

ERIC BUTTERWORTH PAPERS (3014)

BOX 18 FOLDER 40

INVENTORY IN THE AFTERGLOW DECEMBER 26, 1982

INVENTORY IN THE AFTERGLOW

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CHRISTMAS ~~HAS~~ COME AND GONE, AND MANY ARE SAYING WITH A SIGH, 'IT'S ALL OVER ~~TILL~~ NEXT YEAR!' PERHAPS WE SHOULD ASK, 'WHAT IS IT THAT HAS COME AND GONE? WHATS IS ALL OVER TILL NEXT YEAR?' IF WE CAN PICK IT UP AND LAY IT DOWN, THEN THE WHOLE THING HAS LITTLE RELEVANCE TO OUR LIVES.

BUT...TODAY, IN THE AFTERGLOW OF WHATEVER CHRISTMAS MAY HAVE BEEN TO YOU, I WOULD LIKE TO ASK YOU TO SHARE WITH ME SOME THOUGHTS ABOUT TAKING INVENTORY. IT IS A GOOD TIME TO ASK, 'WHERE HAVE I BEEN? WHERE AM I NOW? WHERE AM I GOING?'

GOOD LADIES?

FRIDAY, AT THE STROKE OF MIDNIGHT WILDLY HYSTERICAL PEOPLE WILL BE SLAPPING ONE ANOTHER ON THE BACK AND SCREAMING, 'HAPPY NEW YEAR!' IT IS AN INTERESTING PHENOMENON, WITH NO LOGICAL EXPLANATION.

THOMAS MANN — 'TIME HAS NO DIVISIONS TO MARK ITS PASSAGE. THERE IS NEVER A THUNDERSTORM OR BLARE OF TRUMPETS TO ANNOUNCE THE BEGINNING OF A NEW MONTH OR A NEW YEAR. EVEN WHEN A NEW CENTURY BEGINS IT IS ONLY WE MORTALS WHO RING BELLS AND FIRE OFF PISTOLS.'

WHAT IS A YEAR? WE KNOW ABOUT THE EARTH'S ^{ROTATION} ~~ROTAS~~ ^{ROTATION} AROUND THE SUN. YET IN AN AGE OF SPACE-

CONSCIOUSNESS, IT IS NOT TOO MUCH TO IMAGINE BEING OUT IN SPACE, AWAY FROM THE SOLAR SYSTEM, WITH NO SUN TO ROTATE AROUND, NO SUNSETS OR SUNRISES. NOW, WHAT IS A YEAR? OBVIOUSLY, IT IS MORE PSYCHOLOGICAL THAN ASTRONOMICAL. A YEAR IS A CONVENIENT MEANS OF KEEPING TRACK OF FOOTPRINTS IN THE SANDS, BUT THE WINDS OF CHANGE SOON BLOW THEM AWAY, LEAVING ONLY THE ALLNESS OF ETERNITY.

OF COURSE...A YEAR IS A HANDY DIVISION OF TIME FOR BUSINESS, AN OPPORTUNITY TO TAKE INVENTORY OF COMMODITY STOCKS, OF FINANCIAL ASSETS, AND OF OTHER ASPECTS OF THE ENTERPRISE. ALL VERY IMPORTANT FOR AUDITORS AND FOR PLANNING PROGRAMS FOR THE COMING YEAR.

INDIVIDUALS, TOO SHOULD TAKE TIME FOR INVENTORY, FOR THERE IS SO MUCH THAT WE TAKE FOR GRANTED IN OUR LIVES. IT IS GOOD TO GET A SENSE OF WHERE WE ARE IN CONSCIOUSNESS, TO ENABLE US TO TAKE STEPS OF ADJUSTMENT AND MAKE THE MOST EFFECTIVE COMMITMENTS IN THE YEAR AHEAD.

SCROGGE
METAMORPHOSIS
Bum Rap

ARE YOU HAPPY WITH WHAT HAS BEEN REPEATEDLY OCCURRING IN YOUR LIFE? IF THERE ARE DIRECTIONS YOU ARE MOVING IN THAT YOU WOULD LIKE TO CHANGE, WHY NOT DO SO NOW? THIS CAN BE DONE BY CHANGING YOUR THOUGHTS AND YOUR REACTIONS TO LIFE.

YOU CAN'T CHANGES OTHER PEOPLE, AND YOU CANNOT CHANGE OUTER CIRCUMSTANCES...THOSE THAT EXIST NOW AND THOSE OF THE PAST - BUT YOU CAN CHANGE THE WAY YOU DEAL WITH THESE THINGS AND HOW THEY EFFECT YOU. YOU CAN CHANGE YOUR EMOTIONS ABOUT THEM.

I LOVE THE COMMITMENT OF WALT WHITMAN - 'OH, WHILE I LIVE TO BE THE RULER OF LIFE, NOT A SLAVE. TO MEET LIFE AS A POWERFUL CONQUEROR... AND NOTHING EXTERIOR SHALL EVER TAKE COMMAND OF ME.'

