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New Life Soup by Rebbie Straubing

January always offers the hope of a fresh beginning. We get a glimmer of a feeling about the new year to come. We think that this may just be the year that our dreams will come true. We create resolutions and goals. We outline new ways of eating, new exercise routines, new heights of romance and new schemes for financial abundance. We set out to make a new life soup.

But our fantasies don't always turn out the way we would have hoped. Our soup doesn't always taste much different from last

year's batch.

If this has been your experience, you may be so focused on the soup that's already in your pot that you have no room for a new recipe. Have you ever tried to "doctor up" a tired, burnt old soup? The old flavor keeps seeping through. You cannot make a new soup when the old soup is still in the pot. If you want a fresh new life soup, you must empty the pot.

Overflowing

You may know the story of the scholar who visits a Zen master to learn about Zen. As the scholar rambles on about his lofty Zen studies, quoting and footnoting, the Zen master begins pouring tea for his guest. The tea fills the cup to the brim and overflows onto the table and the floor. Even the scholar's legs become drenched with the continuous flow of tea. The Zen master quietly keeps pouring the tea. Finally the scholar exclaims, "Why, do you continue to pour when my cup is full to overflowing?" The Zen master simply responds, "How can I teach you anything about Zen until you first empty your cup?"

As we sit down to write our New Year's resolutions we resemble the scholar in the story. We are experts on our own past. We can catalogue in detail all our failed attempts at diets and exercise. We can outline for anyone who will listen how each old relationship went bad. We can easily lament all the things we want but can't afford. As we ask the Universe to deliver all the good we desire, we are still occupied with our past patterns and failures.

The Universe, like the Zen master, offers and offers and offers. The Universe pours all our good into our cup continually. But how can we receive access to new ways of being when we are so full of our old patterns? If we have the desire for this year's results to be different from the past, let's consider emptying the cup before filling it again.

Empty New Year!

A vacuum is defined as a space empty of matter. One of its properties is that, given the opportunity, it will pull things into it. It wants to be filled. It is a hungry space.

Unlike the cluttered space of your past, a vacuum craves input. Unlike the mind that is

satiated and quite content with its fullness and knowledge (the way you might feel after big meal), the vacuum wants new soup. We can create a vacuum by emptying ourselves of the old in order to easily manifest the good we desire.

By becoming empty, we create a vacuum. We clean out our soup pot. We empty our cup and open to all the wisdom, joy and abundance we have been asking for. The first step in creating a vacuum is letting go.

Letting Go

Sometimes when we attempt to let go of an unwanted pattern, we cling to it more tenaciously than ever due to our attention to it. Let's take a simpler and more effective approach. Let's place our attention on the emptiness we desire. As we enjoy the sweet simplicity of the empty space, letting go happens automatically. The emptiness becomes more attractive than the mental clutter and the old patterns peel away naturally. Your teacup, like in a Disney animation, empties itself. You find yourself open to brand new experiences. You receive what you have asked for.

The following three visualizations can help you create some empty space. Use only the one(s) that feel resonant with your current state. Spend some time steeping your awareness in these processes before you sit down to write your goals or resolutions for the New Year.

1. Washing the pot. Close your eyes and imagine your pot of life soup. Get a sense of the color and texture of your current life situation and the state of your consciousness. Sense the aroma and flavor of your soup. Then, get a feeling for the new soup you'd like to create. How it is similar? How it is different? Focus mostly on the qualities you value and would like to amplify in your new soup. You can keep this process all about soup or you can include some details that call to you. Finances, relationships, career, can all form specific ingredients in your soup. Once you have filled yourself with the feelings of your soup, empty the pot and wash it out. Look at the beautiful surface of the clean pot and enjoy its emptiness. Feel the potential of a new soup. Feel the new you. Open your eyes.

2. Empty room. Close your eyes and imagine you are in a big empty room in a temperate climate. Sunlight pours in through crystal clear open windows. The breeze gently blows through the white sheer curtains. Let your mind examine all aspects of the emptiness. Enjoy the corners of the room, the center, the walls, the ceiling, the windows. Relax into the peace of the beautiful empty space. Spend as much time there as feels enjoyable, then open your eyes.

3. Empty space. The distance between the nucleus and the electrons of all atoms is so vast that the whole physical universe we know and relate to as solid, is mostly empty space. Deepak Chopra has pointed out that we, ourselves, are mostly empty space. Using this information, close your eyes and imagine yourself as mostly empty space with occasional tiny flecks of matter. Imagine this empty space as continuous with all empty space. Shift your identity from the flecks of matter to the space between them. Relax into the vastness of your being. Tune your consciousness to your own beautiful, empty space. Open your eyes.

Doing these visualizations before writing your New Year's list will help you access your ability to manifest that which you desire. The New Year offers a big empty pot. May your new life soup be delicious!

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