

**YEAR-END  
REFLECTION**

*Ritual*

**Workbook**

Transmute the Hard and Wonderful  
Experiences of the Year into Your  
Guiding Wisdom Moving Forward

## WHY WE ARE HERE

In times of chaos, knowing where we stand matters more than mapping out the future. When things are shifting rapidly around us, we want to settle more fully into who we already are. Even when we are struggling or lost, there are places inside of us that remain strong.

Whatever you lived in 2021, be it joyful, terrible, or a mix of both, there is goodness and guidance to be harvested.

This day is about allowing yourself to sink more deeply into reflection about this year so you feel stronger and more able to move confidently into the New Year.

### ***In this day, we will:***

- Reflect on the experience of the year
- Integrate those experiences by crafting the Story of the Year
- Harvest the learning and wisdom you can lean on going forward
- Call forward the qualities that will support you moving into the New Year

## COMING IN JANUARY: CHART YOUR TRUE PATH

I am working on putting together a one-day event, similar in structure to this day, to help you Chart Your True Course for 2022.

We'll look, not at planning, but at strengthening and deepening your connection to the Spiritual Truth of who you are, your Innate Wisdom which defines your personal process for navigating life, to the Story you are here to tell, and to the Sacred Exchange you most desire to have with other humans.

## **BEFORE WE MEET - YEAR-END INVENTORY**

I like to call this Year-end Digestion rather than Year-end Review because we don't want to just look back at the year with a dry eye, we want to taste, savor, and absorb all the goodness (as well as all the medicine) of the year we have lived.

The first step of that Digestion is an Inventory of the year. It's an Inventory, because like a retail inventory, we are going to take a careful detailed look back at the year. We are not going to guess or assume or even just feel into the year. We are going to use source material, refresh our memories and experiences, and allow that review to move us and inform us.

## **WHY IT MATTERS**

Two things feel important about doing an Inventory, and not just diving into reflection or analysis of the year right away.

The first is that our memories are spectacularly inaccurate or incomplete. There's something called Peak-Ending Theory that posits that when we remember something we focus primarily on the high or low point of what we are looking at, and at what happened most recently. So that means in a year, that you'll mostly reference the most intense experiences of the year and probably the past few weeks! And that leaves out so much lived experience

Every time I do this process in my groups, people tell me that they rediscover experiences and events they'd completely forgotten were part of the year. Important happenings, often from earlier in the year, that shaped them, that informed, that colored their journey.

In many cases, as business owners, we have a negativity bias about what we've done, what we've accomplished. We forget how much we've done, important milestones we reached, projects we devoted significant time and energy to. So in doing the Inventory, clients tell me that they start to feel much better, much more positive about their year. They connect more with their own strength.

The second is that taking time to look carefully over the year is a way of honoring ourselves and the path we've walked. Of taking time to remember, note, and consider the richness and complexity of the lives we've lived

## FINDING GOOD SOURCE MATERIAL

The biggest misstep in doing an Inventory is relying on your memory rather than using source materials to ground you in **WHAT ACTUALLY HAPPENED!**

So, the first challenge in doing your Year-end Inventory is to decide what your source material will be, the places you'll go to track your year. The source material you choose will somewhat determine how long it will take to review the whole year, and will color what aspects of the year you'll focus on the most.

I usually recommend you start with your day planner, or the equivalent of your day planner. This could be a paper planner or a business journal. Ideally, it will give you both the factual information about the day (where you went, what you did) and some of the feeling of the focus or energy of the day. This could be considered your primary source.

I, for example, use an online calendar to track my appointments, but a spiral notebook to plan each day. I include all my scheduled appointments, and also both my personal and business to dos, as well as any resources (book titles, people, information) that I gather that day. In between the pages for each day, I take notes for classes, or do practices like morning pages. I brainstorm business ideas, and I strategize. So, reviewing my online calendar gives me a higher-level view of what I've been up to, but my spiral notebook, my business journal, gives me quite a rich picture of where I was focused each day.

### ***That said, my brilliant clients have also reviewed:***

- The photos they took this year
- The emails they wrote this year
- A bullet journal or diary for the year (this could be quite time consuming so only wade in if you have the time and bandwidth)
- Notes from a Quarterly Review (we do this in the Action Circle)
- Monday/Friday check ins (also something we do in the Action Circle)

Please note, I don't recommend you use all these resources as it will make the Inventory go so slowly it will likely drive you crazy! Choose the ones that feel most intriguing, inspiring, or revealing for you to look at. Choose ones that let you move forward at a reasonable pace.