NOW TO GET DOWN TO BUSINESS. I AM GOING TO GIVE YOU SOME HOMEWORK FOR A PERSONAL PREPARATION FOR THE NEW YEAR 1983. ARE YOU WILLING TO WORK? I HAVE OUTLINED THE PROCESS IN THE LESSON RESUME IN THE PROGRAM SO YOU PROBABLY WILL NOT NEED TO TAKE NOTES.

FIRST...YOU WILL NEED A NOTEBOOK FOR YOUR INVENTORY ACCOUNTING. DETERMINE SOME GENERAL CATEGORIES BY WHICH TO APPRAISE THE QUALITY AND CONSCIOUSNESS OF YOUR LIFE...WORK, FINANCES, HEALTH, LOVE-LIFE, HOME AND FAMILY, HUMAN RELATIONSHIPS. TAKE ONE PAGE FOR EACH...AND WRITE A CATEGORY AT THE HEAD OF THE PAGES.

ON EACH PAGE, DRAW A VERTICAL LINE DIVIDING THE

PAGES INTO TWO COLUMNS. HEAD THE FIRST COLUMN WITH A MINUS SIGN, THE SECOND COLUMN WITH A PLUS SIGN.

NOW, REFLECT ON ONE CATEGORY AT A TIME. FOR INSTANCE...YOUR WORK.

HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT YOUR JOB, YOUR IMPROVEMENT MADE IN THE PAST YEAR, YOUR OPPORTUNITIES FOR ADVANCEMENT, YOUR PRESENT SALARY? WHAT IS DISTURBING YOU ABOUT YOUR WORK? WHAT IS ELATING YOU? WHAT SIGNIFICANT THINGS HAVE HAPPENEDS IN THE PAST YEAR?

MAKE YOUR NOTATIONS IN THE MINUS OR PLUS COLUMN DEPENDING ON YOUR JUDGMENT OF COMMENT. IS IT A NEGATIVE OR POSITIVE THING? FOR INSTANCE...

'I WAS ASKED TO ASSUME ADDED RESPONSIBILITY OF A NEW ACCOUNT.' YOU WILL LIST THIS UNDER THE MINUS COLUMN SINCE YOU ARE UNHAPPY THAT YOU ARE GETTING NO SALARY INCREASE.

ANOTHER COMMENT: 'I FEEL INCREASINGLY FILLED IN MY WORK.' OBVIOUSLY A PLUS COMMENT

→ FINALLY, TAKE A GOOD LOOK AT ALL THE MINUSES. SEE THE IMPLICATIONS OF MANY OF THEM. THESE ARE NOT NEGATIVE HAPPENINGS, BUT HAPPENINGS THAT HAVE EVOKED NEGATIVE FEELINGS. THEY MAY INDICATE THAT YOU HAVE FALLEN INTO A RUT OF SELF-LIMITATION. YOU MAY WANT TO MAKE A COMMITMENT TO BE

MORE POSITIVE AND NON-RESISTANT IN THE NEW YEAR.

NOW...GO OVER THE MINUSES, ONE BY ONE. RE-THINK THE EXPERIENCE AND STATE IT AS IT OUGHT-TO-BE.
EXAMPLE...CROSS OUT THE MINUS LISTING AND REWRITE IT UNDER A PLUS.

YOU WILL WANT TO GO THROUGH THIS PROCESS OF SELF-EXAMINATION FOR ALL THE CATEGORIES ON SEPARATE PAGES.

GO BACK AND CHECK OFF ALL THE ITEMS THAT YOU HAVE HAD TO TRANSPOSE FROM MINUS TO PLUS. THESE ARE AREAS IN WHICH YOU SHOULD MAKE SOME RESOLUTION COMMITMENTS FOR THE NEW YEAR.

A RESOLUTION IS A WONDERFUL THING. IT CAN BE A HELPFUL TECHNIQUE OF OVERCOMING FOR THE SERIOUS STUDENT OF TRUTH. BUT...RESOLUTIONS ARE TOO OFTEN MADE TO REACH TOO FAR.

LIFE CAN NEVER REALLY BE LIVED IN ANY OTHER WAY THAN IN THE NOW. IF YOU RESOLVE TO DO SOMETHING OR REFRAIN FROM DOING SOMETHING FOR AN ENTIRE YEAR, ONE SLIP AND THE WHOLE PROJECT IS DOWN THE DRAIN. YOU MAY SAY... 'WELL, THAT'S THAT! IT WAS A NICE TRY!'

HOW MUCH BETTER TO OUTLINE GOALS FOR THE NEW YEAR BUT TO MAKE RESOLUTIONS EACH MORNING FOR ONE DAY ONLY... 'TODAY, I RESOLVE TO BE STRONG!' TODAY,

I WILL BE NON-RESISTANT. TODAY, I WILL NOT OVER-EAT.

IT IS MUCH EASIER TO WORK ON THINGS ONE-DAY-AT-A-TIME THAN TO TRY TO ACHIEVE PERFECTION FOR THE ENTIRE YEAR. AND...THE BEAUTY OF THE RESOLUTION FOR A DAY TECHNIQUE IS THAT, IF YOU FALL DOWN DURING ONE DAY, THE NEXT DAY YOU CAN START ANEW.

