

A PERFECT TIME FOR DISCOVERY

By Penney Peirce

It's that time of year! The beginning of the first month, the time of newness, when thoughts turn to creating another year—at least somewhat consciously. New Year's resolutions are on the tip of everyone's tongue: "What will I try to make myself do this year?" Lose weight? Quit an addiction? Be more social? Be more introspective? Make more money? Have New Year's resolutions ever worked for you? They certainly haven't for me! I think it has something to do with a natural tendency to resist authority. Even if no one else tells me to lose weight or exercise more, I still have an internalized voice of authority in my head, dictating all manner of shoulds, which the free-spirited me *must* ignore!

It's true, though, that the first steps of a journey symbolize its entirety. The mindset you're in as you begin something colors how the process is likely to unfold. So the first of a year can be a powerful time. Start the year off-balanced or unconsciously and you're likely to carry on in a partially purposeful and semi-successful way. Start quietly and thoughtfully, and the best guidance and ideas are likely to continue to come to you all year. The new year is a time for focus and some silence, for feeling deeply, and for being extra clear. When we let our logical brain make declarations and "resolve" what we must do, we're not feeling into what's most real for this new moment in our life.



The dictionary defines *resolution* as “a firm decision to do or not do something” and *resolute* as “admirably purposeful and unwavering.” It says the word *resolve* means “to find a solution to a problem, dispute, or contentious matter.” So it might be a great thing to be admirably purposeful about a firm decision to solve the problem of being overweight or underpaid if we actually could carry through with the firmness and conviction. But these days we tend to be distracted by endless stresses and desires. We have largely forgotten how to be resolute.

It is attention, applied continually and repeatedly, that can materialize your wishes for the new year.

I’ve come to understand that will-power alone is not as powerful as we’d like it to be. And framing a wish as an antidote to what you don’t want doesn’t carry much true motivation. Instead, real joy, consistent interest, and involvement are the secret to effectiveness. It is loving attention, applied continually and repeatedly, that can materialize your wishes. If I want to lose weight, I first frame my wish positively as a desire to be my most natural, healthiest weight. Then I convince my body by imagining the *actual experience of how it and I will feel when that’s the reality*. I might feel how eating less might be uncomfortable at first, but how substituting a walk, a book, or a household task might take the edge off the discomfort and distract me in a healthy way. I can imagine and feel how losing a few pounds will bring me increased energy and optimism and how continuing will feed my sense of self-worth. If I find the process interesting in its every nuance, I’ll maintain motivation. If I keep my attention focused on the positive experience, I’ll stay involved.

But what are your *real* goals and desires for the new year? First, it’s important to review what you did and

learned the previous year. What did you accomplish? What did you do that you’re proud of? Whom did you meet? How were you generous? Or courageous? How did your life expand? Be specific. Your list might include real world accomplishments, even mundane ones, and it might also include more experiential things, like developing your intuition, healing ability, or ability to perform or speak in public. After your list is complete, you might write: “Look what I accomplished last year!! Look how I grew into more of myself!!” Be authentically amazed. It sends your body a sensory signal of validation.

Then you might add to your list the things you experienced last year that were frustrating, hurtful, or even traumatic. How did you respond to these occurrences? Did you use them to find more understanding about yourself and others? Did you learn more about the underlying reasons as to why the flow paused or stopped at that particular place? What was the hidden lesson? Or did you lash out at others and life, or stop your own energy from expressing positively? Did you make an erroneous decision about yourself or others? Is there something you’d like to correct this year to free yourself from that stuckness?

Part of what you might like to do this year is clean up a few past “mistakes” of consciousness and behavior. You also might want to invite new parts of yourself to surface; this could include new talents or new opportunities to develop greater compassion and clarity. If you can spend a little time alone and be quiet and mindful, perhaps with a journal, you may find glimmers of new kinds of experiences coming to mind. Perhaps you’ll sense a feeling state you’d like to have.