## **BUSINESS METRICS**

If you are a business owner, your inventory could also include reviewing your business numbers. At the most basic level, profit and loss, annually, but maybe also monthly. So your source material for that would be the book keeping reports from the year as well as things like your estimated income and expenses for the year. You could also track down names and numbers of new clients, revenue per clients, number of sales conversations, number of talks given, and so on.

## **TRACKING THE EXPERIENCE**

So, one more tip. I strongly recommend as you begin to look over your source material, that you have a notebook along side of you. As you look things over, note your observations. What strikes you as you begin to look at what happened? What had you forgotten? What do you see now looking back that you didn't see before? What did you spend time on? Where was your attention?

## **FEELING THE FEELINGS**

As you move through your Inventory, it's likely that you feel something. You may feel proud, tender, excited, or inspired as you see the path you walked. And it's likely that you may also feel sadness, disappointment, shame, or disappointment.

One of the things that will deepen this exercise is to pause and allow yourself to feel what arises. You may need to put down your notebook, put your hand on your heart, and just breathe. Allow the feelings to rise up. Notice where you feel them in your body.

You may want to say soothing and kind things to yourself. "You're ok, this is what it feels like to be sad." If you have trauma in your background, make sure you have resources or support to contain yourself and your feelings.

Part of the beauty of being human is the range of emotions we feel. If you can safely feel those feelings, it will deepen your understanding of where you've been and create more space for you to imagine the New Year

## **HOW MUCH TIME?**

Give yourself ample time. I find it can easily take three hours to really look over the year. You might take more time, you might take less.

So consider carving out a little time each evening (you don't have to do it all in one batch) or a block of time one day this week.

Ok, let's go!

## SESSION ONE – REFLECTION QUESTIONS

Okay, by now, you have done your Year-end Inventory. That clear-eyed look at what actually happened, the observations you made, and the space you gave yourself to feel what you feel positioned you to get more from these reflection questions

Once we remember what happened, we can consciously make meaning of the year. Instead of being stuck in a certain feeling about the year, we start to see the nuance and complexity of the path we've been walking.

We can hold it differently. Often, we see new things to celebrate, to be proud of, to acknowledge ourselves for.

So, this is pretty simple.

Carve out some time so you can be quiet and relatively uninterrupted.

Set the tone with lights or music or tea or anything that drops you into your more reflective self.

And then use this list of questions, or any other questions you love.

I recommend journaling, writing down your answers to each question

As with the Inventory, let yourself feel what you feel. If needed, stop, put your hand on your heart and the other on your belly and let yourself breathe in what's arising. If needed, speak kind words to yourself, soothing words to yourself as the feelings move through you.

Here are my favorite questions, the ones I find help me the most to answer:

- What surprised me most this year?
- What happened that I could not have predicted?
- What was most challenging? Whether it was a blessing in disguise or utterly awful.
- What am I still grieving from this year?
- What have I not yet made peace with?
- What made me happiest this year?

- What nurtured me the most this year?
- In what areas did I shift or stretch the most? Where did I step up or show up the most fully?
- What can I most give myself credit for?
- What did I let go of this year?

Feel free to add any other questions you love, or questions that arise as you go through this process. Once you are done, read them through and take what you've gained from your experience this year



## **SESSION TWO – THE STORY OF YOUR YEAR**

A beautiful way to integrate your experience of the year is to write the Story of your Year

Humans comprehend and relate through Story. Our minds naturally translate our experience into Story, highlighting some events, minimizing others, finding connections, seeing arcs of development.

As you shape the Story of the Year, you take charge of the narrative. You are no longer at the mercy of what happened, you are choosing how to hold it, how to view it, how to understand it.

Studies have shown that when you write in response to the question “what was the Story of?”

we heal. Our distress lessens. We feel stronger in the face of whatever challenges occur.

## **HOW TO WRITE THE STORY OF THE YEAR**

As always, carve out some uninterrupted time. I would recommend a minimum of 20 minutes, and give yourself longer if you can.

You may want to review your Inventory and your Reflection questions before you begin, but it is not mandatory.

Then, begin writing with the prompt: “What was the Story of my Year?” Or “The Story of my Year was \_\_\_\_\_.”

In fact, if you use the latter prompt, you can keep repeating that whenever you need to re-energize.

Then, let your hand move across the page (I recommend you write this long hand, but it’s not mandatory). You don’t have to know what the answer is before you begin writing. Discover the answers as your hand moves.