IF YOU FAIL/50 DAYS IN THE YEAR, THE SCORE IS STILL 315 TO 50. YOU STAY ON THE WINNING SIDE.

THIS PUTS THE EMPHASIS WHERE IT SHOULD BE.

A RESOLUTION SHOULD BE MORE THAN A WISH OR VAGUE YEARNING. IT SHOULD BE A COMMITMENT, A SINCERE COVENANT WITH GOD.

IT IS IMPORTANT TO REALIZE THAT THE BEST RESOLUTION IS AN AFFIRMATION OF TRUTH. IT PUTS IT IN A NOW PERSPECTIVE. IF YOU WANT TO FOLLOW THROUGH ON YOUR INVENTORY COMMITMENTS, YOU CAN FORMULATE AN AFFIRMATION FOR EVERY MINUS & TRANSPOSED INTO A PLUS.

IT HAS ALWAYS BEEN MY FEELING THAT AFFIRMATIONS AND TREATMENTS ARE TOO-OFTEN INEFFECTIVE BECAUSE, THEY ARE STEREO-TYPED, THEY ARE MUCH MORE EFFECTIVE WHEN PERSONALLY CREATED.

IT IS SIMPLY A MATTER OF CONSIDERING THE OUGHT-TO-BE'S, AND THEN RESTATING THEM IN AN ISNESS CONSCIOUSNESS.

EXAMPLE -- 'I OUGHT TO BE ABLE TO DO MY WORK WITHOUT SUCCUMBING TO FEELINGS OF PRESSURE.' TRANSLATED, THIS BECOMES... 'I AM ESTABLISHED IN THE AWARENESS OF ONENESS WITH GOD. I AM FREE FROM TENSION, STRESS, OR STRAIN. I WORK WITHOUT PRESSURE AND I AM FREE FROM DISTURBANCES OF ANY KIND...'

IF YOU TAKE SOME TIME TO REWORK ALL THE AREAS OF NEED INTO AFFIRMATIONS AND TREATMENTS, YOU WILL COME UP WITH A MARVELOUS PRAYER PROJECT TO BE WORKED ON IN THE NEW YEAR.

YOU CAN HEAD YOUR NOTEBOOK:

'MY OUGHT-BE-BE-OGRAPHY.'

THIS BRINGS US TO ANOTHER VITAL POINT... THERE IS NOTHING FUTURISTIC ABOUT TRUTH OR ONENESS WITH GOD, WITH MIND, WITH LIFE. WHEN YOU RESOLVE YOURS AREAS OF NEED INTO 'I AM' RESOLUTIONS, YOU WILL BE FORMULATING YOUR PRAYER. BUT REMEMBER... THE AFFIRMATION IS NOT DECLARING IT TO HAPPEN TOMORROW OR SOMEDAY. IT IS THE FOUNDATION OF YOUR LIFE RIGHT NOW.

DON'T PRAY TO GET BETTER... AFFIRM YOUR WHOLENESS NOW. DON'T PRAY THAT YOU WILL FIND A JOB OR GET A RAISE, BUT KNOW THAT YOU ARE NOW IN THE FLOW OF PROSPERITY AND OF UNFOLDING OPPORTUNITY. DON'T EVEN PRAY THAT YOU WILL HAVE

A HAPPY AND HEALTHY AND FULFILLING NEW YEAR...
AFFIRM THAT YOU ARE NOW GOD'S PERFECT EXPRESSION
...HAPPY AND WHOLE AND RICHLY BLESSED...NOW.

IF YOU PRAY FOR GOOD TO COME IN THE NEW YEAR,
YOU LOSE THE CONSCIOUSNESS OF THE PRESENT *(presence)*
YOU GET INTO THE THOUGHT OF FUTURITY. AND IT
IS BUT A STEP OVER INTO CONCERN WHETHER THE
PRAYER WILL BE ANSWERED...OR JUST WHAT ~~THE~~ *THE*
NEW YEAR WILL BRING.

➔ MANY SO-CALLED EXPERTS SURFACE AT THIS SEASON
TO MAKE PREDICTIONS OF ALL SORTS OF DIRE THINGS
FOR THE NEW YEAR...AS IF THE YEAR IS A FIXED
PERIOD REplete WITH ALL THE HAPPENINGS SEEN IN
ADVANCE BY THE SEER.

NO ONE CAN SEE THE YEAR AHEAD, NO MATTER HOW
GREAT MAY BE THE PSYCHIC ABILITY. THE YEAR IS
NOT AN ENTITY. THE PROPHET MAY SENSE TRENDS AND
MOVEMENTS OF CONSCIOUSNESS AND THUS PROJECT THEM
FORWARD TO MAKE PREDICTIONS. BUT EVEN IF HIS
CALCULATIONS ARE GOOD, THE EVENTS NEED NOT
HAPPEN, AND WILL NOT IF WE CHANGE CONSCIOUSNESS
AND ALTER THE FLOW OF CIRCUMSTANCES.