**Try spending some quiet time,
alone with a journal.
Let new ideas surface from the deep.**



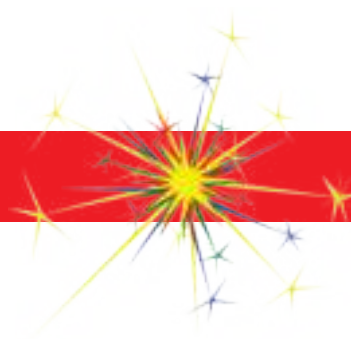
Here are some journal prompts that might help you uncover some of your deeper, truer desires:

- What is incomplete from last year that I truly want to complete this year?
- What is complete from last year that I want to release and integrate fully now?
- Who do I want to know better or co-create something with this year?
- What projects have been lurking just below my conscious mind that I'm curious about?
- What new things would I like to learn about this year?
- Where would I like to go? What new places would I like to explore and discover?
- What is my next courageous act?
- How can I be more generous and kind?
- What would I like to experience physically?
- What would I like to experience emotionally?
- What would I like to experience mentally? More intuition? More inspiration? More clarity? More common sense?

You may think of additional questions to ask yourself, but after you list your answers, go back over each one and feel the truth of it. Feel what it would be like if the thing you imagine were an actual reality and part of your new normal. Feel your *enthusiasm* for the experience. This will make it easier to return your attention to the actual reality you want to create.

The first of the year naturally causes us to think about why we're here. What is my life purpose? Am I "supposed to" do something? I find that life purpose is largely about balancing yourself and accessing as many of your talents and positive character traits as possible. It's not really about having a mission or accomplishing some great feat. If you're too shy, you may need to develop more self-expressiveness and confidence. If you're too aggressive, perhaps you need to be more compassionate and patient. If you're too analytical, you may want to work on your intuition. If you're too defined and locked in to fixed beliefs, you probably need to be more open-minded and flexible. Each of these balancing acts has a life lesson. This is all to say that, mainly, your life purpose is to know yourself as a many-faceted soul and find the fullness of your true nature and capacity.

Part of reviewing the previous year's experiences, both positive and negative, is to see what your life lessons may have been about. How one-sided or limited were you? How much did you welcome surprise? How good were you at experiencing all the phases of the creativity cycle: from being and inspiration, to focusing and doing, to attaining results and feeling satisfaction, to letting go and being quiet so you could discover the next inspirations? Now, as you focus on a whole new



year, where is the juice? What do you-the-soul want you-the-personality to take action on?

Each of us is built for something.

Of course, we are all built for something. Some of us have a basic nature that loves to nurture plants, animals, and people. Others want to make beautiful art or design buildings. Still others want to protect the innocent, or heal bodies and minds, or entertain people and help them lighten up. What you're built for shows up early. As a child, you may have loved Leggo constructions or drawing birds and horses. Maybe you liked to cook or play baseball. You-the-soul causes you-the-personality to be interested in what you are going to do in your life—from the beginning. And those interests don't fade—they just take on new variations. Trust yourself and be loyal to what truly motivates you. What do you always love doing or talking about?

When you feel into the progression and evolution of your natural interests—and watch how they have stayed with you—your intuition and imagination can easily bring you an expanded vision of how these interests become talents and natural gifts and how these talents build into a life work, into something you'd like to contribute to the world. This expanded vision is your Life Dream where you-the-soul talks and reveals and guides the growth of you-the-personality. By following the bread crumb trail, you eventually discover that you *are* the soul, you *do* know what you're doing, you *are* quite unlimited, and you *can* create whatever you'd like.

And guess what! The start of the new year is the perfect time to discover this. And guess what else! Every moment when you show up fully is another new year's day, another chance to start fresh and on purpose.

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and author of 10 books on intuition development, inner energy dynamics, expanded perception, dreamwork, and personal transformation. She coaches business and government leaders, psychologists, scientists, celebrities, and those on a spiritual path about the hidden dynamics of what makes for true success. Her books include *Transparency*, *Leap of Perception*, *Frequency*, and *The Intuitive Way*.