

## SEEK SERENITY & GO INWARD

Once again a new year is here—it is a time for reflecting on the past year, setting new goals, making resolutions and creating new habits in order to achieve something new for your life. Many people are deliberate about their process of looking ahead and creating new objectives. Others, exhausted from the busyness of the holidays, grab a new goal just in time to kick-off a new year. And other people just keep rolling without stopping to make any new plans at all.

Do you take time to stop and really think about where you are going? Do you give yourself the spaciousness to rest, ponder, think deeply and allow for new thoughts to emerge? Or, are you always on the go or in a hurry, complaining that there is never enough time to get it all done, much less take time for yourself?

If you find that you take on more, want more, try to achieve more without understanding why, then perhaps taking a short sabbatical would be a wise investment in yourself. You must go inward before manifesting outward. Seek serenity for the sake of better health and be able to create a clearer, more authentic picture of your life. If not, your vision might be blurry. It's like attempting to capture a gorgeous scene by taking a picture while the car is still moving. It can be fuzzy and out of focus. If you are always doing things on the fly, then you might be setting yourself up for more stress and its subsequent consequences.

I believe in striving for excellence in all that you do and creating big visions to pull you forward—but not when you sacrifice your self-care, physical body, spirit, relationships or peace of mind. It is important to take time off. After all, what's the hurry to get it all done now?

So, I challenge you to intentionally hibernate in order to restore your body and soul. Search for inner wisdom during the stillness and then thoughtfully envision your next life steps. Proactively move towards what's next while instilling new healthy habits that you can use all year. Here's how to de-stress and take extremely good care of you.

### SUGGESTIONS FOR CREATING PEACE & SERENITY:

- 1. Enrich you.** Put yourself first and take ultimate care of you. Listen to music, take long baths, get a massage, sing, putter, create new routines. Have a pajama day. You will be better for others if you are rested, replenished, nourished and happy.
- 2. Create your life vision.** Plan something to look forward to that is meaningful and purposeful; Daydream often. Set soulful and realistic goals.
- 3. Embrace life balance.** Balance is not work/life only... it includes career, money, health & wellness, friends & family, romantic love, spirituality, fun & play and physical spaces. EVERY area needs attention and is as important as the others.
- 4. Plan your time.** Slow down and “right size” your schedule. Use 15 minutes daily to decide what you really need to do. Discern what needs to get accomplished now or can wait until later. How important is it?
- 5. Connect daily with people you love.** Don't miss the opportunity to show how much you care. Be a friend.
- 6. Pursue your passions.** Ignite your inner fabulousness, come alive and make time for the activities you love.
- 7. Get active.** Move, exercise, dance, go outside regularly; don't live a sedentary life.
- 8. Be joyfully present.** Focus on your current task or experience in that moment. Don't multi-task and be completely engaged in what you are doing. Express your joys freely. Smile.
- 9. Behold beauty.** Open your eyes to the magnificence around you, both yours and others.
- 10. Say NO often.** Set boundaries and don't go against yourself. Stress is created when you are not true to you.
- 11. Ask for help.** Speak up for what you need and want from your support system. Build your army of advocates and tell them what you need. People don't know unless you inform them.
- 12. Take time daily to be quiet.** Relax and get out of the hurriedness of life. Meditate, pray, read, do nothing, take a nap, watch a sunset or sunrise, see the good in life and yourself. Create traditions and rituals. And breathe.
- 13. Be proactive rather than reactive.** Keep it simple, keep your side of the street clean. If something needs to be tackled, just do it NOW or take it off your list. Stop worrying.
- 14. Have gratitude every day.** Who and what are you thankful for in this moment? Give back and do something unexpectedly for others.
- 15. Write, journal, make lists.** Get out of your head and let your thoughts flow freely. Make a brain dump, if needed.
- 16. Take inspired actions.** Will “this” action move you closer to your dreams or away from them?
- 17. Increase your emotional intelligence.** Recognize your feelings and express them appropriately. Use anger as a motivation for change. Laugh often.
- 18. Celebrate your successes.** Build in rewards along the way.

Actress Salma Hayek said, “People often say that ‘beauty is in the eye of the beholder,’ and I say that the most liberating thing about beauty is realizing that you are the beholder. This empowers us to find beauty in places where others have not dared to look, including inside ourselves.” As you rest this winter season, seek selfish serenity and use this state of dormancy to look deep within and discover what extraordinary qualities you possess that perhaps the world needs to experience through you.

### COACHING QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER DURING YOUR HIBERNATION

Create your own personal nest—a place to retreat and rest. Settle in to your favorite spot, make a soothing drink, gather your journal and any other reading materials. Once you are cozy and comfortable, consider your past, present and future.

- To begin, define what “down time” means to you.
  - What will replenish and recharge you?
  - How can you pamper yourself today?
  - Do you enjoy your own company? How will you be and what will be doing with your alone time?
- Reflect on your past.
  - What did you accomplish last year?
  - Who was there?
  - Success? Failures? Learning?
- Be present.
  - How do you want to take care of yourself today?
  - What boundaries do you need to create?
  - What does ultimate nesting and rejuvenation look like?
- Envision your future.
  - What dreams do you want to come true in 2012?
  - What do you want to be able to say about your life one year from today?



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