

Namaste!

we've been doing this writing exercise for years, I'm dusting it off, updating a bit and reposting, I hope you do it, you'll be glad you did: (printable version at the end)

Before we turn the page on 2014... Let's look back. It's usually best to keep this somewhat lighter, and fun. In our outward facing world, here is an inward journey, and there's no one, or no need to impress.

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

Make a cup of something to sip, get a nice pen, three pieces of paper, a pad of post-its, perhaps your calendar. Find a quiet place where you can sit.

It's okay to skip this part, but if you keep a calendar or appointment book a brief skim can jog our memory as to how much has passed this year.

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

Once in quiet space, reflect on your experience of 2104. Let your mind drift through the past year, the milestones that have passed, the highs and lows. Let it all come. Breathe.

Imagine wrapping your arms around the whole of who you are, and where you are at right now. Acceptance and appreciation of now, is the base-camp for your journey into 2015. In bold letters, title the first piece of paper:

What I'm leaving behind in 2104.

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, this is not like a facebook post, where millions cultivate a sparkling image of themselves. And no, you won't have to read this aloud in class, so be a *true story* to yourself here.. and keep writing...

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? put it down.

(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 2104.

What has living through 2104 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 2104 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 2105.

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? It's really important to visualize not just the results, but you putting in the efforts, you doing the work. And therein lives the shift.

Do you take time to contemplate, to meditate, time in nature, when is the last time you learned something new? How do you truly nourish yourself?

Can you feel the interconnectedness of all life and energy, do you have a deepening spiritual practice, a belief about how you fit into this mystery we're living? Make a *Spiritual Bucket List* as to how will you honor your individual and universal connection.

And the innermost self, when was the last time you were really happy? Had a good laugh? can you find inspiration in the simplest of things? Do you spend time in wonder and awe... in gratitude? What do you truly appreciate about this gift of this life?

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... after a day of shaping your reality. Can you see all this as preparing to bring your gifts and talents to the world in true service? Cause that's where the juice is.

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. (or maybe upgrade to card stock and a tasteful frame for it.) Finish your tea, slide back into meditation for a few minutes before rising. This is the work of a spiritual warrior. Well done.

Bring your first sheet, and your candle outdoors, or to your fireplace where you can safely burn the list. 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 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.

Not just on New Years, but each day I resolve to do my best. To show up, stay open, to bring my best, and to learn from failure... dust myself off and keep going. I'll not limit myself through fear or hesitation, and will lean into uncertainty.

I'll stay in awe of the beauty of the little things in life, and open wide to possibility.

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, and all beings that you cross paths with.

Please forward this to a friend? click the FB like/share button, email or tweet... Imagine the world we'd live in if more of us journeyed inward regularly. here's the printable version: your 2104 year in review

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