

Demystifying 2012: 5 Steps to an Empowered Future

By: Marci Wise



2012 has arrived – and along with it comes a mountain of melodrama, myth and mystery. Spurred on by the ending of the Mayan Calendar, which will occur on December 21, 2012, many have suggested that the ending of this ancient time-keeping system will coincide with the ending of the world. Although the notion has made big money for Hollywood – with the occasional action-packed, cataclysm-gear-ed blockbuster – even most Mayan scholars are skeptical that the completion of the 5,126

year old calendar will bring an end to all of life itself. The more common belief within the Maya culture is that we are living in a time that will be marked by great transformation.

Indeed, whether one is of Mayan ancestry or not, we can easily see that our world in the midst of a great global re-shaping. Political structures are being challenged, financial institutions re-evaluated, and countries around the world – such as Tunisia, Egypt, and Libya – are emerging from under the iron fist of dictators who have ruled for ages. It seems that there’s a global push toward freedom and liberty – and that we may be witnessing a dramatic turning point in history.

So how can we each rise up from our front row seat and play our part in making the world a better place? By understanding and acknowledging the power of personal responsibility – and the enrichment that it can bring. Reshaping your habits can reshape the world. Here are the five building blocks to not only surviving 2012 – but thriving!

Power-up

“The mind has great influence over the body, and maladies often have their origin there.”
Moliere

Times of change can be stressful – even good change – so bolster yourself up for the challenge as if you were training for a marathon. Eat well, exercise and keep your thoughts positive. Prepare yourself to be powerful by nurturing your own physical and mental well-being. While being informed is wonderful, if too much negative news is draining your energy, then take steps to limit your exposure to only what’s necessary. The stronger you feel – the more effective you’ll be!



Find your Focus

“A pessimist sees the difficulty in every opportunity; an optimist sees the opportunity in every difficulty.” Winston Churchill

Negative events are a part of our world and cannot be overpowered with force. In fact, getting caught up in fear, anger and confusion only feeds the monster. While you can't always control the world around you – you can control your own attitude. Your outlook and response determines how harsh or mild world occurrences will feel. The true path to power comes by placing your individual focus on simplicity and open-heartedness. Get clear on what's important to you – and then scale down so that your energies are more concentrated and pack more punch.

Salute your Strengths

“Nothing splendid has ever been achieved except by those who dared believe that something inside of them was superior to circumstance.” Bruce Barton

Acknowledge your own unique talents, skills and passions and use them to bring about positive change. Each life is a piece of the puzzle – a part of the solution. Don't wait for something negative to move you to action – look for a place to shine your particular light and lead the movement toward a better world.



Take Action

“Everybody can be great...because anybody can serve. You don't have to have a college degree to serve... You only need a heart full of grace. A soul generated by love.” Martin Luther King Jr.

The earth is straining under the demands we've placed on it. Urban sprawl and deforestation have affected the environment in ways that are causing endangerment to many species of the world's plants and animals. Since all of life is connected, make it your mission to help by taking positive action. From recycling, to carpooling, to switching to more energy efficient light bulbs – small changes can make a big difference toward preserving our earth.

Find Unity

“Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much.” Helen Keller

In times of change it will be important to hold firmly to your own traditions and beliefs – but also to respect those of others. The only path to true peace will come when we can acknowledge that we are really one people. The internet has helped us to better understand other cultures by removing many of the boundaries that separate us. When we can find unity- by

focusing more on our similarities than our differences – our collective power to enact positive change will increase exponentially. Accept that there can be many paths to the same destination – and allow others to find their own way – while still honoring your own.

The way to a better life isn't a mystery – the greatest teachers have sung it's praises since the beginning of time – simplicity, love, respect, tolerance, sharing, gratitude, and forgiveness are the way to the world that we desire. We don't get a fresh start only on January 1st of every year- but instead with every sunrise. Each new day offers us the chance to do better – and be better. Perhaps this year will serve as an opportunity for all of us to reassess and redesign a future that not only promotes material growth –but also our greater well-being as well. Instead of thinking of 2012 as an ending, why not see it as a wonderful new beginning – and a chance to rise above the limitation of past thinking and actively create a new and unlimited future. When you look at it that way – you can't help but say “bring it on!”



About Marci: Marci Wise is a journalist and author whose work serves to reignite a passion for living and awe for life. Her latest book, “Pain, Passion & Purpose,” will be released later this year.

Photos courtesy of: *Maxwell Wise Photography and Microsoft Images*