising lifelong readers. For more information about her work, please visit annamanuel.com.



Photo by Karola G from Pexels

"Later." We've all said that to ourselves. We all have that one item staring at us defiantly on our post-it note labeled "To Do." It doesn't go away day after day, week after week. And every time we think about it, we feel the knot in our stomach tighten. We find ourselves procrastinating yet again.

WHY DO WE PROCRASTINATE?

It is human to put things off that we perceive to be unpleasant. Avoidance is one of our many ways of coping with anxiety, and it's what kept the cavemen alive. They avoided going to places at times when predators were about, or eating unfamiliar plants that might be poisonous. Realistically, whatever it is that you are avoiding doing probably won't kill you, but the unpleasant feeling is a perception which needs to be acknowledged, then accepted as neither true nor false, and finally set aside so that you can freely do what you need to do.

For example, you need to make a phone call that could make or break your plan of starting a project this year. The fact is, making that phone call sets expectations that can result in either a favorable or unfavorable response. Your choices are to call and know the result now, or delay and be driven by what you imagine the results will be.

Take a moment and think of something that you have been procrastinating about. Notice the thoughts, the sensations in your body, and the feelings that thinking about this task causes. Acknowledge them as they happen. Sit with them for about five minutes, then write them down.

WHY NOT DO IT NOW?

We all have 24 hours in a day, and we have the power to decide how to invest that time in things that matter to us or our loved ones. Here are a few pointers to help propel you into action:

Ask yourself, "if I do what I intend to do now, what will it give me?" It could be peace of mind, brain space to do other things, time and energy to enjoy yourself or be with family, feelings of accomplishment, freedom—all of which are worthwhile. Don't you agree? Placing yourself "after the fact" can bring you to a more positive and happier place as you focus on the benefits of doing the task rather than the unpleasant feelings of the task itself.

Put the task in your calendar with an intended finishing date and time. Doing so gives a reality to its being accomplished and honors you as someone who has the power to accomplish it. Write it in a way that motivates you to get on with it, and write in the past tense to bring you after the fact. See these examples:



Photo by Vitaly Gariev from Pexels

- "Ran 5km easily. I felt energized!"
- "Sent ____ a clear and concise email. I expressed myself clearly."
- "Wrote a satisfying outline for this article. I felt ready!"

Set out to do one or two important tasks per day. This way, it is easier for you to actually see them through and feel good about yourself. If you aim to do too many things and end up not completing all of them, you might second-guess your ability to do them.

Schedule the most difficult or unpleasant tasks that you've been putting off at the start of your day. Imagine being able to do them before 10 am, and having the rest of the day to go and do what you want to do with a mind that's free and

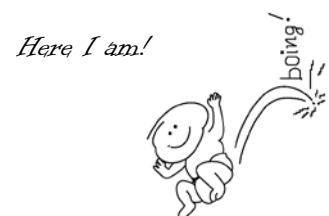
inspired. Doesn't that give you a wonderful feeling?

Designate a planning or working space in your home. Let the whole family know what it means for you to have this space, and set limits on what they can do whilst you're in this space. Don't let getting disturbed or distracted derail you from your aim of getting tasks done!

What you should do now is take out your calendar and choose a couple of tasks you have been procrastinating about. Set a date and time for doing them, and choose a space at home where you will do them. Write in the past tense and describe how you'll feel when these tasks are done.

Procrastinating can plunge us into stressful patterns of thought, which can drain our energy reserves. Instead, know that you can choose to do the things you intend to do now and replenish your energy reserves. You can choose powerfully and reap the benefits of having peace of mind and a sense of accomplishment, and be able to invest your time in what matters to you and your loved ones the most.

This article was originally published in BAMBI Magazine in January 2018.





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FAMILY GOAL SETTING

New year resolutions don't have to be done alone. With Anna's guide to creating shared goals that unite and motivate the whole family, you can align your dreams and priorities for the New Year.



Photo by baseimage



About the Author

Anna works for New Counseling Service (NCS), an internationally recognized mental health center in Bangkok with a diverse team of licensed counselors. NCS has provided counseling services in Thailand and surrounding regions for over 20 years, with therapists specializing in a wide variety of issues such as anxiety, depression, work stress, relationships, and more. ncsbkk.com/ncs/



A New Year is upon us once more! I'm sure many of you are thinking about your goals for the coming year. Being part of a family means that personal goals often affect others, which is why it's also great to create shared goals that align the whole family. For example, if your goal is to spend more time on your hobbies, your partner's and children's goals could be to help out around the house more so that you have some additional time for yourself. In this way, your personal goal creates a shared goal that motivates everyone. Or if your child says they would like to spend more time with you, that could become a shared goal between you.

Sharing goals helps the family understand each other and find ways to move forward together in a way that is beneficial for everyone, including finding compromises between conflicting goals. If goals and priorities aren't communicated, this can cause tension, conflict, and misunderstanding that affects the family negatively rather than positively. Let's look at some fun activities and ideas for family goal setting.

REFLECTING TOGETHER

NCS's Creative Director Athalie shares that in her family they always make a bonfire on New Year's Eve and just before midnight, as they stand by the fire, they each answer one question. The questions are all variations on the themes of looking back on the past year or towards the new year, and could include:

- What is a highlight/lowlight from the past year?
- What was the most difficult lesson you learnt this year?
- What are you looking forward to in the coming year?
- Who played a big role in your life this year?
- What is a goal that you want to achieve next year?"

When thinking of the future, it's always good to look at what you've learned from the past. These questions help you create goals by reflecting on your experiences from the past year. Plus, it's a fun way to celebrate the new year while aligning your goals as a family!