NOW...LOOKING BACK OVER ALL THE SELF-EXAMINATION
WORK, YOU MAY DISCOVER THAT AT THE ROOT OF MOST
OF THE MINUSES IS A LACK OF FAITH. THUS SOME
THOUGHT SHOULD BE GIVEN TO CREATING A FIRM

RESOLUTION TO WALK BY FAITH IN THE NEW YEAR.

NOW...WALKING BY FAITH DOES NOT MEAN WALKING WITH YOUR HEAD IN THE CLOUDS, FOR THIS KIND OF POLLYANNA ATTITUDE IS EASILY DISILLUSIONED IF DIFFICULTIES ARISE.

FAITH IS NOT EXPECTING NO CHALLENGES, FOR LIFE IS CHANGE AND CHANGE MEANS GROWTH AND UNFOLDMENT. FAITH IS THE CONVICTION OF CHANGELESS SUPPORT WITHIN DURING CHANGING EXPERIENCES WITHOUT. *GRANT "RIGHT SIDE UP"*

IT IS FAITH THAT SAYS, "WHEN I MEET MY NEXT WATERLOO, I SHALL BE A WELLINGTON AND NOT A NAPOLEON. I WILL NOT BE THE VICTIM OF CIRCUMSTANCES, BUT I WILL BE THEIR MASTER."

THE ATTITUDE OF FAITH WILL OPEN THE FLOW OF GOOD WITHIN YOU SO THAT, AS SHAKESPEARE SAYS, 'YOU WILL FIND THE 'SWEET USES OF ADVERSITY'... FINDING 'SERMONS IN STONES, BOOKS IN THE RUNNING BROOKS, AND GOOD IN EVERYTHING.'

★ ONE OF THE MOST MEMORABLE CHRISTMAS CARDS I HAVE EVER RECEIVED CARRIED THIS MEANINGFUL INSCRIPTION UNDER A LOVELY ORIGINAL DESIGN...

'THIS CARD WAS CREATED BY ANNE ADAMS, A POLIO PATIENT WHO, PRIOR TO HER ILLNESS WAS AN ARTIST. THROUGH PERSEVERANCE SHE HAS TRAINED HERSELF TO DRAW BY HOLDING A PENCIL BETWEEN

HER TEETH...EACH ORIGINAL DRAWING TAKES UP TO TWO MONTHS TO PRODUCE.'

A LESS RESOLUTE PERSON WOULD HAVE CALLED THIS THE END OF A CAREER. BUT ANNE ADAMS CALLED IT GOOD, AND WENT ON. THE IMPORTANT THING IS THAT LIFE IS GROWTH...AND THIS PERSON IS GROWING IN A WAY THAT MIGHT NEVER HAVE BEEN ACHIEVED UNDER NORMAL CIRCUMSTANCES.

CAN YOU IMAGINE ANNE ADAMS DOING THE SELF-INVENTORY PROJECT? JUST THINK OF THE ITEMS SHE COULD HAVE LISTED UNDER THE MINUS COLUMN. YET...BY THE SPIRIT SHE IS EVIDENCING IN HER WORK, IT WOULD APPEAR THAT SHE HAS ALREADY RESOLVED THEM INTO PLUSES, LEADING TO A LIFE OF CREATIVITY AND MASTERY THAT IS INSPIRING FOR ALL TO SEE.

FEW OF US MAY EVER HAVE THAT KIND OF CHALLENGE TO FACE, BUT THE IMPORTANT THING IS TO TAKE WHATEVER CHALLENGES WE DO HAVE AND RESOLVE THEM INTO 'THINGS WORKING TOGETHER FOR GOOD.'

"TO THEM THAT LOVE THE LAW"

THIS IS ONE OF THE REASONS I AM OPPOSED TO PEER-
ING INTO THE FUTURE THROUGH PSYCHIC
READINGS OR ASTROLOGICAL CHARTS, OR WHATEVER.
FOR IF YOU COULD SEE A TOTAL PREDICTION OF THE
YEAR AHEAD, YOU MIGHT WANT TO AVOID AT ALL COSTS
SOME THINGS THAT MIGHT OTHERWISE BE GREAT
EXPERIENCES FOR GROWTH.

// PHILLIPS BROOKS... 'PRAY NOT FOR EASIER LIVES,
BUT PRAY TO BE STRONGER PERSONS.'

➔ THERE ARE SOME LINES THAT ARE TRADITIONAL WITH
ME IN THE DAYS LEADING TO THE NEW YEAR... QUOTED
BY KING GEORGE OF ENGLAND IN A CHRISTMAS BROADCAST
CAST TO THE WORLD AT THE BEGINNING OF WORLD
WAR II IN 1939 - BY M. LOUISE HASKINS - ...

'I SAID TO A MAN WHO STOOD AT THE GATE OF THE
YEAR... 'GIVE ME A LIGHT THAT I MAY TREAD
SAFELY INTO THE UNKNOWN.' AND HE REPLIED,
'GO OUT INTO THE DARKNESS AND PUT YOUR HAND
INTO THE HAND OF GOD. THAT SHALL BE TO YOU
BETTER THAN LIGHT AND SAFER THAN A KNOWN WAY.

