JANUARY 2026 | YELLOW-BELLIED MARMOT

COMMITMENT

Making a plan and putting it into practice



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NEWSLETTER



Commitment
JANUARY 2026

SAY IT:

Commitment: Making a plan and putting it into practice

KNOW IT:

ASK A GROWN-UP:

- Describe a commitment you have made in your life. What was your plan and how did you put it into practice?
- Why is it important to stick with your commitments?

ASK A KID:

- Describe a commitment you have to make at school or in an extracurricular activity.
- How can making a plan help you stick to your commitments?

SEE IT:

In the movie *Up*, Carl makes a commitment to take his wife Ellie on a dream vacation to Paradise Falls. As life continues to move along, many obstacles arise making it difficult to fulfill this commitment. When Ellie passes away, Carl is left alone, and decides to make a plan and finally fulfill this commitment in memory of his wife. This movie is an excellent example of the commitment Carl makes to his wife Ellie and his determination to follow through on their dreams.

Take a few minutes to watch the trailer for *Up*:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HWEW_qTLSEE

BE IT:

Plan a family movie night to watch the movie *Up*. Discuss the power of making a commitment and working hard to follow through to achieve that commitment. As a family, commit to something you want to accomplish. Maybe it's a vacation you want to take, a project around the house, a person you want to help, or just to consistently spend time together as a family. Write out a plan of how you are going to make this commitment become a reality. Encourage each other as you work hard to put this plan into practice.

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PHASE

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In the elementary years, a child develops skills that equip their future.

Here are three questions that all elementary-aged children are asking:

1. Do I Have Your Attention?
In Kindergarten and first grade, a child craves adult attention and approval.

2. Do I Have What It Takes?
In second and third grade, a kid wants to know how their abilities compare with peers.

3. Do I Have Friends?
In fourth and fifth grade, a kid begins to prioritize friends in a new way.

Relationships create a safe place to resolve who we are. Relationships bring clarity. When kids see themselves the way a loving adult sees them, it changes how they see themselves.

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COMMITMENT // YELLOW-BELLIED MARMOT // SAGE GREEN

Cousins of groundhogs, yellow-bellied marmots are ground squirrels that scurry on rocky slopes and in alpine meadows in the Western United States and Canada. They might not have planners with monthly calendars and fancy stickers, but they faithfully stick to a yearly routine.

These marmots live in colonies with one male and often several females, and the youngsters born in any given year. They communicate with vocalizations, some of which earned them the nickname "whistle pig" from early settlers. These sounds include loud whistles, screams, and teeth chattering. They disappear into impressive burrows when threats appear, such as coyotes, bears, foxes, or golden eagles.

Yellow-bellied marmots are most active in the morning and late afternoon. But they're only active a few months out of the year. They are devoted to a yearly plan of eating and sleeping – eating their way through summer, and then hibernating from September until May.

In the summer, they fill up on grasses and forbs (herbaceous plants with broad leaves). They love dandelions. In late summer, they eat seeds, and occasionally, insects. To survive hibernation, marmots need to nearly double the amount of their body fat. The boulders above their dens that serve as lookout posts in summer can help protect them in their burrows in winter.

Yellow-bellied marmots are true hibernators. They experience periods of deep torpor, meaning their breathing slows and their body temperature is within a few degrees of the ambient temperature in their burrow. They only occasionally rouse to urinate in a special area before entering torpor again. They lose almost no fat during these months of hibernating and do not show signs of aging. A more dangerous time for them is when they emerge in spring and begin quickly burning energy again.

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COMMITMENT // YELLOW-BELLIED MARMOT // **SAGE GREEN**

Sage green takes its name and hue from common sage, Salvia officinalis, a member of the mint family. Like other greens, sage nods to renewal, but its muted gray shade lends a sense of security and comfort. Sage has been an important medicinal and ceremonial herb around the world for centuries, including in ancient Rome, China, Greece, and Egypt, as well as in Aztec, Celtic, and Native American cultures, among others. With its long history and sense of calm, sage is a grounding color, holding a strong connection to the natural world.

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