

Making The New Year “New”

Shiranda Deerwoman; December 30, 2022

“New” is new only in the awareness of the present moment; free of every thought and memory; of all happenings and thoughts formed in our past; and free of all planning, worrying and concern for the future. In the new of the present moment unblemished by the past, is the miracle as well as the awareness of Ourselves and our Life in God. Guidance from the Voice for God is easily heard when the mind is still.



To make every moment, every breath “new” in the New Year may be our greatest task, producing our most profound joy and reward; providing what beforehand, we’ve only dreamed. It is the agent that gives life to what was held imprisoned as mere potential. This, the alchemy which we have been seeking and for which we have been prepared. It is the “Be Here Now” (Ram Dass) of “Practicing the Presence” (Goldsmith); the water trough to which spiritual teachers have been pointing.

We must acquire the ability to be present to overcome the world.

It's easy to think, “I don’t know how”. How to do this and how to stand firm amidst the ongoing distractions of the world while every impulse of our lower nature dopes us and tugs at us with things we then feel “I’ve got to do”. Call a friend, place that order, watch the news, wash the dishes; really anything except be present with a quiet mind. This is not about thoughts or activities being good or bad, it’s about distracting thoughts and actions. And surely, we can be present washing the dishes as well as in every task, conversation, or activity. It’s a learned ability, an ability we must acquire in overcoming the world.

The thought that I don’t know how to be present is familiar and has allowed confusion to determine how I live. Admittedly, it requires real effort to still the mind. It’s in part, the effect of not fully trusting my own worth, innocence and right to be happy. We’ve all had a mix of experiences and programming that have contributed to such doubt. Thus, inconsistency and unconscious choices have impeded my progress, but I believe we do know how. We need merely take a single spiritual idea we’ve recognized to be transformative, and practice it with care, determination, and persistent effort. We will experience benefits “before we are halfway through”. That’s the timeline the Promises of 12-Step programs outline for our success. The promises continue, “We are going to know a new freedom and a new happiness. We will not regret the past nor wish to shut the door on it.”

Our minds are created for spiritual awareness.

The point is that as we apply spiritual principles, we will experience change. Everyone who has sat in 12-Step meetings has felt the impact and power in the promises and in shared testimonies

that demonstrate the freedom, strength and hope of life in recovery. We all want freedom from compulsive thoughts and behaviors inherent in physical life, be they addiction or not. We all want to be happy. Every success provides a stepping stone for continued advancement on our path that is forever ours and forever transforms the One Mind we share. Application of and commitment to spiritual principles does indeed transform when employed to still the stream of unwanted chatter. Our minds are created for spiritual awareness; not to be a platform for mindless nonsense.

Here are practices that immediately come to mind as tools for stilling the mind and coming into an awareness of the Divine. You all know many more, and ones perhaps more dear to you. Find one that works for you and use it:

- Be Still and know that I am God. (Psalms)
- Peace. Be still. (Mark)
- Be in activity with my thoughts on what I am doing: “I am walking --left, right, left, right”; keeping my focus on walking with these thoughts to myself. “I’m picking up the knife, I’m picking up the onion. I’m holding the onion on the cutting board. I’m cutting the onion. My eyes are beginning to smart.” Over time, the mental words will not be needed as we begin to be in activity, with our attention fully on what we are doing. We begin to be present.
- My TK™ (Transformational Kinesiology) colleague and friend, Kate, recently suggested focusing on what we are sensing to help us be fully present: *“I see the computer screen. I feel the keyboard under my fingers. I hear the roar of a car outside. I taste chocolate lingering in my mouth. I smell the fresh air.”* And keep it going as a practice; using it to bring our awareness back to the present.

I’ve tried it and it does draw me into the present. Ironically, utilizing the physical senses to become present, takes us beyond all physical sensing when we shift into the stillness of the present. Does it sound tedious? Absolutely! Commitment and dedication to a goal can seem trying and even boring. Even more so, commitment to our goals will surely bring up fears from what is unresolved and what still holds us back. It’s therefore vital that we remember the importance of our goal.

I feel the love of God within me now.

Lesson 189 from “A Course in Miracles” outlines a most stirring, profound, and penetrating invitation:

“Simply do this: Be still, and lay aside all thoughts of what you are and what God is; all concepts you have learned about the world; all images you hold about yourself. ²Empty your mind of everything it thinks is either true or false, or good or bad, of every thought it judges worthy, and all the ideas of which it is ashamed. ³Hold onto nothing. ⁴Do not bring with you one thought the

past has taught, nor one belief you ever learned before from anything. ⁵Forget this world, forget this course, and come with wholly empty hands unto your God.”
(<https://acim.org/acim/en/s/597#7:1-5> | W-189.7:1-5)

The lesson title is “I feel the love of God within me now”. That’s the point and to me is a most cherished goal. Besides, if we fail to still our minds and be present, we will not be able to welcome the new and 2023 can only be an extension of 2022 that carries forward all that we consider both good and bad from the past. In that, not new at all.

Expansion is inherent to our nature.

Consider, pioneers living in Virginia may have had a good life, but many wanted more than what was familiar and so they headed west to new territory that offered unforeseen adventure and growth. The discontented easily looked westward. Young adults often leave the comfort of home and of their childhood communities as they are drawn to distant states or countries. Women and men routinely leave the comfort of their jobs and present achievements as they seek for more. Artists learn new techniques, tradespersons, and professionals alike, study to stay current or excel, expanding through additional or higher training.

As we today yield to a higher calling, becoming present may welcome the shift in consciousness, the joy, and blessings that truly sustain. It's our nature to expand and express the more that we are. Expansion inherently requires that we go beyond how we are currently living. As spiritual beings, we can readily recognize that spiritual life must replace physical life as we are then able to awaken and touch the Divine.

Happy New Year Dear Friends and Companions.

Shiranda is a Healing Arts Professional and long-time student of Spiritual teachings. Her study includes "A Course in Miracles" (1996), *New Thought Christianity* (1990), and more recently, *Christian Science*. Her study of *Transformational Kinesiology (TK)[®]* introduced her to the *Ageless Wisdom Teachings* in 1993. Involvement in *12-Step program* beginning in 1980 was Shiranda’s first spiritually focused study.



Shiranda is long-time admirer of Ram Dass. As a young adult, just out of college, his four-record set, "Love, Serve, Remember" hugely impacted her thinking. She is an educator and a counselor through formal training. For more articles and to subscribe (homepage) go to www.healwhatcausedit.com