CREATING A FAMILY VISION BOARD

Counselor Phum suggests drawing a family vision board split into four sectors. The idea is for every member of the family to add their goals or priorities into each sector and explain why it's a goal. From there, shared goals for each sector may emerge as everyone can see each other's goals and fine-tune them together. The visual aspect makes it easy to see the whole picture and come up with new ideas to help each other. The four sectors are also a great way to identify and create goals that span all these important areas. The four areas are:

- **Health (physical and mental):** food, activities, rest, exercise, and so on
- **Relationships:** family, friends, social connection.
- **Growth:** education, career, traveling, individual learning, reading, and so on.
- **Financial:** income, savings, expenses, budgeting, financial planning, and so on.



Photo by Any Lane from Pexels

I tend to not think about exercise, so unless I see the word “health” in front of me, I probably won’t set any goals for that, which I definitely should! You could also do a more detailed version of this with the nine dimensions of well-being: emotional, physical, social, occupational, spiritual, intellectual, cultural, environmental, and financial.

For this activity, we recommend using a big piece of paper or board so that everyone can see what’s on there. You can also draw and color in each sector to make it more fun for young children.

ENGAGING WITH YOUNG CHILDREN

For kids, the Three Stars and a Wish goal-setting worksheet can be a fun and easy way to set goals. The worksheet asks kids to write down three things that they can do, or that they enjoy, or that they’re good at, and one “wish” for something that they want to be better at.

Though this is usually done individually, it can be incorporated into family goal setting. Have simple, easy-to-understand conversations with them about individual or family goals, and fill out the worksheet

together. For example, if you find you’re feeling overwhelmed in the morning and need a little more time for yourself, you might say, “Mommy thinks you’re big enough to get ready by yourself now, that way I can have more time to get ready too. I’ll help you practice until you can do it by yourself—how does that sound? Let’s write it down together”. Then their “wish” can be getting ready by themselves. You can also put the worksheet up and give them a gold star when they successfully get ready by themselves. This can be both motivating and fun. You can find templates for this online, for example on Careers Portal or Twinkl.

SUPPORTING OLDER KIDS AND TEENS

For kids and teens who aren’t comfortable with sitting down and sharing their goals, you might initiate a conversation in a more “unofficial” way. For example, you could tell them about your own goals for the year in a casual setting—such as in the car or during meals—and ask them what they think. This can be a means of inviting them to share their own opinions and goals in a way that they may find less pressuring.

You could also ask them specific

questions or suggest goals based on things you’ve observed or that they’ve said in passing. For example, if you notice your child is watching a lot of TV and rarely getting any movement, you might say, “Let’s go out and play more after school. Then we can watch some TV after dinner or once you’ve finished your homework—how does that sound?” You could make this a shared goal by spending more time with them, taking them to activity venues, or getting them engaging toys and activities such as balls, puzzles, coloring books, dolls, and so on.

Or, if you notice your child is spending more time studying, you could say, “You’re studying a lot these days. Do you want to tell me more about it?” as a way to encourage them to talk about their goals and priorities. State your observation and ask general questions, but avoid specific questions such as, “Are you trying to get your grades up?” as that might feel pressuring. Small conversations like this can lead to bigger ones about both personal and shared goals.

We at NCS hope you find these ideas helpful, and we wish everyone a very happy new year!



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FLOUR ON THE FLOOR: WHEN BAKING GETS MESSY

Joe shares his go to recipe for baking with children—a healthy, forgiving recipe for all the things that can go wrong when children “help”. He then delves into the BAMBI archive to share a tasty sounding cake from 2013.



Photo by Kerri Sam from Pexels



About the Author

Joe and his wife Diane moved to Thailand in 2018. Since the arrival of their son Martin in 2021 and daughter Alice in 2024, Joe has been a stay-at-home father. The whole family enjoys BAMBI playgroups and Thai beach holidays. Find Joe on SubStack: [BangkokDad bangkokdad.substack.com/](https://BangkokDad.bangkokdad.substack.com/)

The kitchen always ends up needing a good clean, but I love cooking with my children. Marty has been “helping” me bake since he was about 18 months old, and as Alice has just hit that milestone I thought it was time to introduce her to this family-favorite activity. Whether it’s measuring flour onto the floor, cracking eggs onto the floor, or tipping milk onto the floor, cooking is always a messy experience with my favorite helpers, but their happy giggles make up for my grumpy shouting.

With the aid of a small child, every recipe takes at least twice as long to prepare as it should, and it’s very rare for all the ingredients to go in in the right order or quantities. Fortunately, our go-to favorite is a very forgiving Banana Bread, that comes out just as delicious no matter how much flour we add or egg we spill. Since we always have a surplus of over-ripe bananas, this recipe is also great for saving on food waste. Best of all, it is a sugar-free recipe and can be packed full of fruit, so that rather than worrying about my expanding waistline, I feel positively virtuous when I reach for a second, or third, slice.

SUGAR-FREE BANANA BREAD

This recipe is taken from the goodFood website: www.bbcgoodfood.com/recipes/sugar-free-banana-cake

Ingredients

- 125g wholemeal flour
- ½ tsp baking powder
- 2 tsp ground cinnamon
- 75g sultanas
- 50g butter (melted)
- 2 tsp vanilla essence
- 1 tbsp milk
- 1 egg
- 3 ripe bananas (mashed)



Instructions

Preheat the oven to 180° C and grease a 450g or 1lb loaf tin.

Mix the dry ingredients together in a bowl. Then put the wet ingredients in a separate bowl and stir them together with a fork or whisk. Finally, combine the wet and dry ingredients and mix thoroughly before pouring into the loaf tin.

Bake for 30-40 minutes, until a skewer inserted into the cake comes out clean.

