

Getting Ready For Change

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Whatever happened to New Year's resolutions? Everyone tells me, "Oh, I don't make them anymore." Why not? Are you so perfect that there's nothing you need to change? It is important to have a point in time to make an appraisal of how you are doing. It is even more important to resolve to improve, and then to act upon that resolve.

Change comes in many forms. You can choose it, or it can be foisted upon you. When your employer "reorganizes" your job out of existence or your spouse decides upon a new lifestyle, you undergo a lot of change. Simpler changes are imposed on you all the time, like when your favorite brand is no longer available or your yoga teacher switches classes to a different day and time. These external changes compel an internal change, whether you want it or not. When students tell me about life experiences that have helped them become who they are now, they usually talk about something they resisted when it first arose. Change impels you into needed personal growth.

Change can be created through your own choice. You can decide to change your eating habits or to become more regular in your yoga practice. The choice to change comes from two types of motivations: novelty and commitment. Some people keep their life interesting by constant change. Life is boring without something new and interesting. I know this one, because I spent 20 years living it before I found yoga. Actually, yoga was one of the things I tried in my endless search for something new and satisfying. Yoga surprised me by becoming progressively more satisfying until it ended my dependency on the "new and improved" activities to animate my life.

New Year's resolutions are about choosing to make needed changes because of clarity and commitment – to see yourself in a moment of clarity and to commit to give birth to the changes in yourself that you choose. To give up on making resolutions is to insure that changes will be forced upon you, because life will not let you resign from the process of growth and transformation. In fact, each of the steps in your process of personal growth brings you closer to the experience of what yoga calls, the "Changeless."

What would you like to resolve for the New Year?