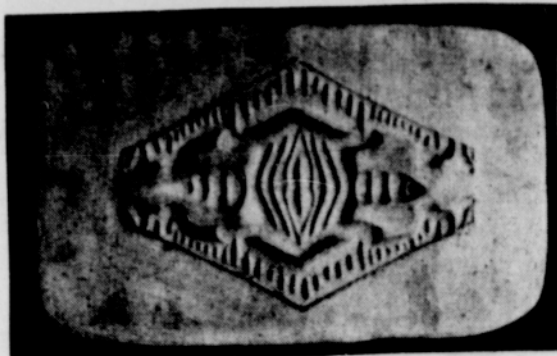


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It's understandable to be put off when people swear. I mean the dramatic or pompous kind. "I do solemnly swear," or "I do so swear", or even the innocent "I do."

"I do hereby resolve" has a similar ring, suggesting a Dickensian transformation in behavior. That takes some of the fun out of the notion that, with the new year, we remind ourselves that we can have something to say about how and what we change in ourselves and our lives. Change we will, but a New Year's Resolution, well, it smacks of overinflated wishful thinking.

So, what might happen if we took smaller bites? Monthly resolutions, say, and maybe in reduced dosages.

A good rule of thumb for practicing a new skill, for instance, limits you to twenty minutes or so at a time. Longer, and the focus required will fade. Now, twenty minutes a day is a chunk of time that most of us can lay claim to, and whether you spend that twenty minutes learning about something, learning to do something, or renewing an old interest, it can give you a great deal of pleasure.

You might begin with a list of possibilities. No editing, just jot down anything that comes to mind or heart. Risky, silly things. Safe, serious things. Unfamiliar things. You don't make new friends unless you say Hi to them.

We come from forever, and we can't remember it. We'll return sometime soon and we don't know when. We are bound to a place that has drawn us to its spiritual web, a place that will someday, without malice, change its shape like the blanket over a dreaming sleeper and toss us into chaos, and all that we now know will seem part of the sleeper's dream.

Until then, why not have some fun and try a few things?

MEANWHILE, IN NEWPORT.....



Alex is still Missing in Inaction.

WHERE TO GET AN EDGE

CANNON BEACH: Jupiter's Rare and Used Books, The Cookie Co., Coffee Cabana, Bill's Taverna, Cannon Beach Book Co., Hane's Bakerie, The Bistro, Midtown Cafe, Once Upon a Breeze & Cleanline Surf
MANZANITA: Manzanita News and Espresso, Cassandra's, The Video Store
ROCKAWAY: Sharky's
TILLAMOOK: Rainy Day Books
HEKOVIN: The Hawk Creek Cafe
PACIFIC CITY: The River House
OCEANSIDE: Ocean Side Espresso
LINCOLN CITY: Trillium Natural Foods, Driftwood Library
NEWPORT: Oceana Natural Foods, Don Petri's Italian Food Co., Cafe DIVA, Cosmo Cafe, Bookmark Cafe, Newport Bay Coffee Co., Cuppatunes, Bay Latte, Ocean Pulse Surf Shop & Canyon Way
EUGENE: The WOW Hall, KLCC, Oasis
CORVALLIS: The Environmental Center, OSU
SALEM: Heliotope
ASTORIA: KMUN, Columbia Cafe, The Community Store & Cafe Uniontown
SEASIDE: Busk's Book Barn, Universal Video & Cafe Espresso
PORTLAND: The Goose Hollow Inn, Powell's Books (Two Locations), Music Millennium (Two Locations), The Lawerkirst, Key Largo, East Ave Taverna, and many many more.....
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