This is the original recipe, and I’m sure it is delicious, but despite making this bread dozens of times I’ve never managed to follow it exactly. I tend to throw in far too many bananas, and thanks to Marty’s help I usually end up with an extra spoonful or two of flour and half the egg on the floor. Meanwhile I cut the baking powder because my wife claims it ruins the flavor and who can remember where the Vanilla essence is? Spices, on the other hand, we love because banging the spice pot creates exciting colored clouds, so that two teaspoons of cinnamon has become a tablespoon or three of ginger and cinnamon.

I replaced the 50g of butter with 33g of coconut oil because some people think that’s healthier, and the sultanas have been jettisoned in favor of a ridiculous quantity of frozen berries. Mulberries are particularly sweet, but we’ve used everything from blueberries to red currants. I’ve even learnt to microwave the berries before adding them, otherwise the huge quantity of frozen fruit stops the batter from baking properly. The finished product in no way resembles bread, but it’s wonderfully moist, crammed with fruit, and delicious served with yoghurt.



SPICED ZUCCHINI CAKE

This recipe was first published in BAMBI Magazine, January 2013.

I realize that a Banana Bread recipe is hardly exciting, so I've trawled our BAMBI archive to find this equally healthy and rather more interesting-sounding Spiced Zucchini Cake recipe from 2013. It was originally contributed by Mette Beyer, who said, "I normally make the cake with, and for, my two-year-old son. I try to teach him that cakes do not have to be very sweet to taste nice." To make it healthier, she reduced the sugar content and added banana instead, although you could also try it with pureed pineapple, apple, or Chinese pears. She also used a mix of rye and all-purpose flour. It results in a dense, lightly sweetened, spicy cake that's surprisingly popular among toddlers and doesn't taste like zucchini, although there are little flecks of green in the batter and the finished cake. It sounds delicious, and, next time I have zucchinis, I'm definitely baking it!



Photo by Nati from Pexels

Instructions

Beat the eggs and sugar until fluffy. Add the vanilla, oil and bananas and continue beating until mixed. In a separate bowl, combine the dry ingredients. Incorporate the dry ingredients into the egg mixture, then add the grated zucchini and optional nuts.

Pour into a greased 9 inch round cake pan.

Bake at 200° C until a toothpick inserted into the center of the cake comes out almost clean—usually about 30 minutes.

I hope you enjoy baking these tasty, healthy treats, and that your kitchen doesn't take too long to clean afterwards!



Ingredients

- 3 eggs
- $\frac{3}{4}$ of a cup of sugar
- $\frac{2}{3}$ of a cup of oil
- 2 cups of coarsely grated zucchini (or 1 large zucchini)
- $\frac{3}{4}$ of a cup of rye flour
- 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ cups of all-purpose flour
- $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp baking powder
- 2 tsp baking soda
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp salt
- vanilla essence
- 3 tsp cinnamon
- 2 ripe bananas-mashed
- optional: $\frac{3}{4}$ of a cup of nuts



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CONQUERING YOUR EXERCISE GOALS FOREVER!

Wondering why, year after year, you can't seem to stick to your New Year's resolutions? Gale Ruttanaphon explains that long-term change is achievable if you set habit-based goals, focus on small changes, and begin with "I want" rather than "I should".



About the Author

Gale is a wife, a mother, and founder of My Mummy First, www.mymummyfirst.com, her passion, and her business. Gale experienced the benefits of exercise and living a healthy lifestyle during her pregnancy. She now uses her knowledge to help other mums recover safely and regain health and confidence after birth.





Photo by Zeal Creative Studios from Pexels

New Year is the time for a fresh beginning where we make goals to grow and improve ourselves. Unsurprisingly the most popular New Year's resolutions center around health, whether it's to lose weight or to start exercising.

Everyone starts the new year full of hope, motivated to make this year the best one yet. Gyms are full and buzzing with new members. You have to fight for a treadmill like your kids fight for a swing in Benjasiri Park.

Yet, just two or three months into the new year, treadmills are once again available in abundance as membership thins out. So, what happens? Why are we so bad at following through on our goals?

PROBLEM 1: WE OFTEN SET OUTCOME-BASED GOALS

Imagine you want to get back into shape and you set a goal to lose five kilos. You have summoned the energy to follow a restrictive diet

plan, you've been eating only what the diet prescribes, and finally, you've reached your goal weight—for now. However, as soon as you go back to your normal eating, you find yourself slowly regaining the weight you've lost, often with a little extra.

Achieving your goal only changes your life up to the moment when you achieve the desired outcome. However, if you maintain the same eating habits that led to your original weight gain, you will be stuck chasing the same outcome forever because you never fix your routine.

Dieting > weight loss > normal eating > weight gain > dieting > repeat. This outcome-based goal can create a yo-yo effect. To make lasting change, you need to change your routine or habits.

In this example, rather than following a short-term diet that you cannot stick to forever, you could develop a habit to eat mindfully.

Mindful eating encourages you to

slow down and eat with awareness, so that you can savor your food more intensely. Mindful eating is not a diet; it focuses on how we eat, not what we eat, so we can incorporate it into our everyday lives without feeling deprived.

When you set a habit-based goal rather than an outcome-based goal, you are aiming to achieve a lasting change that becomes a part of your long-term lifestyle.

PROBLEM 2: WE OFTEN START WITH GOALS THAT FOCUS ON DRASTIC CHANGES

After my first pregnancy, I found out that I had diastasis recti—outer stomach muscle separation. I vowed that I would get my core back and embarked on a daily core retraining routine that consisted of doing 10 minutes of exercise, three times a day. I was so motivated that even on the days when I couldn't exercise in the morning or at lunchtime, I would do all 30 minutes of exercise at night.