THE 'KNOWN WAY' IS ALWAYS IN THE PAST. WALKING
THE KNOWN WAY WILL MAKE THIS COMING YEAR AS
EVERY OTHER YEAR. RESOLVE INSTEAD TO WALK IN
NEW WAYS. AND AS YOU PUT YOUR HAND IN THE
HAND OF GOD'S, WHICH MEANS YOUR CONSCIOUSNESS
WILL BE SYNCHRONIZED WITH THE INSPIRATION OF THE
ALMIGHTY INSTEAD OF WITH THE WAY OF THE WORLD,
YOU WILL WALK BY FAITH AND NOT BY SIGHT... AND
YOUR WAY WILL BE FRAUGHT WITH UNBELIEVABLE GOOD.

YOU WILL WALK WITH SPRING IN YOUR STEP, BY WHICH
YOU WILL WALK IN PATHS OF ETERNAL SPRINGTIME.

HAPPY NEW YEAR! HAPPY NEW YOU!
HAPPY NEW UNFOLDMENT OF THE DIVINITY WITHIN YOU.

Dec 26, 1972

The first of the year for many businesses is a time of inventory. There is a taking of stock of commodities on hand, of financial assets, of the other aspects of the enterprise. This is important for auditors and for planning the new year. Individuals, too, should take time for inventory, for there is much we take for granted in our lives.

We want to get a sense of where we are in consciousness...to enable us to take the appropriate steps in adjustment and to make the most effective commitments for the coming year. But in looking over the past year, we do not want to allow in what the poet calls the "malarial gloom" of the past.

Ella Wheeler Wilcox's "Resolve" ---

It is the residue of the past that is relevant now. Things may have happened around us and to us through all the year of experiences, but all that counts is what happened in us...and what impact remains in consciousness today.

Take a small notebook for your inventory account. Have a page for each of any number of categories: Work, Relationships, health, finances etc. On each page draw a vertical line down the center with a minus sign at the head of the left column and a plus sign at the head of the right column. Now spend some time reflecting on where you are in your work, what is bugging you or what is elating you. make notations...but in each case challenge yourself to make the decision whether to write your comment under the minus or the plus column. Then when you have gone about as far as you can, reflect on all the minuses and transposing them by indicating a suitable positive attitude.

You might ask yourself the question, "Is my work all that I would like it to be?" And if not "Why not?" In the minus column list all the reasons why you feel your work is not succeeding as you wish it would. These are your "alibis" Then resolve them into a positive entry by setting down some positive thought about each item.

Are you happy with what repeatedly occurs in your life? If there are directions you are moving in that you would like to change, why not do so now? This can be done by changing your thoughts and your reactions to life. You cannot change other people, you cannot change outer circumstances, but you can change the way you deal with them and how they effect you. You can change your emotions about them.

In his book, Peace of Mind, Joshua Liebman writes, "You are better, more capable, more successful, more creative than you imagine." Doing this critique inventory may show you certain repeated patterns of unfinished business, procrastination, and an accumulation of unfinished projects that surround you. Select any of those as a symbol, determining to carry it to conclusion. Adopt the formular of wise old Ezekiel, "And in every work that he began he did it with all his heart, and prospered."

Time. What is a year? We may explain about the earth's rotation around the sun. Yet in an age of space-consciousness, it is not too much to conceive being out in space, away from our solar system...with no sun to rotate around, and no sunsets or sunrises. Now, what is a year? Obviously it is more psychological than astronomical.

Thomas Mann: "Time has no divisions to mark its paassage, there is never a thunderstorm or blare of trumpets to announce the beginning of a new month or year. Even when a new century begins it is only we mortals who ring bells and fire off pistols."

A year is a convenient means of keeping track of the footprints in the sands, but the winds of change soon blow them away, leaving only the Allness of eternity.

Now I am going to suggest some homework by which to make personal preparation for the New Year. Take a small notebook for your inventory accounting. Determine some general categories by which you can appraise the -quality and consciousness of your life: Your work, your finances, your health, your love life your home and family, your human relationships, etc. Take one page for each of these general categories.

Now, on each page, under the appropriate heading, draw a vertical line dividing the page into two columns. Head the first column with a minus sign, and the second column with a plus sign. Now...spend some time reflecting on one of the categories at a time. For instance, your work. How do you feel about your job, your improvement, your opportunities for advancement, your compensation. What is disturbing you about your work? What is elating you? What significant things have happened in your work in the past year? There is one proviso...you are to make the notations in the minus or plus column depending on your judgment of the comment. Is it a negative or positive thing. For instance, one comment might be, "I was asked to assume the added responsibility of a new account." But you will need to list this comment under the minus column since you are really unhappy that no increase of salary went along with it. Another comment might be, "I feel increasingly fulfilled in my work". This would obviously go under the plus column.

Finally, take a good look at the minuses. If there are many of them, it is important that you recognize the implication. These are not negative happenings, but happenings that have evoked a negative feeling. This may well mean that you have fallen into a rut of self-limitation. You may want to make a commitment for the New Year to be more positive and non-resistant to things that occur in your work. And...the next step is to go over the minus, one by one, re-think the experience and visualize yourself having a positive reaction. Cross out the negative listing and rewrite it more positively under the plus column. You will want to go through this same process of self-examination for all the categories that have been given separate pages.

