

Putting a Bow on 2010: A Proper Perspective

At this stage, the punctuation you put on 2010 will not depend as much on what you do but on your point of view. As you look back on the past year, you likely experienced highs and lows, encountering blessings and victories alongside hardship and heartache. As you wrap up 2010, be sure your attitude toward the last twelve months is providing you with the healthy perspective needed to finish strong.

Here are three suggestions to help you adopt a mindset that makes the most of 2010.

1) See the lessons in every setback.

Things turn out best for the people who make the best of the way things turn out.

~ *John Wooden*

As you think back on the past year, don't be ashamed by the mistakes you made. Failures are stepping-stones to success, not proof of inadequacy. If you're not stumbling from time to time, then chances are you're not going anywhere worthwhile.

Failures are not fun, but neither are they fruitless. Opportunities to learn and grow are embedded in every setback we undergo. Instead of dwelling on the disappointment of things going wrong, seize the insights of the experience. By doing so, you'll emerge as a stronger person.

2) Show gratitude for the blessings you've received.

Gratitude is not only the greatest of all virtues but the mother of all the rest.

~ *Cicero*

To cultivate gratitude, Oprah recommends keeping a gratitude journal:

"Every night, list five things that happened this day that you are grateful for. What it will begin to do is change your perspective of your day and your life. If you can learn to focus on what you have, you will always see that the universe is abundant; you will have more. If you concentrate on what you don't have, you will never have enough."

In addition to writing down what you're thankful for, take action to show gratitude to the people who have helped you over the course of the past year. Expressing thankfulness to others encourages them, strengthens your relationship with them, and positions you to receive their goodwill again in the future.

3) Turn the page on the past and take joy in today.

Hoping to get a glimpse into history, an interviewer asked an 87-year old woman, “What was the world like back in your day?” “Hmph!” she responded, “This is my day!” I love her attitude. Instead of being wistful about the years behind her, the elderly lady’s mindset was on making the most of the day in front of her.

The close of the calendar year can be a time of reflection. We think back to the happenings of 2010 and assess where we are in life. Although life can only be understood looking backwards, it can only be lived moving forward. No matter what has transpired this past year, today is a blank slate. So set aside any regrets you may have about 2010, enjoy the holiday season, and look forward to a fresh new year.



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