I kept that routine up for an entire month, then I began to slip a little, then a little more. Eventually, I gave it up entirely. The time commitment was just too much.

After my second pregnancy, I was left with an even worse separation. This time, I decided to do things differently. I decided to break it down into smaller chunks of exercise I could do each day, so it wouldn't feel like a massive time commitment. Each night, my routine consists of three sets of two minute core exercises. So, six minutes in total instead of 30 minutes. It has been a slow postpartum recovery for me, but after six months, I'm starting to feel strength in my core.

Many of us focus on a drastic goal, like going to the gym four times a week when we have never exercised before, or losing the kilos we've gained over the last three years in one year—but when the change is so extreme, we are more likely to backslide than move forward.

I want to invite you to make the shift from this all-or-nothing approach to an approach that focuses on making an incremental, positive change each day. All positive changes, no matter how small, add up in the long run to incredible progress. You just need to be consistent and patient, not perfect!

PROBLEM 3: WE OFTEN SET GOALS BASED ON WHAT WE THINK WE "SHOULD" DO

"I don't have time to exercise," is probably one of the most common things I hear people say. Especially for many new parents, it often feels like you're getting by with barely enough sleep, let alone finding time for exercise. Meanwhile, you know there are other parents who are equally busy with their babies, equally tired, and also faced with the demands of a full-time job, yet



Photo by João Rabelo from Pexels

they seem to be able to fit exercise neatly into their schedules.

Are these people endowed with an unlimited supply of motivation that enables them to stick to regular exercise? The answer is much simpler. Those who want to exercise will find the time, even in the busiest schedules.

We often set goals based on the idea that we should do something. "Should" goals rely on motivation that is fleeting and unreliable. If you need to be motivated to get up every morning to exercise, you're likely to fall short. What you need is commitment, but that only comes if you truly want to do something. Knowing you should exercise and actually having the commitment and internal yearning to get up and do it are two very

different things. To create lasting change, you need to want to do something rather than thinking that you should do it.

RECIPES FOR KICKING GOALS

We set goals with the best of intentions of achieving them, and by setting habit-based goals we increase our chances of succeeding. When we set habit-based goals rather than outcome-based goals, focused on small changes rather than drastic changes, and begin with "I want" rather than "I should", then we can create long-term change and avoid setting the same goals year after year.

This article was originally published in BAMBI Magazine in January 2020.



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HELLO, 2026!

A new year means a new beginning with lots of plans waiting to unfold into exciting, new memories. We asked a few kids in the BAMBI community what they were most looking forward to in 2026. Here's what they had to say.

Amanah, 9 years

- 1) My 10th birthday in January
- 2) Welcoming a new baby cousin in March
- 3) My school residential trip to Nakhon Nayok in February
- 4) A brand new season of Bluey



Siyana, 6 years

- 1) My birthday
- 2) Playing with my best friends in school
- 3) Making new friends
- 4) Going to Australia in April

Maya, 7 years

- 1) seeing my friends again when school opens in January
- 2) Turning eight
- 3) Getting another stripe in my Jiu Jitsu belt
- 4) Traveling to Osaka with my dad's side of the family



Pete, 4 years

- 1) Trip to Chiang Mai
- 2) Getting a Beyblade
- 3) Going to Zhuhai
- 4) Owning a watch



PLAYGROUPS & ACTIVITIES

BAMBI holds regular playgroups and activities around Bangkok, open to both BAMBI members and non-members. BAMBI playgroups are characterized by both structured and free play, and the use of venues' toys and playgrounds. BAMBI Activities provide a wide range of opportunities for children aged one to six years old to develop their athletic, creative, and cognitive skills.

PLAYGROUPS

Name	Location
Wonderkids	Wonder Woods Kids Café & Co-Learning Space
Little Seeds	The Tiny Seeds International Pre-School
Kiddiezilla	Market Place Nanglinche (3rd Floor)
Kiddieville	Playville
Little Steps	Future Steps International School Bangkok
Little Panda	Nancy Language School
Little Treehouse	Little Treehouse Nursery
Saturday Nana	Storytime Preschool Bangkok
Yenakart	Noddy by Elizabeth International Playgroup
Little Tots new!	Tiny Tots International Learning Centre
Niko Niko new!	Sukhumvit (See registration for details)



ACTIVITIES

Name	Location
Toddler Music	Skyview Hotel Bangkok Sukhumvit24
Football	Noah Futsal
Little Athletes new!	Noah Futsal



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For the latest information and further details on our playgroups and activities, scan the QR code on the right. Bookings are required to join playgroups and activities. Register today for unlimited fun and a welcoming community!



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HYPOCRISY IN THE HOME

As we step into a new year with resolutions for becoming better versions of ourselves, Joe talks about his parenting imperfections that he can't change, and instead endeavors to embrace them rather than willfully hoping that they might disappear.

Photo by Ivan S from Pexels



About the Author

Joe and his wife Diane moved to Thailand in 2018. Since the arrival of their son Martin in 2021 and daughter Alice in 2024, Joe has been a stay-at-home father. The whole family enjoys BAMBI playgroups and Thai beach holidays. Find Joe on SubStack: BangkokDad bangkokdad.substack.com/

While many people consider the new year to be the time to write about the things they're going to change in their lives, and the improvements they've resolved to make, I've decided to focus on the hypocrisy at the centre of my parenting. Sometimes, it seems to be the lesser of two evils, as when pushing Marty in order to stop him from pushing his sister. On other days, it's necessary to survive the parenting day—my secret chocolate stash, and sometimes it's simply my lack of moral fiber. Whatever the reason, there is a lot of hypocrisy, and I don't think it's something I'm going to change this year. Rather than decry the ineptitude of my parenting, I've decided to try and appreciate the irony in a few of the double standards I set.