Now make a new set of pages for the various categories. Ask yourself for each category, "Am I as successful in my work as I would like to be?" Am I as healthy as I would like to be?" etc. If the answer is yes, it may be that you are not expecting enough from life, you may be too complacent. But if the answer is no, then ask "Why not?" How many reasons can you give for your lack of success, etc? Make a list of these reasons.

You know what these "reasons" are..."Alibis". But it is important to look at them, for they are a key to understanding your consciousness. Success in life runs in inverse ratio to the number of alibis you hold in mind.

For instance, under "health", you may list as reasons why you are not as healthy as you would like to be: "I have had many colds because of the poor heating in my apartment building." and "I have had much tension and nervous headaches, because of the pressure in my work."

After you have completed the list of Alibis, in a second column re-write each entry by stating the condition as you think it "ought-to-be". For instance, about the siege of colds due to inadequate heating at home, you could rewrite it in this way: "I ought to be able to keep myself in the consciousness of God's healing flowing constantly through me to keep me in good circulation and vitality." etc. Rewriting all the alibis in this way...tells much about you, about your hopes and aspiration, and about your embryo faith. All these statements of how you think things ought to be, form a kind of OUGHT-TO-BE-OGRAPHY.

And then...for every "ought", evolve a resolution for personal growth in the New Year. But let's talk about resolutions. A resolution is a wonderful thing.

They can be helpful techniques for demonstration for the serious student of Truth. The problem is: resolutions are too-often made to reach too far. Life can never really be lived in any other way than in the NOW. If you resolve to do something or refrain from doing something for an entire year, one slip and the whole project is down the drain. We may say, "Well, that's that! It was a nice try!"

How much better to outline goals for the year, but to make resolutions each morning and for that one day only: "Today I resolve to be strong. Today, I will not react in anger or jealousy...Today, I will not overeat." It is so much easier to work on things one day at a time than to try to achieve perfection for an entire year. And, the beauty of the resolution-for-a-day technique is that, if we fall down during the day, the next day we can start anew. If we fall 50 days in the year, the score is still 315 to 50. We stay on the winning side. This puts the emphasis where it should be. A resolution should be more than a wish or vague yearning. It should be a commitment, a sincere covenant with God.

The finest kind of resolutions are affirmations of Truth. If you want to follow through on the Ought-to-be-ography, you can go back and formulate an affirmation for every statement of oughtness. It has always been my feeling that affirmations and treatments are too often ineffective because they are stereotyped. They are so much more effective if they are personally created. It is simply a matter of restating the ought-to-be's in an ISness consciousness. "I ought to be able to do my work at the office without succumbing to the feeling of being pressured." Translated, that becomes "I am established in the consciousness of inner peace and I can not be pressured or disturbed in any way."

Now this brings us to another vital point: There is nothing futuristic about Truth or your oneness with God, with Mind, with Life, with Infinite Intelligence. When you resolve your "oughtness" statements into I AM realizations, you will be formulating your personal prayer treatments. But you will realize that the affirmation is not declaring something to happen tomorrow or someday. It is the foundation of your life right now.

Don't pray to get better...affirm your wholeness now. Don't pray that you will find a job or get a raise, but know that you are now in the flow of prosperity and unfolding opportunity. Don't even pray that you will have a happy and healthy and fulfilling New Year...Affirm that you are now God's perfect child, happy and whole and richly blessed.

If you pray for good to come in the New Year, you lose the consciousness of the Presence. You get into the thought of futurity. And it is but a step over into concern over whether the prayer will be answered...or just what will the New Year bring? Many so-called "experts" are surfacing at this season of the year, making predictions of all sorts of dire things for the New Year...as if the year is a fixed period replete with all the happenings seen in advance by the seer.

No one can see the year ahead, no matter how great may be his psychic abilities. The year is not an entity. The prophet may sense trends and movements of consciousness and thus project them forward to make predictions. But even if his calculations are good...the events need not happen, and will not if we change our consciousness and alter the flow of circumstances.

As you look back over all the self-examination efforts, you may discover something interesting...that at the root of most of the negatives and alibis, is a lack of faith. Thus some thought should be given to creating a firm resolution for walking by faith in the New Year. Walking by faith doesn't mean walking with your head in the clouds, for this kind of Pollyanna attitude is easily disillusioned of difficulties arise. Faith is not expecting no challenges, for life is change and change means growth and unfoldment. Faith is the conviction of changeless support within during changing experiences without.

It is faith that says, "When I meet my next Waterloo, I shall be a Wellington and not Napoleon. I will not be the victim of circumstances, but I will be their master." The attitude of faith will open the flow of good within -ou so that, as Shakespeare says, you will find the "sweet uses of adversity", finding "sermons in stones, books in the running brooks, and good in everything."

