

The New Year Is a Time for Renewal

Once the big push to “make it through the holidays” is over, we often experience a feeling of letdown. We may put lots of energy into holiday preparations, only to have the festivities and plans dart by in a flash. Feelings of anger, disenchantment, restlessness, and frustration may set in, often fueled by our disappointment if the holidays failed to live up to our fantasies.

But the new year can herald a time for rebirth, renewal, and celebration. It is also a time for contemplation and resolution. One of the most important aspects of human experience is the attribution of meaning to our existence. What better time than this to hunker down and reconnect with that which is most precious and nourishing—to get in touch with ourselves, our passions, our purpose, our dreams, our relationships, our values?

Here are some ways to seize this opportunity for renewal:

- * Go out of your way to connect with people who are important to you. Sometimes in the holiday hustle, our time with those people is rushed and superficial. Plan to have coffee or a meal together and really talk. Don't let distractions get in the way of communication.
- * Send post-holiday letters—especially to folks you don't often see.
- * Write thank-you notes for all the presents you received and let each giver know the importance of your relationship.
- * Spend time processing anger toward yourself and others to pave the way for forgiveness. If you had some particularly difficult encounters over the last year, reflect on how you might want to renew a relationship or clear the air. Be honest in your self-appraisal as well as your appraisal of others.
- * Think about what is most meaningful to you and establish a private ritual of celebration.

- * Give yourself a thoughtful gift.
- * Count your blessings (really, count them!).
- * Review the past year. How have you grown? What have you achieved? Did you allow time for playfulness, laughter, and fun? What do you want to do differently in the new year?

© Harris, Rothenberg International, LLC

Reviewed 01/08