

talk about touch

WITH MARY KATHLEEN ROSE AND MARY ANN FOSTER



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Mary Kathleen Rose, left, and Mary Ann Foster. *Rick Giase Photography*

ENVISION YOUR LIFE

MARY ANN FOSTER: Welcome to the New Year! It's a great time to sweep out the old and bring in the new. One of my favorite New Year's rituals is to sit down and write a letter to myself, envisioning what I want to accomplish in the coming year. After writing it, I place this missive in a sealed envelope, date it, and address it to myself to then open as part of the following New Year's ritual.

MARY KATHLEEN ROSE: And what do you discover in the process of doing that? Any surprises?

MAF: Reflecting on last year's letter is usually more gratifying than I expect. I'm often surprised to have achieved far more than I envisioned. In the past, figuring out concrete business goals had not worked well for me; but this process is based on *feeling* goals. I tune into how I want to feel in my personal and professional life over the next year, then write about the physical, emotional, and spiritual state I want to experience.

MKR: What do you mean by a feeling goal? Give me an example.

MAF: It's like a visceral aspiration, an overall sense of being. For example, in one letter I wrote, "I want to be working in a home office with a private entrance, a large room filled with light and color, lots of windows and fresh air, birds singing outside, a steady flow of people who are appreciative of my work, and the inspiration that comes from sharing in a supportive community."

MKR: Very nice. What I love about this process is that rather than describe a monetary goal, as many business plans do, you describe how you want

to experience yourself and others in your work and in the world.

MAF: So many elements affect our vocational experiences—our physical and emotional state; the settings in which we work and play; the kind of people with whom we interact; and the compensation we receive for our livelihood. When business goals are just monetary, we might meet them, but they still may not feed the heart.

MKR: I also enjoy being involved in a creative process that feeds my intellectual curiosity. So one of the goals I can set for myself in the New Year relates to this: what do I want to learn this year?

MAF: This year, I'm focusing on the transition from vision to manifestation.

MKR: Yes, while it is important to take time to envision your life, it is also necessary to take specific actions to bring your vision to reality. For example, if I want to have more clients in my practice, I might need to create a new ad or make some phone calls to generate increased business. As I take specific steps to place that ad or call potential clients, I generate movement in the direction of my vision.

MAF: And the return can come in unexpected ways. While we're talking on the phone, someone may be knocking on the back door. We need to pay attention to any response that comes our way so that we don't miss out on unexpected opportunities.

MKR: Indeed. Goal setting need not be a linear process. None of us truly operates in isolation, so the


goals I envision arise from my sense of connection with other people and the world around me. After all, the work we do with massage and bodywork is about connection.


MAF: Yes, it is important in this time to connect with other people in ways that are inclusive and that bring us together in community. But how do we sort through the many options we have to do this?

MKR: I find it essential to take some time, on a regular basis, to sit still, to let go of the chaos of possibilities, and to allow a filtering process to occur. I've learned that the universe has a better sense of timing than my conscious mind. There is a time to think and a time to just be, a time to act and a time to rest.

MAF: And a time to be thankful for the harvest before moving on, to be grateful for what we have and appreciate what we've accomplished.

MKR: Now I'm ready to sit down and write that letter. Can I borrow your pen? **m&b**

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