



Small  
Ways  
your focus for  
this year

# AS WE ENTER MORE FULLY INTO THE NEW YEAR...

...the desire to have some paths and destinations planned out deepens. One important focus that we haven't talked about yet (tho' a page is in our future!) is how we care for the earth. Last year's February's ebook had this at its heart, too, tho' I hadn't actually intended it when I sat down to write. This year, I am intending for us to focus on this particular sort of caring, for our own sakes and the still-beautiful planet's.

No doubt you have noticed, that the state of the earth's health and all of its accompanying issues has become almost daily news. This is a good thing, for it is long past time that we all wake up, but it can also be frightening. We have talked so often about the overwhelm of trying to help, to make a difference, to know where to begin. Beginning in March we will specifically address some true Small Ways-in depth-with guest posts and real sharing of our own dilemmas and responses.

For this month, I want us to fly above the details of disposable coffee cups and whether it helps to buy in bulk or stop using plastic dental floss and find our larger vision that will be the source of our next steps.



Early this year, I listened to a podcast (I'll link it at the end) with a climate change star (according to Jonathan Van Ness, the host of the podcast...you may know him from *Queer Eye*.) Ever since, I've been mulling over what to do, beyond my usual. To be honest, I have felt discouraged by how little receptivity there seems to be, with people and companies, to make sweeping versions of the small shifts we talk about at Wisteria & Sunshine. So I was glad that in the podcast, Anastasia Khoo got very clear on the three main places we should all be focusing...

-REDUCING EMISSIONS

-RENEWABLE ENERGY

PROTECTING NATURE

The oceans, forests, wetlands, meadows, hedgerows, plains, gardens, yards and all that they contain.

Each of these can be addressed personally, and globally and finding the ways to do so is what I will be pondering and acting upon from this day forward. Just having it simplified gets the grey cells (and our hearts) making connections, doesn't it? And to make those connections even easier to make, I'll also be linking to the series of videos Anastasia mentions in the podcast (short videos to learn about our relationship with climate change) and the carbon footprint calculator at the conservancy organization she works for.

Do listen to the podcast so your mind can start to work on your ways. I was going to write that it is good to work on these large ways, as well as the small, but the truth is...the large and the "small" are so intertwined, it all matters.



My guiding word this year is greatly influencing the path I intend to create this year. You may remember that it is...

## *weaving*

...a more poetical version of last year's word-integrate. Because last year was more a year for *seeing* all that I want to integrate, rather than doing so. The seeing has been so helpful, tho'. It has shown me the ways I need to make room for the weaving...in my days and especially in my work. It is spurring me to get some deeper help with my health issues, and perhaps experience a real lessening in the their limitations. And it is helping me to let go of some things that I might have thought were important, but I can see now that they aren't.



So this is the year that I will truly step out on my chosen path of being more self-sufficient with our home and garden, tho' mostly garden. When I paid attention to all of the Small Ways that most frustrate me (personally and globally) shopping for food (and everything that goes with it-packaging, especially!) is the thorniest.

To grow and put by more of what we eat is where I will be focusing. And it probably will be mostly my own focus, unless the gardener-Doug comes back to life.

Years ago, he managed the market garden we had for about two years. Those were the days, before I had work beyond mothering and homemaking, when we came the closest we have ever been to homesteading. Goats, chickens, huge garden, bread from home-ground grain, homemade yogurt, canned vegetables, a full freezer of home-grown.

This newer version will look different, I am twenty years older, it is just Doug and I to provide for, and I want to grow vegetables year 'round. There will be much learning and experimenting ahead! But I am excited, hopeful and a bit...mmm...realistic about how it will challenge me. This is where our North Stars come in to the rescue, because beyond the goodness of what I will be able to grow and put by, it is knowing through and through that this is a huge piece-for me-of what an integrated, whole life looks like.





I have sort of been playing at gardening for the last many years, good intentions, but intentions fit in around everything else in my life.

Have you listened to the read-aloud I recorded this month yet?

Reading about the vegetable garden and all of the details of storing and using them...these are the sorts of things that have always given me a thrill. The Secret Garden and Mandy would be all the better, in my opinion, if they had planted a few vegetables, too. : ) Yet buying fruits and veggies from the store never gives me a thrill. And farmers markets and other good options just don't weave in well with my life.

To live out my new focus will take care of many of my needs for exercise and well-being, much in the same way I described in last year's ebook. And it will encompass caring for the land more kindly and devotedly as I described there. I've already been bringing home branches I can carry from my short Winter walks, to hand-saw into firewood for the little fireplace fires we rarely have as we hoard wood for heating our house. Little weavings, all adding up to the tapestry of my one "wild and precious life." Interesting how the passing of the years can light a fire, or revive one that has dimmed.

I feel called to something like Frederick Buechner described as...

*"the place where your deep gladness  
and the world's deep hunger meet"*

Your focus for helping to "pull us all back from the edge of the cliff" as dear [Mary Reynolds](#) has recently described it, will look different, no doubt. But I wonder if you also feel that what we are drawn to and the ways that the earth needs us to step up can be woven into something worthwhile, something fruitful?



## *Around February's New Moon...*

...date still to be determined (please vote in the Pigeonholes poll if you've yet to) I will be holding space for our Minding Your Life gathering and will have a new page for this focus to add to the set. Until then, see you in the conversation and the quiet.

Here are the links I mentioned, for you to begin your own pondering. The Jonathan Van Ness one brings up Small Ways while talking about the "big" Ways that might help you find your path...



# GETTING CURIOUS PODCAST

What's The Cutest Way to Fight Climate Change? with  
Anastasia Khoo



## CALCULATE YOUR CARBON FOOTPRINT & REDUCE YOUR IMPACT



## CLIMATE LAB VIDEOS



## LAST FEBRUARY'S EBOOK