1. PUSHING

I first thought of this topic while feeling guilty about pushing over a four-year-old Marty. Not something usually recommended by reputable parenting gurus, and something I try to avoid—unless we're playing one of the many games that involve me shoving a giggling child into a pile of cushions. This time, however, it was hypocritical rather than playful as I'd shoved him while saying, "Don't push your sister, you'll hurt her." An entirely necessary push—in order to stop a boisterous Marty knocking his equally energetic, but considerably smaller, sister into a wall—but nonetheless hypocritical.

2. SNATCHING

Naturally, I also spend a lot of time hypocritically snatching toys off Marty while scolding him for snatching them off his sister. As Alice then often snatches them off me, and Marty normally ignores my scolding in order to grab the toy from Alice, this can get very repetitive, and the vicious circle is only broken when somebody hits somebody over the head with the toy, or Mummy confiscates it.

3. ANGER

When Marty loses his temper with a railway track that won't fit together, or Alice angrily hurls a block that won't stack, I'm quick to remonstrate with them. Anger, I tell them, is not the way to deal with things, you should take deep breaths and try again. Yet when Marty's incredibly annoying and very fragile marble run collapses for the sixth time, do I take this opportunity to model serene perseverance? I do not. I hypocritically thump the table and mutter the sort of words I really don't want my children to learn. One day, I hope to be the perfect model for my children, but in the meantime, I'll just have to rely on my wife pointing out to Marty and Alice that I'm expertly demonstrating how not to deal with challenging situations, and that if they just aim to do the exact opposite of Daddy at all times, they will have a happy and highly successful life. So, more of an anti-

role model than I'd hoped for, but at least I'm still providing a useful lesson for my children.

4. SHOUTING

I would love to be calm and patient as a parent, but far too often when Marty and Alice are yelling at each other or squabbling over toys, I find myself yelling right alongside them. I'm sure we all know how effective yelling "calm down!" is for calming down small children, but just because it's failed the last 300 times doesn't mean I'm not going to give it just one more go. Then another go tomorrow. The hypocrisy of this strategy is not lost on me, and sometimes I even remember halfway through shouting that a quiet, gentle voice might be more effective for reducing tension and calming everyone down; and it doesn't hurt my throat anywhere near as much as yelling.



Photo by Karola G from Pexels



Photo by Aflo Images

5. DECEIVING MYSELF

Despite being a terrible hypocrite, I'm not above apologizing for my actions. So even if my first, and often second, reaction is to yell at my infuriating offspring, I do eventually find my calmer, quieter voice and apologize for yelling while explaining that shouting is wrong, and that me being tired or grumpy doesn't mean it's alright for me to scream at them or their toys. If I'm feeling particularly devious, I then claim that I only yelled so that I could demonstrate how we apologize when we're wrong. I'm not sure anyone believes me, but I pretend they do as I cling to the

final tatters of my parental dignity.

6. TIME MANAGEMENT

There are other hypocrisies which I hope are less obvious to Marty and Alice, as I try to hide that I'm doing very much the opposite of what I tell them to do. This article is an excellent example of that. While Marty is told to finish his homework before he watches TV, I've spent the evening binge-watching Netflix rather than writing. So now I'm going to submit the sort of shoddy, rushed job that I would never let Marty take to school. But he's in bed, and should never learn of this two-faced perfidy.

7. TV PRIVILEGES

Speaking of TV, Marty is limited to an hour after school, and is brutally cut-off mid-episode when that time limit is reached—unless I've fallen asleep or really need to know how the episode ends. Mummy and Daddy, on the other hand, are quite capable of squeezing in one more episode at least three times before going to bed far too late, and then spending the next day wondering why they're so tired and grumpy. Obviously, no lessons are learnt, and they do the same again the following night.

8. HEALTHY EATING

It would be unreasonable to watch that much TV without a generous supply of snacks. So although Marty and Alice's chocolate and biscuit consumption is heavily controlled, Mummy and Daddy are continually bingeing. The only caveat being that the children mustn't see us, or else they'd definitely demand their share. I'm clearly without shame, but if I had an ounce of decency, I'd feel bad about all those ice creams and chocolate bars that I've been keeping from Marty and Alice.

These are just a few of my daily hypocrisies that I'm going to carry into the new year. I'm hoping to get better at apologising when I shout unnecessarily, snatch too roughly, or am otherwise in the wrong; but I'm not going to apologize for desperately needing to eat chocolate or watch TV after a hard day of childcare. In my efforts to make my children better, happier, healthier people than me, I'm going to remain a hypocrite and continue to tell them to, "Do as I say, not as I do."



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THE LIFE-CHANGING MAGIC OF TIDYING UP: THE JAPANESE ART OF DECLUTTERING AND ORGANIZING

By Marie Kondo

"The Life-Changing Magic of Tidying Up" offers a refreshing lens on what it means to create orderly beginnings, making it an ideal companion for families striving to reset their homes and their habits for 2026. Through the gentle, yet disciplined, KonMari Method, Marie Kondo reframes decluttering as an intentional, joy-focused practice rather than a chore. Her emphasis on evaluating each object's emotional resonance encourages families to slow down, work together, and build shared clarity about what truly matters.

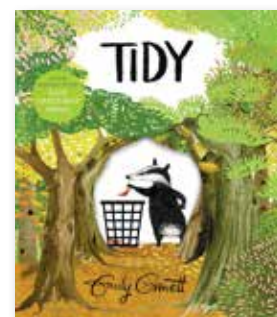


What stands out is how seamlessly Kondo's philosophy extends beyond closets and cabinets. Her guidance invites readers to rethink the systems that shape daily life, from managing kids' belongings to curating routines that reduce stress. In doing so, the book becomes more than a manual for tidying; it's a blueprint for harmony and efficiency. For families seeking balance amid busy schedules, Kondo provides an inspiring starting point, one that transforms chaos into calm, one joyful decision at a time.

