

A New Year And A Fresh Slate

Did you make any New Year's resolutions for 2012? I haven't done real well with them in the past, but maybe I've set the bar too high. Now I'm resolving to eat junk food, exercise less, and watch reality TV. I look forward to a year of resounding success!

If you look at it one way, going from December 31 to January 1 is really just going from Saturday to Sunday. No big deal. But for most of us, there is a sense of closing one chapter of our lives and opening the next. That can be a huge relief for those of us who have had painful, life-altering experiences in the past year. "Yes! Close the book on 2011! I'm so glad I will never have to live through that year again!"

It's a great feeling to be looking at a clean slate, a whole new unspoiled year ahead of us, representing hope and possibilities. Not that we won't still have grieving to do, or things from the past to work through. If we've been paying attention in the Neutral Ground groups, we know there's no future in trying to bury and deny! (And for those whose loss is *very* recent, it may just not be possible to get caught up in a new year's promise right now.) But for those who have had some time to get used to the changes, the new year can be a time of new beginnings.

What have you always dreamed of doing? As long as it isn't harmful to yourself or anyone else, your dream is worth pursuing. Is there any reason why you can't move toward it right now, with a fresh year ahead of you?

Afraid? Here's what artist Georgia O'Keeffe said: *I've been absolutely terrified every moment of my life—and I've never let it keep me from doing a single thing I wanted to do.*

Reluctant to risk? Here's what writer Anais Nin said: *And then the day came when the risk to remain tight in a bud was more painful than the risk it took to blossom.*

Confused about how to start? Here's what actress/singer Cher said: *If you really want something, you can figure out how to make it happen.*

Discouraged by nay-sayers? Here's what author/philosopher Mark Twain said: *Keep away from people who try to belittle your ambitions. Small people always do that, but the really great make you feel that you, too, can become great.*

Sure that your dream is impossible? Here's what writer Helen Keller said: *No pessimist ever discovered the secret of the stars or sailed to an uncharted land or opened a new doorway for the human spirit.*

Right here and now, what is the *first thing* you need to do to move toward your dream??

Here's to a wonderful year of dreams come true!

Phyllis R.