One of the most memorable Christmas greeting cards I ever received, carried this meaningful inscription under a lovely design: "This card was created by Anne Adams, a polio patient who, prior to her illness was an artist. Through ~~her~~ perseverance she has trained herself to draw by holding a pencil between her teeth; each original drawing takes up to two months to produce!" A less resolute person would have called this the end of a career. But Anne Adams called it good, and went on. The important thing is that life is growth...and this person is growing in a way that never could have been achieved under normal circumstances.

Can you imagine Adde Adams doing the self-inventory project. Just think of the Alibis that she could list. And yet, by the creative work she is doing it would certainly appear that she has already resolved them into a very successful OUGHT-TO-BE-OGRAPHY, leading to a life of creativity and mastery that is inspiring for all to see. Few of us will have that kind of challenge to face, but the important thing is to take whatever challenges we do have and resolve them into things working together for good.

This is one of the reasons that I am strongly opposed to peering into the future through psychic readings or astrological charts, or wha-tever. For if you could see a total prediction of the year ahead, you might want to avoid at all costs some things that otherwise might be great experiences of growth. Phillips Brooks the great preacher obviously had this in mind when he said, "Pray not for easier lives, but pray to be stronger persons."

There are some lines that are traditional with me in considering entrance into the unknown ground of a New Year. They were quoted by King George of England from a poem of M. Louise Haskins, in his Christmas broadcast to the world at the beginning of World War II in 1939:

"And I said to the man who stood at the gate of the year: 'Give me a light that I may tread safely into the unknown.' And he replied, 'Go out into the darkness and put your hand into the hand of God. That shall be to you better than light and safer than a known way.'"

The known way is always in the past. Walking the known way will make this coming year as every other year. Resolve that you will walk in new ways. And as you put your hand in the hand of Gods, which means your consciousness will be synchronized with the inspiration of the allmighty instead of with the way of the world, you will walk by faith and not by lsight...and your way will be fraught with unbelievable good. You will walk with Spring in your step, by which we mean you will walk in paths of eternal Springtime, with constant new growth and unfolding opportunities.

Happy New Year! Happy New You! Happy new unfoldment of the Divinity within you.

INVENTORY IN THE AFTERGLOW

Well, Christmas has come and gone, and many persons may well be saying with a sigh, "Well, it's all over until next year!" But perhaps it is time to ask, what really has come and gone, and what is it that is all over until next year? If we can so easily pick it up and lay it down, then most certainly the whole thing has little relevance to our lives.

I like the simple thought of the poet:

"If every day were Christmas, How different life would be;
If not one day but all the year were ruled by charity.
Had we the faith in miracles A child has Christmas morn,
Each day would be love's manger And Christ would be reborn
In us again to change and heal Our outworn wars and ways,
Had we a child's or shepherd's gift for wonderment and praise.
Yet every day is Christmas When we have learned to live
By love's law, learned not how to get But only how to give;
And like a child can wonder And like a child can pray,
But have the grown-up wisdom to give ourselves away."

Today...in the afterglow of whatever Christmas may have been to you, I would like to invite you to share with me for awhile in some thoughts about the need for taking inventory of our lives. It is a good time to ask ourselves, where have we been, where are we now, and where are we going?

~~Next Friday~~ ^{Tomorrow} evening at the stroke of midnight a lot of wildly hysterical people will be slapping ^{off} another on the back and screaming "Happy New Year!" It is an interesting phenomenon, with no truly logical explanation.

Thomas Mann says: "Time has no divisions to mark its passage, there is never a thunderstorm or blare of trumpets to announce the beginning of a new month or year. Even when a new century begins it is only we mortals who ring bells and fire off pistols."

What is a year? We may explain about the earth's rotation around the sun. Yet in an age of space-consciousness, it is not too much to conceive being out in space, away from our solar system, with no sun to rotate around, and no sunsets and sunrises. Now, what is a year? Obviously it is more psychological than astronomical. A year is a convenient means of keeping track of the footprints in the sands, but the winds of change soon blow them away, leaving only the Allness of eternity.

Of course the year is a handy division of time for business persons...it provides an opportunity to take an inventory of commodity stocks, of financial assets, and of other aspects of the enterprise. This is all very important for auditors and for planning programs for the coming year.

Individuals too, should take time for inventory, for there is so much we take for granted in our lives. It is good to get a sense of where we are in consciousness, to enable us to take appropriate steps of adjustment and to make the most effective commitments in the year ahead.

Are you happy with what has been repeatedly occurring in your life? If there are directions you are moving in that you would like to change, why not do so now?

This can be done by changing your thoughts and your reactions to life. You cannot change other people, and you cannot change outer circumstances; but you can change the way you deal with them and how they effect you. You can change your emotions about them.

INVENTORY IN THE AFTERGLOW

Take a look at your life over the past year. Are you as successful as you would like to be, as you think you ought to be? Are you as healthy as you would like to be, etc. If you are, something is wrong...you may well be dangerously complacent. If not, why not? How many reasons can you give for your lack of success? What reasons can you give for not having what you think you should have? What about your health? What reasons can you give why your physical condition is not as vital as you would like it to be, etc.

