



## **Don't Create New Year's Resolutions: Try A New Way to Get Inspired**

Over the years of coaching, my clients and I have discovered a tool to help create *inspiring intentions* for the New Year that will stick. Resolutions often fail because they stem from guilt or something we want to correct (drink less wine, eat fewer carbs, network more effectively).

As an entrepreneur, I sometimes feel like the Year End Gorilla comes in to sit on my chest, pointing out various "not enoughs" and how the year has not measured up. As a coach and human being, I'm learning this is just part of human nature. We certainly don't have to let it defeat us. In fact, I've learned how essential it is to create an opposite, uplifting energy before embarking on a New Year. [I can honestly report that this year's "not enough" energy had less grip on me than previous times. I do feel prosperous, grateful and filled with genuine enthusiasm about the new year.]

Don't start with critical energy, such as "What's wrong...that I need to fix?" There's a temptation to end up in territory that says you've been a bad girl or boy and now you're going to clean up your act once and for all. Don't go there and don't let others push you there. How well does that truly motivate you?

DO start by stirring up positive energy. Try a Celebration Inventory. Take the time—at least an hour. I promise you it's worthwhile ROI of your time investment. Review the prior year coming from an encouraging, applauding energy. Imagine a character that believes in you, helping with this review, generously emphasizing the good stuff. He or she might say "I'm proud of you for...I admire your perseverance about ..."

## Your Next Step

I keep tweaking this process to kick off the New Year with a fresh start. This year, I felt very compelled to do a Releasing Ritual just before the Celebration Inventory. It's simple, and very powerful. How it works:

Take quality time to reflect on the thoughts and feelings that are “clogging up” your energy- keeping you tethered to old plans and stories, rather than free to create new inspiring intentions and adventures from a clean, blank canvas. Imagine a cleansing that brings closure. Write down your “stuff to release” (I like little scraps of paper for each item) and then safely burn these (e.g. outdoors in a grill or fire pit). As an example, I wrote down several business goals that did not work out the way I had originally envisioned. I also needed to acknowledge a handful of situations where people had approached me about an opportunity and then didn't return calls or emails. I wanted to release pressure about previous expectations, disappointments, etc. from the year. As each little story was burned away, I spoke out loud things like “I am letting go of any attachment to this. I release it completely. I forgive myself and others and bless them. I release my need to understand “why.” I release this all with love that surpasses logic and reason. I am now free of any limiting gunk from this experience or the stories I made up in my ego brain about this. It is finished... done. ” Lots of breathing felt great too. You get the idea.

Then, I was able to approach the Celebration Inventory with more flow and ease. As I saw something pertaining to one of those old goals or disappointments that I just released, I was really able to breeze over it and emphasize the glass half full.

**There are 3 parts to this process:**

- 1) Releasing Ritual**
- 2) Celebration Inventory of the prior year**
- 3) Setting Inspiring Intentions for the New Year**

Do this at your own pace. I did the Releasing and Celebrations parts on the same day, in about an hour. I am allowing breathing room and chill out “being” time for a couple weeks at year-end. Then, I look forward to declaring intentions for the New Year, that will come from a “cleaner” well of internal inspiration and listening to what Spirit wants to express through me.

### Here are thought starters for your own Celebration Inventory:

- Review your calendar, journal, meeting notes or anything else that might refresh your memory.
- Notice what is working well in your life.
- Acknowledge sheer effort (*Hey look, you attended 623 meetings this year!*)
- Acknowledge progress in awareness, classes taken, new things tried, etc.
- Celebrate growth in who you are becoming.
- Notice insights about what has been most fulfilling and worked out well (to inform how to best invest your energy moving forward).
- *Take a bow* for the above and really acknowledge *what it took* (courage, willingness, compassion, etc.).
- Celebrate gratitude in various areas of your life.
- Write down highlights. The value is in the *process* of doing this, not really the final document.

I do this live with clients, helping to draw out the positives and encourage them to “take a bow.” Sometimes I call it the “Lookee Inventory” as in “Lookee what you did or how you’ve grown about...” Consider doing this with a trusted, nonjudging, encouraging buddy.

- Reflect on this inventory BEFORE declaring intentions for the new year.

Flowing off of this positive energy, complete the following: In the New Year, I would LOVE to create \_\_\_\_\_. Now, frame your intentions in ways that are genuinely inspiring. Try “I’m going to have fun reaching out for the support that I and my mission deserve” rather than “Stop being lazy or shy about those networking contacts.” What’s more likely to lead to a happy New Year for you?

## Year-End Celebration Inventory

The chart on the next page is a great tool to help you wrap up this inventory and begin to set intentions that will authentically motivate you and have a better chance of sticking.

For each area, express gratitude.

Example: *I'm so grateful for my new spiritual community-- growing closer and stronger, adding belly laughs and deep beauty to my life each month.* OR simpler: *I'm grateful for my health checkup coming out well.*

The next step is very important. Don't declare goals for things you want to have or accomplish (not yet). Start with your heart and soul... what matters most to you expressed as a desired feeling state? This gives you the true spirit of what you desire. It reveals your higher agenda, that might be achieved through various strategies or tactics than you may plan or not!

Example: *I would love to feel consistently energized and vitally healthy every day.* OR .... *to feel so excited about how my leadership is helping empower others.* (You can have specific contexts, e.g. leadership with XYZ group/organization.)

At the end of this process, take a break and let it breathe for a while. Come back another time and select your 3 top inspiring intentions for the new year. Let those propel you to create a Vision, goals and then planning and choices, while being flexible about exactly how it all unfolds in real life. Enjoy the ride!

## **WAKE UP INSPIRED**

### **Year-End Celebration/ Inspired Intentions for the New Year**

<b>Life Area</b>	<b>I Am Celebrating..... Grateful for....</b>	<b>Moving Forward, My Heart's Desire is to Feel...</b>
<b>Health/Body</b>		
<b>Work</b>		
<b>Money/Finances</b>		
<b>Friends</b>		
<b>Family</b>		
<b>Romance/Partner Relationship</b>		
<b>Personal Growth Self-Development</b>		
<b>Spirituality</b>		
<b>Fun &amp; Recreation</b>		
<b>Environment, Physical Space</b>		
<b>Community</b>		
<b>Contribution, "Making a Difference"</b>		
<b>Other?</b>		



*Be well... be inspired,  
Marian*

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Named one of 50 top coaches in America, **Marian Baker** is a master certified coach, author and speaker. Her book, *"Wake Up Inspired - Fuel Healthier Success and Love the Life You're Meant to Lead"* has earned Book of the Year (ForeWord) and Independent Publisher Awards and 5-star reviews. She's coached and led workshops with hundreds of clients from business and personal growth communities since 1996. Marian has been featured on ABC-TV, Ladies Home Journal, Health Magazine and other media. She loves this work and falls asleep grateful in Chicago.

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