You don’t have to limit yourself to one theme or one thread. Your life wasn’t that simple, nor should your Story be.

So this Year might have been a Story of Loss. It might have been a Story of Persistence in the Face of Challenge. It might have been a Story of Unexpected Blessings. It might have been a Story of Finding New Inspiration. It might have been a Story of Learning to Trust Your Intuition. It might have been a mix of all of those things.

Once you arrive at a theme that rings true, write a bit more about it. How do you see that Story unfolded throughout the year? What are the different ways that theme developed? Where in your life did that Story come to life?

***Is there another theme? Write about that one.***

And the next. And the next.

Until the Story feels complete.

Once you're done, take a pause. Then cycle back and read your Story.

Out loud if you dare.

Let yourself feel and hear the Story of what you've lived.

What is my solid ground moving forward?

Where did I most naturally have discipline?

Where might more discipline create more joy and freedom?

## SESSION THREE – HARVESTING NEW WISDOM, GUIDANCE, AND DIRECTION

Now it's time to pull together what emerged from the previous two sessions. What have you LIVED that can now guide you moving forward?

***I recommend that you take this time to:***

Journal

Play with post its

Work with a mind-mapping software

***Here are the questions you can explore to help bring forward the wisdom of the year:***

- What did life teach me this year that I can use going forward?
- What worked for me this year?
- What didn't?
- What am I clear I will do differently?
- What spells, illusions or false stories was I operating under that didn't work or kept me from experiencing the fullness and richness of life and work I desire?
- What unhelpful patterns of behavior am I ready to shift to achieve something materially different this year?
- In what areas do I need to have more compassion for myself and less judgment?
- In what areas can I let go, let myself off the hook, so I can concentrate on a few areas where I most want to shift?
- What resources and assets do I have available that I am not using, or not using to their fullest?
- What can I most deeply affirm about who I am and who I am becoming?
- What is my solid ground moving forward?
- Where did I most naturally have discipline?
- Where might more discipline create more joy and freedom?

## **SESSION FOUR – GUIDING QUALITIES FOR THE COMING YEAR**

In this hour, we will call in guidance of what we need this year if we are to show up in the full force and power of our beings. We will use a non-linear process to ask and feel into the direction that will most serve us.

### **ESSENCE VS. FORM**

As you go through the exploration in the next few sessions, I want to invite you to make a critical, but undervalued, distinction between Essence and Form.

Essence is what is fundamentally true—true about us, who we are, what we bring to the table. Essence is the stuff that can't be changed even if we wanted to.

Form is the vehicle through which Essence comes forward. Form is our best guess about how we'll bring that Essence into something concrete.

As humans, we aren't always good at predicting what will make us happy, or choosing the best Form to express our Essence in the world.

When we don't see the difference between Essence and Form, we cling tightly to our plans and goals, we worry about measuring up, and we suffer if the Form we chose fails to deliver on its promise.

But if we are clear what is Essence and what is Form, we have a lot more fluidity. We know our first job is to honor what matters most, and in doing so, we become more flexible about Form—more willing for it to change, shift, adapt as we go along. We hold our success or failure more lightly. We are more nimble on our feet.

Traditional goal setting focuses on Form and leaves out Essence. That's why it can be frustrating and disappointing. Or feel empty and unsatisfying.

That's why I want to show you a way to dial in to the Essence of what you want this coming year, before you start to play with what Form that might take

## **BEFORE GOALS OR INTENTIONS: CALLING IN THE NEEDED QUALITIES**

I truly believe that our success depends less on how we exert our will and impose ourselves on the world, and more on our ability to tune in to what is ours to claim. We can't usually do this with our more rational mind, which is scurrying around with a big list of all the things we could or should do

Rather than leap straight to goals, or even visions, we are going to begin by sensing our way into the energies that our bodies and spirits are already beginning to align with.

## **SOUL DISCOVERY**

In this precious, beautiful, sometimes painful life journey, we anchor ourselves in the clear-eyed recognition of who we are as souls. In the ongoing discovery of what is real and true, beyond the surface and beyond the noise of the world, we tap into a source of energy and excitement that helps us navigate and supports us in taking courageous steps to be seen, heard, and known in this lifetime.

Today, we are going to use a non-logical, right-brain exercise to help us make a "soul discovery" that can help guide us in the coming year

**Please do not do the following exercise in advance of our "Planning" Day. There is a magic to doing this with the group.**

## 1. WORD ASSOCIATION

**NOTE:** We will do this together on our first session. It works best if you DON'T prepare your answers in advance. That said, I have this here so you can review after our first session or if you are going through this at another time.