SUCCESS IN LIFE RUNS IN INVERSE RATION TO THE NUMBER OF ALIBIS...FOR AN ALIBI IS INDULGING IN THE ART OF FAILURE.

Indulge your thoughts and feelings in hardship and obstacles and you become an authority on the subject? Keep it up and you will become an expert in the science of "HOW AND WHY ONE CANNOT SUCCEED, CAN NOT BE HEALTHY, etc"

When you list the reasons why things are not as you think they should be...problems, health, human relationships, all that seems to have kept you from your good.

This is revealing, because of the fact that you think these things have held you back. The problem is not the person or condition, but your thoughts about them.

To transpose the alibis...write it as you think the condition or relationship ought-to-be. Put it down...it tells much about you. It even tells about your embryo faith - it gives a kind of profile of what you really are...and a goal to work for and from.

The ought-to-be's form an OUGHT-TO-BE-OGRAPHY.

Then for every "ought" -- evolve a resolution for personal growth in the New Year. A resolution is a wonderful thing. It can be a helpful technique for demonstration for the serious student of Truth. The problem is: resolutions are made to reach too far. Life can never really be-lived in any other way than in the NOW. If you resolve to do something or refrain from doing something for an entire year, one slip and the entire project is down the drain. We may say, "Well, that's that! It was a nice try!" ~~that's how much better to outline~~ ^{How much better to outline} goals for the year, but to make resolutions each

each morning for that one day only: "Today, I resolve to be strong. Today, I I will not overeat...I will be loving and nonresistant."

It is so much easier to work on things one day at a time than to try to achieve perfection for an entire year. And, the beauty of the resolution-for-a-day technique is that, if we fall down during the day, the next day we can start anew. If we fall 50 days in the year, the score is still 315 to 50. We stay on the winning side. This puts the emphasis where it should be. A resolution should be more than a wish or vague yearning. It should be a commitment, a sincere covenant with God.

This is not to minimize the ideal of the New Year. Any time is a good time to make a New beginning...and while the world is talking about the New Year... You can do something about it. Make it new by planning a new format, a new attitude, a new tempo for living.

Walt Whitman: "Oh, while I live to be the ruler of life, not a slave. To meet life as a powerful conqueror...and nothing exterior shall ever take command of me."

There is nothing futuristic about Truth or your own oneness with God, with Mind, with life, with Infinite Intelligence. Affirm your oneness, not as something you may have, even will have at some future time. Know that it is the foundation of your life right now.

In prayer, avoid the tendency to pray for things to happen tomorrow, or someday. Don't pray to get better...affirm your wholeness now. Don't pray that you will find a job, but know that you are now in the flow of creativity and substance of Spirit. Don't pray that you may have a happy and healthy and fulfilling New Year...Affirm that you are now God's perfect child, happy and whole and richly blessed.

If you pray for good to come in the New Year...you lose the consciousness of the presence. And it is but a steep to the concern over whether the prayer will be answered...or just what will the New Year bring?

Many "so-called experts" make predictions of all sorts of dire things for the New Year...as if the year is a fixed period replete with all the happenings seem on advance but the seer/

No one can see the year ahead, no matter how great may be his psychic abilities. The year is not an entity. The prophet may sense trends and movements of consciousness and thus project them forward to predict things...but even if his calculations are good...the events need not happen, and will not if we change our consciousness.

The best possible resolution for the coming days and months...is to walk by faith...turn from the tendency of being in tune with the indefinite...to being in tune with the Infinite. Walking by faith doesn't mean walking with head in the clouds...for this kind of Pollyanna attitude is easily disillusioned if difficulties arise. Faith is not expecting NO CHALLENGES, for life is change and change means growth and unfoldment. Faith is the conviction of changeless support within during changing experiences without.

It is faith that says, "When I meet my next Waterloo, I shall be a Wellington and not -Napoleon. I will be the victim of circumstances ~~and not~~ but I will be their master.

And when we walk in this consciousness of faith, we are vibrating in a way that causes things to work together for good. It is a consciousness that is synchronized with the transcendent rhythms of harmony and peace and success and life everywhere. Karl Jung first referred to "synchronicity" as meaningful coincidences that cannot be causally explained. They were as serendipitous...which can be explained by the synchronization of thought vibrations.

Experience of Eddie Rickenbacker in war, adrift with handful of men on a raft in the Pacific, without food or water for many days. How they prayed for relief, and a sea gull came and landed right on his head. Lot of argument about this. Intellectuals have said, "The gull just happened to come at that time." But did you ever see a gull sit on a man's head out in the open sea? The gull provided them with food and saved them from starvation, enabled them to carry on until rescued. It was a spur to faith and courage. Rickenbacker, businessman, intellectual, mature person, was asked, "Do you believe the gull was the answer to your prayer?" With childlike faith he replied, "Of course I do. We had a desperate need and we prayed and the gull came. How else could it have happened?"

Why try to find another answer? The important thing is...they prayed... they looked forward in faith...and they became synchronized with the cosmic forces of the Universe.

If you could see a total prediction of the year ahead, you might want to avoid many things that might otherwise be great experiences of growth.

Brooks: "Pray not for easier lives, but pray to be stronger men".