

"Spiritually Literate New Year's Resolutions"

One of my favorite sources of spiritual wisdom is a book called *Spiritual Literacy: Reading the Sacred in Everyday Life*. In it, spiritual teachers Frederic and Mary Ann Brussat have chosen 650 brief readings, collected from the work of contemporary spiritual teachers, poets, nature writers, and activists, that reveal a spiritual perspective on everyday experience. They call these passages examples of spiritual literacy. Here's how the Brussats define that term:

"Life is a sacred adventure. Every day we encounter signs that point to the active presence of Spirit in the world around us. Spiritual literacy is the ability to read the signs written in the texts of our own experience. Whether viewed as a gift from God or a skill to be cultivated, this facility enables us to discern and decipher a world full of meaning. Spiritual literacy is practiced in all the world's wisdom traditions. From ancient times to today, spiritually literate people have been able to locate within their daily life points of connection with the sacred."

The Brussats also have a wonderful website called *Spirituality and Practice: Resources for Spiritual Journeys* and this list of what they call "Spiritually Literate New Year's Resolutions" comes from this site. While I'm not normally a fan of the practice of making resolutions at the start of a new year -- it's so easy to make them, forget them, and then go on as before -- I can't disagree with any of these ten and plan to keep this list out where I can be reminded of them periodically during the year -- and the years -- ahead. That said, what I like most about this list of resolutions is the sense that they are all actually spiritual practices to live by rather than yet another set of goals to accomplish.

Spiritually Literate New Year's Resolutions

By Frederic and Mary Ann Brussat

1. I will live in the present moment. I will not obsess about the past or worry about the future.
2. I will cultivate the art of making connections. I will pay attention to how my life is intimately related to all life on the planet.
3. I will be thankful for all the blessings in my life. I will spell out my days with a grammar of gratitude.
4. I will practice hospitality in a world where too often strangers are feared, enemies are hated, and the "other" is shunned. I will welcome guests and alien ideas with

graciousness.

5. I will seek liberty and justice for all. I will work for a free and a fair world.

6. I will add to the planet's fund of good will by practicing little acts of kindness, brief words of encouragement, and manifold expressions of courtesy.

7. I will cultivate the skill of deep listening. I will remember that all things in the world want to be heard, as do the many voices inside me.

8. I will practice reverence for life by seeing the sacred in, with, and under all things of the world.

9. I will give up trying to hide, deny, or escape from my imperfections.

10. I will be willing to learn from the spiritual teachers all around me, however unlikely or unlike me they may be.

adapted from the Brussat's website *Spirituality and Practice: Resources for Spiritual Journeys*: <http://www.spiritualityandpractice.com/>