



At the End of the Year

2021 Reflections

Getting Started

For those who have spent some time with me or worked with me, you probably know my fondness for reflection. I'm more directionally-oriented than goal-oriented (e.g. I know what interests me, excites me, energizes me and I'm happy to follow wherever it leads) and because of this most yearly reflection templates aren't a good match for how I move through the world. Over the years I've developed my own end-of-year reflection process that I thought I'd share publicly for the first time. Feel free to answer all the questions, or just flow with the ones that resonate strongly and leave the rest (and add your own!). Give yourself permission and time to meaningfully reflect. It can help to do this across several sittings instead of in one go. I like to ritualize the process by lighting a candle, putting on some music, making tea, and really getting present and settling in. Basically the idea here is to make the process energizing, uplifting, and fun.

Part 1 - The Questions

1. What is important to me? What am I up to? What am I committed to?
2. What are my values?

If you'd like a prompt to get started, [here is a great list from James Clear](#).

3. What went well this year? What did I accomplish? What comes next?

There are many ways to approach this. You might prefer to review your year month by month. Or maybe by calling out major milestones. Going through your photos from the year can be another way to reflect and highlight important memories.

4. What needs to be celebrated?
5. What was challenging, surprising, or disappointing this year? What didn't go as planned? How did I respond? What can I take away from these experiences?
6. What did I heal?
7. What parts of me still need healing?
8. What did I learn? What do I want to remember?
9. What did I avoid? What did my avoidance serve? What did my avoidance cost?
10. Where are my growth edges?
11. What do I want to deepen?
12. What do I no longer need to carry?

13. What brought me energy?
14. What depleted me?
15. What do I want more of?
16. What do I want less of?
17. What did I wake up to? What new ways of seeing, thinking, knowing, being, and doing became available to me? What is now possible?
18. What kind of adult was I?
19. What kind of adult do I want to be?
20. What does a good morning and evening look like? A good day? A good week?
21. What am I in control of?
22. What am I not in control of?
23. What will I take forward into next year?
24. What was my theme for this year?
25. What do I want my theme for next year to be?

Part 2 - The Letter

After you've reflected on the questions above, take a few moments to settle your mind and drop into your senses. Sit quietly and follow your breath, feel your feet on the floor and your seat in the chair. What do you notice? What sensations are you aware of? Allow the impressions from your reflections to float into your awareness. Connect fully and deeply with your theme for the coming year.

Imagine you are sitting across from your future self, one year from today. Your future self that has just began their yearly reflection process. The first thing your future self is going to do is read the letter you are about to write. What do you want them to know? About your hopes and dreams? About how the year went? About the type of person they became, what nourished them, what they achieved, how they connected with others? If you are a goal-oriented person, this is a great place to talk about the goals you set and achieved.

There is no wrong way to do this. Allow your creativity and heart to lead this process. When you are finished with the letter, put it somewhere safe. You will read it one year from today when you sit down once again to reflect on your year.

Part 3 - Closing With Gratitude

To close out the reflection process, take a moment to express your gratitude for everything and everyone that's brought you to where you are today, and to the amazing person you are and continue to become. Let the gratitude fully wash over you before you get up and continue move back into the flow of regular life.

Appendix - Dimensions of Life

When answering the questions in Part 1, it can be useful to reflect on specific dimensions of your life. You can use the questions to guide reflections in a specific dimension, or include the dimensions in your answers to the questions.

- Relationships
- Love
- Money
- Profession/calling/vocation
- Spirituality
- Emotions
- Practices & habits
- Health & wellness
- Adventure
- Learning & growth
- Dreaming & longing
- Hobbies & recreation
- Community

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