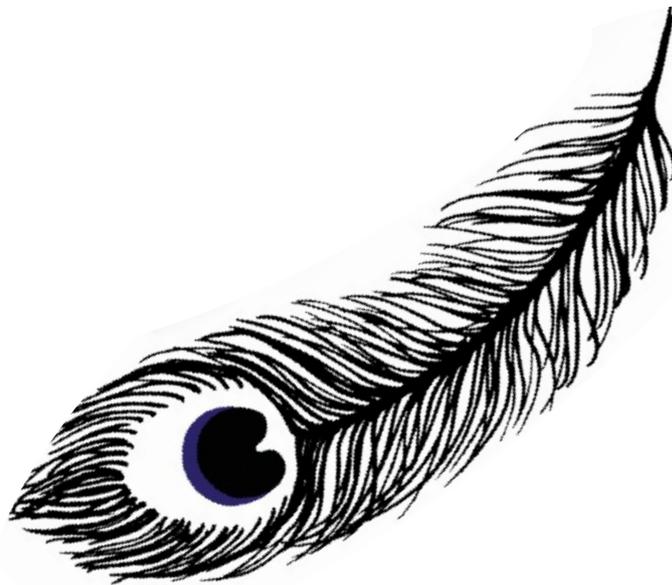


# Two Words

for a  
Powerful Year

\*

14 January 2012



## Introduction

The practice of choosing just two words for an entire year is one of focus. It is also a process of stripping away the layers of 'shoulds' until you can see what really motivates you.

INTRINSIC motivation.

Who you really are and what you really desire. **What really gets you out of bed in the morning.** It might not be what you expect at all. Or might already know yourself pretty well.

I know that when I realised I wasn't motivated by money *for the sake of money*, that was a bit of a shock. For years, I would tell people I wasn't ambitious, because I thought you had to want to be rich to count as ambitious.

Turns out my ambitions are to feel like my work has meaning, to feel like I am making a difference in the world, to feel heard. These are perfectly valid too!

But. Even if you know yourself quite well, as time passes, we start to need different things from our lives. What you need when you have two kids under five is very different from what you need when you are travelling five days a week for work. What you need as a student is not the same as what you need when you start to slow your working life down after a forty-year career.

Which brings me to 2012.

Where are you now?

What do you need?

Where do you feel a lack, or a desire for change?

Do you need changes in your behaviour or in your attitude? Both?

Feel free to write some thoughts down...

## Finding your Two Words.

Yes, you might have them already after thinking about the questions I set you for 'OMwork':

- . What three values are most important to me? (e.g. honesty, loyalty, fairness. Those are mine.)
- . What do I need this year? What was lacking last year?
- . Is my focus in the right place or does it need to shift slightly?
- . Am I comfortable where I am, in all areas of my life?
- . If not, does anything need to change for me to be more comfortable?

If you do, great. This exercise is still useful, an extension of the questions above.

**Write down as many words as you can that appeal to you, starting with ones you've been considering for your Big Two.**

Don't think about it too much, just get as many words down as you can!

Now, examine your list.

- ★ Do you notice any words that are synonyms for each other?
- ★ Do you notice any themes developing?
- ★ Do you feel like you need to look for other words?
- ★ We are looking for mood here, what we call 'bhavana' in yoga.  
Which of your words evoke the mood you want for your year?  
Write those words down here.



Which two of those words give you the most accurate Bhavana?

Congratulations! Those are your two!

Now to set them into your system. In yoga we often do this sort of thing: we call it Sankalpa, or making a resolution/dedication.

I know, horror, the resolution word has made an appearance....

I'm going to show you the process I followed for my two words, then you can do the same for yours.

My two words: **Stillness** and **Stability**.

## Stillness.

What might that mean for me, in practical terms?

- Much less driving than last year.
- Less teaching.
- Less time growing my businesses, more time enjoying them.
- More time in nature.
- Less travel (hah! Good luck to me with that one).
- More meditating to rest my mind.
- Stop working at least an hour before bedtime.
- Less work in general, more pleasure.
- Less work, more self-care.
- More time at home, less time socialising. I need this because my work is very people-oriented and I get to the point where I don't want to talk to anyone!

Now, the nature of my work is that I travel a lot. So the only way I can travel less is to have more restful holidays, or tack my holidays on the end of my work trips, which I fully intend to do.

## Stability.

What might that mean for me?

- Setting up better cash flow and business systems so I don't lurch from one 'learning experience' to the next (starting two new businesses last year really showed up the gaps in my knowledge).
- Taking care of my emotional stability:
  - less sugar, because that does Bad Things to my mood.
  - eight hours of sleep a night, non-negotiable, because less does Bad Things to my mood...
  - enough exercise, every day, even if I am on deadline. Unfortunately, for me, that means a two hour commitment every day. Otherwise it does Bad Things...I think you get the picture.
  - Planning my year so I know roughly what my work commitments (and income) will be more than a few months in advance.

Now, your turn.

Messy is good - it took me AGES to get to these nice, neat little lists...

More space for messy, if you need it...

And so to the yoga.

I like to symbolically practice, on the mat, what I want to practice off the mat. Yoga and life are a continuum for me, really just the same thing. Yoga is what gets me through my days in a non-murderous fashion.

I'm a ghastly person without my yoga - snappy, grumpy, sore, insufferable. My family and close friends know EXACTLY what I mean if I say 'I didn't get to do yoga today'. Their usual response is 'Oh dear'.

So.

You don't have to know the names of the poses, but start to think about which ones would best reflect your two words, for you.

We are going to try and weave them into our practice...

**And, as we practice, ask yourself these kinds of questions:**

How might I be (insert your word) in this pose?

Does anything need to change for that to happen?

What if I run into a pose or practice that makes me feel the *opposite* of my how my words do?

How can I approach that? Does it help if I soften into the experience?



## Your Two Words and Your Year.

Today, you have practiced a kick-ass form of self-examination, Svadhyaya in yoga-speak. It's the mental and emotional equivalent of a good spring-clean.

The great thing about the two words practice is that it requires less measuring: you can check in through 2012 as often or seldom as you like, to see whether you are holding the mood of your words, whether you are living into it.

I also find it useful to reflect on the unexpected ways those words show up in my life.

Case in point, all those illnesses last year which forced me to re-assess pretty much everything, since my words for 2011 were **healing** and **wholeness**. I certainly didn't go into January expecting to spend most of the year sick, but being sick was what cleaned me out so I could get well.

Bit of a mind, er, frick, don't you agree?

Checking in on your words periodically can be fun, it fosters an environment of growth, which seems to make us all feel satisfied, and we have our Facebook support group.

Happy 2012!

Nadine