I am going to ask a question, and your job is to write down the first thing you think of. We'll be using the senses as our guide to calling in the qualities we'll most need to expand our expression this year

The Question: If there were a \_\_\_\_\_ that would support me in showing up more fully this coming year, what would it be? (e.g. — "If there were a color that would support me in showing up more fully this coming year, what would it be??")

Use your answer to fill in the first two columns of the following chart

If there were a \_\_\_\_\_: Your Answer Quality Quality Quality

Color | Flavor | Scent | Texture | Location | Piece of Music

### Examples:

- Color: lemon yellow
- Flavor: peppermint
- Scent: hot chocolate
- Texture: corduroy
- Location: public library
- Music: Brandenburg Concerto

## 2. QUALITIES

Now, go through each answer and write down three energies or qualities you associate with each of your answers

There is no right answer, just feel your way into what each thing you chose means to you. These will be adjectives. Don't worry if they make any logical sense.

### Example:

- Color: lemon yellow — bright, cheerful, optimistic
- Flavor: peppermint — alive, bracing, tart
- Scent: hot chocolate — comforting, cozy, rich
- Texture: corduroy — solid, strong, comforting
- Location: public library — ordered, strong, light
- Music: Brandenburg Concerto — ordered, lively, soothing

### 3. CLUSTERS OF QUALITIES

What's neat is that you'll see themes and threads emerging as you look at the energies and qualities you wrote down. In some sense, you'll see a message from yourself to yourself about what energy or quality needs to be developed to have fuller expression.

If you see patterns, cluster the qualities that seem to go together.

*Working with the example above, I would see the following trends:*

- Comforting/cozy/soothing/rich
- Solid/strong/ordered
- Bright/cheerful/optimistic/light
- Alive/bracing/tart

### 4. HOW MIGHT THESE QUALITIES HELP ME EXPAND MY EXPRESSION THIS YEAR?

So, what does this all mean?

What do you do with this information? There isn't a simple answer. But asking and answering that question is what this time is about.

Anything that comes to you as you ask this question is fair game to write down.

If it helps, here are two more specific questions to help you dig in.

#### **How Can I Experience More of These Qualities This Year?**

Putting aside for a moment what you "think" you should do this year, imagine your life and work is a blank slate. If nothing were on your plate but the mandate to expand your experience of the qualities you named, or to develop that quality in yourself, where would that lead you? What would you do differently?

Take each cluster, one at a time, and ask yourself, "what do I imagine would deepen my experience of this quality this year?" How would use of this energy or quality support me in more powerful, aligned expression?

So, for example, “What do I imagine would allow me to access more comforting/cozy/soothing/ rich qualities this this year?”

## **How Can I Bring More of this Quality to My Year?**

If you already know some of the things you are doing this year, you can also ask yourself “how can I bring more of these Energies or qualities to what I already plan to do this year?”

How can I bring more sweetness to my marketing?

How can I bring more depth and richness to my content development?

How can I bring some roughness to my public speaking?

Have fun with these questions but don't take your answers too seriously. Even if you don't generate a single practical idea at this point, just asking these questions should break up your normal patterns of thinking and start planting new ideas for where you might go and how you might approach what's on your plate this year.

## **5. THEMES FOR THE YEAR**

As you play with these questions, you may see some key themes emerging for your year. A theme isn't a goal, in that it's not a specific or measurable outcome. A theme as the intention, the flavor, the guiding principle that you want to align with.

**Naming a theme can be a good way to simply hold on to an insight or awareness about what you want to stay close to this year**

*Some of my themes over the years have included:*

- Feed My Soul
- Trust in Creativity and Inspiration as the Source of My Prosperity
- Trusting in the Power of Me as an Expression of Divine Substance
- Creating Elegant Systems to Deliver Value and Lighten my Heart
- Be Vocal and Visible
- Allowing my Calendar to Orchestrate My Life
- Financial Integrity as a Form of Self Love
- Releasing What No Longer Serves



It's also okay not to have a theme besides the names of your qualities.

## **6. FIND IMAGES**

You probably won't have time today, but a great follow up exercise to do this weekend would be to give shape and form to the qualities or themes that have emerged. That could include:

- Searching for images online or off that embody the energies and qualities you want to lean on this year
- Making a drawing or painting or collage
- Buying a physical object that represents the feeling of your energies and qualities

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