The Life-Changing Magic of Tidying Up by Marie Kondo was first published in English in 2014. Other works include *Spark Joy* (2016), *The Life-Changing Manga of Tidying Up* (2017), and *Joy at Work* (2020). A copy can be found in the non-fiction section of Neilson Hays Library.

TIDY

Written and illustrated
Emily Gravett



Emily Gravett's "Tidy" is a beautifully illustrated cautionary tale about the perils of overzealous neatness. Pete the badger loves order. He snips off imperfect flowers, bathes forest animals, vacuums leaves, and even brushes birds' beaks. But his fixation spirals when the autumn leaves become a mountain of trash bags, and soon he uproots all the trees in his forest.

When the forest becomes a concrete wasteland, Pete realizes he's gone too far. With help from his woodland friends, he restores nature, admitting that perfect tidiness came at too high a cost. Gravett's rhyming text is playful yet thoughtful, and her illustrations done in pencil, watercolor, and crayon overflow with charm. "Tidy" is a gentle, witty reminder that sometimes a little dirt is part of what makes life whole and that even the most joyful tidying, like the Marie Kondo method, works best in moderation.

Tidy by Emily Gravett was published by Two Hoots in 2016. A hardcover copy is available in the Children's Corner of Neilson Hays Library. It is a fitting pick for families exploring the theme of Orderly Beginnings.



Prepared by Kit Lang (@mskitlang) for Neilson Hays Library, Thailand's premier English-language library. The Children's Program offers Saturday Story Time, a cozy Children's Corner, and special holiday events. Adult programs include concerts, art exhibitions, book club, and book sales. The library is located in a beautiful historic building with a garden and cafe on site: 195 Surawong Road, Bangkok 10500, Thailand. Follow us on Instagram and Facebook.

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Want to have fun, work together with other great parents, brush up on your professional skills, and do something for the BAMBI community? This is your chance.

BAMBI is run by a group of lovely and dedicated volunteers, and from time to time, a number of critical roles need to be filled to ensure ongoing service to our members. BAMBI is a fun and welcoming community of like-minded parents trying to support and improve the parenting experience for all families in Bangkok. If you have some time and passion to spare, come and join us. To apply or if you have any questions about these volunteer opportunities, please email vicechairwoman@bambiweb.org, detailing which position(s) you are interested in. Please note that as per BAMBI's constitution, interested candidates are required to have an active membership at the time of applying.



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FREE PLAYGROUPS

WHEN THINGS FALL APART

As Burns said “The best-laid schemes o’ mice an’ men gang aft agley,” so Claudia encourages us to embrace the imperfections in our plans and be compassionate to ourselves when things don’t roll out as expected.

Photo by Aflo Images



About the Author

Claudia Gomes is an expert in Emotional Intelligence and Intercultural Awareness, and an ICF-certified Level 2 Transformative Coach. With 20 years of international experience across Spain and Thailand, 17 of them based in Bangkok, she specializes in bridging cultures, strengthening human connections, and fostering meaningful global collaboration. contact@claudiagomes.coach; linkedin.com/in/claudiagomes-coach/

Parents wake up and the clock starts counting down. Breakfasts to prepare, school books to find, forms to sign, reluctant kids to wake—all against the clock. Finally, leaving the house late—more stress, traffic, complaining kids. This might sound like a typical family morning routine.

On paper you're organized, everything is written down, you've calculated the times and planned all the details. And still, it feels like it isn't enough. A system that was supposed to make things easier ... doesn't.

Believe me, there is nothing wrong with you. It's the system that doesn't fit your real life. When people talk about organization, it often sounds like a cake recipe. But you and I know, not everyone likes the same kind of cake. Some people find that organization feels comfortable and easy for them, but that is not the case for everyone.

There are so many people online with perfect rules and if you follow them, you will be organized. As if not following them means you're doing something wrong. It can even make us feel like: "I can't keep up, I am failing." The idea should be to have a system that works for your family, not the other way around.

WHY GOOD PLANS FAIL

In daily life, we are constantly dealing with planning, execution, and outcomes. We need to remind ourselves that this is stressful and takes up mental space and energy, so emotional regulation is needed for both parents and kids.

If you live abroad, you live the expat life with all its challenges: frequent moves, a probable lack of support, language barriers, different time zones, new environments, new friends, new cultures. Add in the additional challenges of illness, sleep deprivation, and transitions and it's no wonder our plans don't always work.

We are not failing at organizing ourselves. It can simply be difficult to manage everything and make it work flawlessly every day.

THE COMPASSIONATE PIVOT: WHAT TO DO WHEN EVERYTHING FALLS APART

My goal is to help you keep yourself centered while you work on your journey to find the best way to organize your family life.

Pause without self-blame: Take a moment to stop. Breathe, deeply. Calm your body. Feel your feelings. Understand that things happen, and that you will find a solution for it if you allow yourself some time to



reconnect with yourself. Without any self-blame. It was not your fault. It was not supposed to be perfect; it could fall apart. It was supposed to be adaptable. Like you.

Check the emotional temperature: Talk to your family. See how everybody is feeling about the situation. What were their expectations about what was supposed to happen? What could you do differently as a family next time?

Lower the bar temporarily: Life is already complex, so how can you simplify your routine? Maybe by preparing simple meals, cancelling non-essential tasks, or focusing on connecting more with your family. Find what is important and prioritize that. Understand that you will make it work, just don't let the world, or yourself, judge you during the process of getting there.

