

Your 2013 Year in Review

Namaste!

I receive the best feedback from this writing exercise we've been doing each year, So I'm dusting it off, updating a bit and reposting, I hope you do it, I think you'll be glad you did:

Before we turn the page on 2013... Let's look back.

No need to get too-heavy here, just acknowledging how far we've come, and where we'd like to go. It's best to keep this somewhat lighter, and fun.

Can you carve out 10 –20 minutes for this meditation & writing exercise:

Make a cup of tea, get a nice pen, three pieces of paper, and a pad of post-its. Find a quiet place where you can sit.

Light a candle, and get comfortable. Let your breath smooth out and slide into meditation for a few minutes...

Once in quiet – creative space, reflect on your experience of 2013. Let your mind drift through the past year, the milestones that have passed, the highs and lows. Let it all come. Breathe.

Embrace the whole of where you are at in your life right now. Acceptance and appreciation of now, is the base-camp for your journey into 2014. In bold letters, title the first piece of paper:

What I'm leaving behind in 2013.

Inhale....Exhale... Start writing... Don't stop, judge, or filter in any way. Get it onto the page. What are you so-done with? What will not survive the strike of midnight on December 31st?

Explore the facets of your life. Home, career, relationships, (might need more paper!) health, behaviors. Then get into the energetics. List your done-with fears, doubts, hesitations, and grudges... No, you won't have to read this aloud in class. Keep going.

Have you been unkind or hurt anyone? Apologize. Has anyone treated you unkindly – unfairly? Forgive them. Make amends, Make your peace.

List your disappointments, and how you've disappointed others. Where are you kidding yourself?

(Breathe) Are you still carrying that bad habit? You know the one, the one you said you were done with last year. Go ahead and write it down. These ripples end here... Phew. Still with me? great. Onward.

In bold letters across the top of the second sheet, write:

How i've grown and what I've learned in 2013.

What has living through 2013 revealed to you? What have you accomplished in the different areas of your life? how have you grown, what have you've learned, especially those tougher lessons. are you evolving?

(breathe, steady and evenly) What obstacles have you overcome... what have you gained? Where have you surprised yourself in your strength?

What are the important changes you'll bring forward into the new year. What are the high points, peak moments, sweet memories you'll savor?

Take some time with this, We'll squeeze every last bit of goodness from 2013 before moving on. These waves live on.

You're doing great. Keep going! Here's where it gets fun. Label the third sheet:

I'm happy – healthy and thriving in 2013.

How would envision your ideal life. Again, ponder the aspects of your life. Relationships, work, creativity, your home, finances, health, your Yoga practice...

How do you feel in your body? Do you take in clean wholesome food, drink filtered water? Get exercise? What is your energy level...if your body had a charge indicator like your cellphone, what would it read?

Do you take time to contemplate, to meditate. when is the last time you learned something new?

Can you feel the interconnectedness of all life and energy, do you have a spiritual practice, a belief about how you fit into the big picture?

And the innermost self, when was the last time you were really happy, joyous, grateful? Had a good laugh? can you find inspiration in the simplest of things? Do you spend time in Awe.

Is there any part of you that is yearning for nourishment?

Write in positive and present tense, like it is already your reality, How will you feel? Describe in detail your day, from rising after a great nights sleep, your meditation, your

breakfast... to the work you will do, to the beauty you'll experience, all the way to tucking yourself in... Or being tucked in... content and slipping off into peaceful sleep.

Take a break, sip some tea, then meditate on this visualization, allow it to saturate you. let a word or simple phrase of summary come to you..

A word that sums up this direction you'd like to move in, a quality you'd like to see more of in your life.

Write this theme, Your Mantra for the coming year – in your best penmanship on your post-it note.

Finish your tea, slide back into meditation for a few minutes before rising.

Bring your first sheet, and your candle outdoors, or to your fireplace where you can safely burn the list. Make a ritual of this, as your paper turns to ash, state:

I _____ release these qualities and experiences from my life.... and shed these anchors for real. So be it, cause I said so, Swaha!

The second and third lists you'll read once more, then tuck away. Reflect on them in in a month or two, You just may need a refresher to get back on track.

Stick the post-it Mantra on your bathroom mirror, or a place where it will be the last thing you see before you go to sleep, the first thing you see before starting your day. Read it while you brush your teeth, ponder it for the full two minutes. (you do brush for two minutes right?)

Putting pen to paper, and writing intentions seems to work. We leap from, "I might want to think about maybe making this change someday, to "I'm doing this!" For more on these practices of writing down our intentions, check out the book *The Artist's Way* by Julia Cameron.

It's been quite a year, and I created this writing practice to lighten up, and be more open to the currents of creativity.

Much water has passed under the bridge as they say, and I've learned much through love and loss, bliss, Wellness, and illness... good-fortune, and hardship. I have so much to be grateful for – and joyful about.

Not just on New Years, but each day I resolve to do my best. To show up, stay open and love fearlessly, to dust myself off after spectacular failures of my best whole-hearted efforts, and keep going.

I'll stay in awe of the beauty of the little things in life, and open wide to possibility. I will try not to be deterred or taken off course by the callousness, doubts, and fears of others. I'll not limit myself through fear or hesitation, and will lean into uncertainty.

I love the quote about taking the leap... and growing wings on the way down, by Kurt Vonnegut. We need to leap often.

Of the thousands who will read this post in the next few days, how many will actually try the exercise? It's up to you.. Nobody can do it for you. But I plead with you, I challenge you. Get three pieces of paper and invest some time in You.

Do it for the people who count on you.

There's really no place I'd rather be, there's nothing I'd rather be doing, so many thanks for your support, and for bringing friends and family to class, I really appreciate your telling others about our growing community in our brand-new space at 135 Commonwealth Ave in West Concord.

Please make a copy for a friend, or go to the website below, and email or share the original post on Facebook or Twitter. Imagine the world we'd live in if more of us introspected regularly.

May all beings be happy and free. Om Shanti Shanti Shanti...

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