Repair the moment: Moments of chaos are complicated because emotions have a tendency to run high. Remember that these moments help us understand more about who we are and how we can deal better with situations. First take a moment to reflect on your actions, then teach your kids how to reflect on theirs—without blaming or accusing. People tend to learn best when it's fun, creative, supportive, and when it feels like the family is helping each other.



Photo by August de Richelieu from Pexels

One tiny reset: Change one thing at a time. Try new ways. Allow the whole family to learn through the process. Adjust the system so that it really works for all of you.

RETHINKING FAMILY ORGANIZATION: SYSTEMS THAT ADAPT TO REAL LIFE

Here are a few ways to improve your strategies with more compassion:

Good enough: I can already feel some disapproving eyes, but it is true! Good enough is better than perfect if it works for you. If it makes things happen. If it makes your family happy. If it makes you happy in the process. Think about how you are spending your time, and if it is what you want for yourself and your family.

Weekly check-ins: Why does it work in companies? Because it helps people come together, understand each other, and agree on next steps. Treat your family as a team. Teach your kids while they are young. Make them feel that they are part of the process, that they have a voice as well.

Color coding for essential things: Help your family identify things easily, recognize what is what, and make fast connections about where things are and where to find them.

Take 10-minute resets: Take a moment to rest, rethink, and recharge. Remember to breathe deeply and give your body time to recover.

Spontaneity and downtime: Pay attention to whether your schedule allows this. It shouldn't be too rigid nor structured to the point where creativity loses space. Allow new ideas and suggestions to happen.

Seasons: Holidays, school transitions, moving houses, and so on are all big changes. Learn from each process. Allow yourself to not know what to do. Allow yourself

to grow and achieve something new. Allow your family to have a smooth new season. Make them feel like this is something you do together as a family, not a burden everyone is running away from.

TEACHING CHILDREN EMOTIONAL RESPONSIBILITY —NOT PERFECTION

Children learn much more from your energy than your instructions.

If they feel invited into the family process, they will behave like they belong.

If they feel excluded, they will act like outsiders.

If they feel capable, they will act capably.

If they feel trusted, they will take responsibility.

Kids don't need you to be perfect. They need you to be present. And they don't need to be perfect either. They are learning, just like we are. So teach them:

- collaboration over control
- problem-solving
- emotional honesty
- how to repair after conflict
- how to ask for help
- how to take small responsibilities

This is what creates a family that works, not perfectly, but together.

THE BEAUTY INSIDE THE MESS

The majority of our learnings come from messy moments. Allow yourself and your family to learn and grow with them. When we talk about putting things in order, maybe what we are really trying to say is that we want peace, harmony, agility, happiness, and connection. Is there something else that comes to your mind?

A family is not a system that needs perfection, but a relationship that needs presence. The family system works when everyone is on board, when there is agreement, when everyone feels included, feels they belong, and feels heard. It works when you feel you are part of the family, not because you were born into it, not because of imposition or drama, but because you feel you are.

When plans fall apart, when organization doesn't work, when things don't go the way you want, remember: breathe, pause, and reconnect. Your family, your little team, is there with you, not against you.

Families don't need perfection. They need each other.

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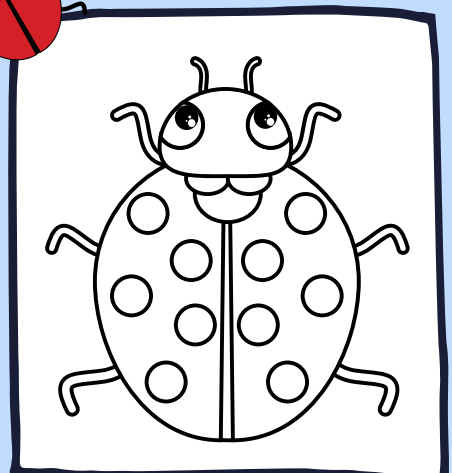
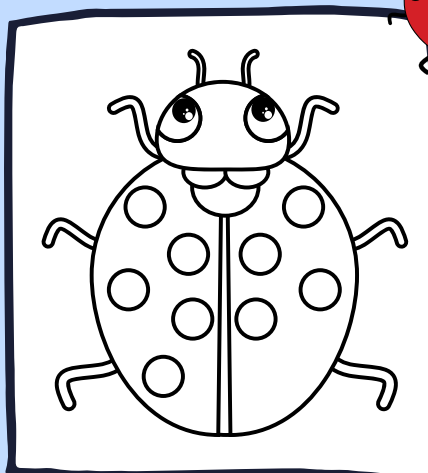
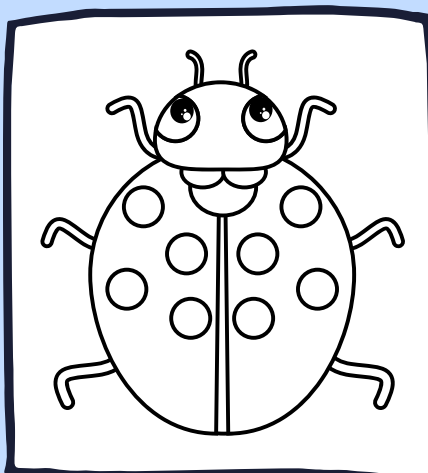
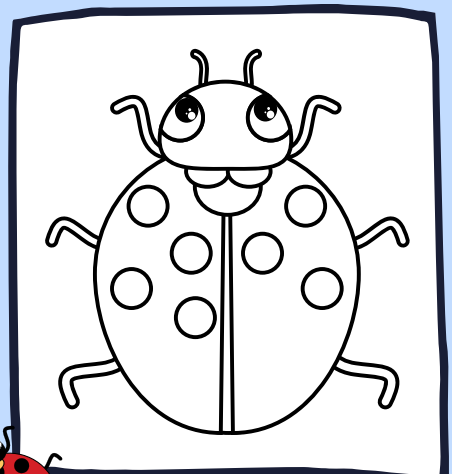
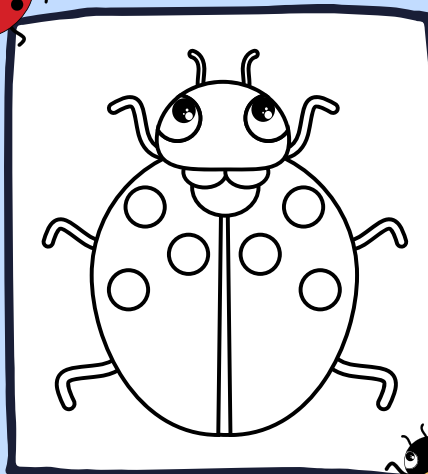
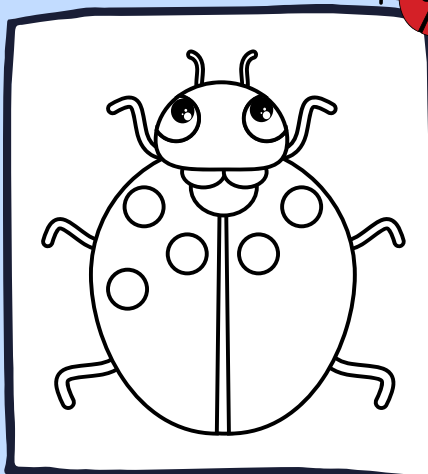
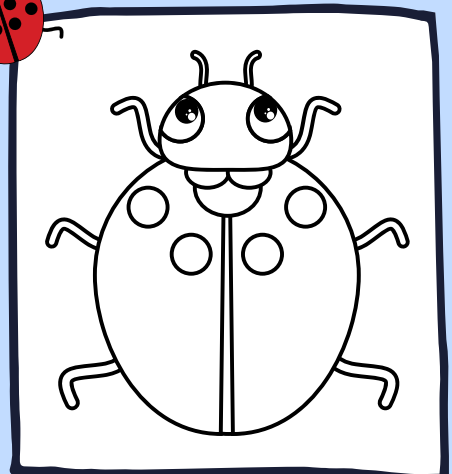
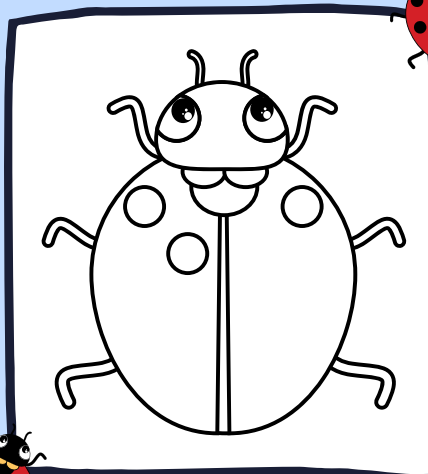
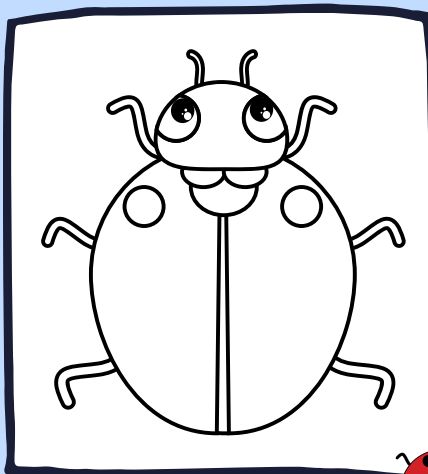
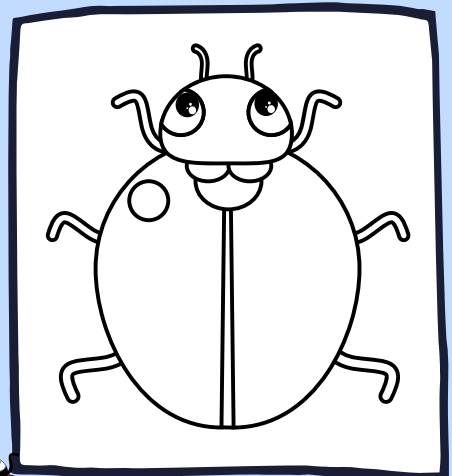
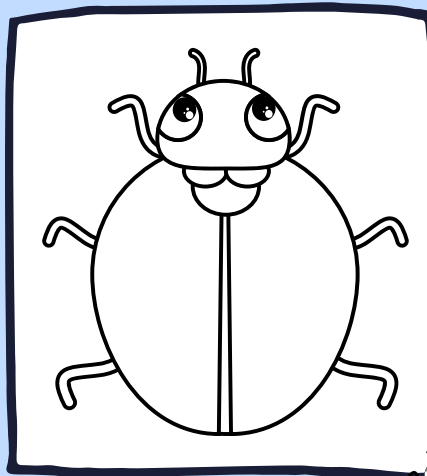
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SPOT THE DIFFERENCE



LADYBUG DOTS

How many dots do these ladybugs have? Count and color them in.



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BAMBI is managed by an elected committee of volunteers and all BAMBI members are encouraged to volunteer. Vacancies can be found on the Call for Volunteers page in this magazine and are posted online; you are welcome to contact vicechairwoman@bambiweb.org with inquiries.

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