

JAY'S STRAIGHT TALK

UNPLUGGED AND UNCENSORED



i CAN'T IMAGINE
MASTERING THE SKILLS
INVOLVED HERE WITHOUT
A CLEARER UNDERSTANDING
OF WHO'S GOING TO BE
IMPRESSED★



JAY McDONALD
Empowering Excellence

Straight Talk XXII December 31 2011

It's amazing that we're about to end 2011 and start a new year. Jim in China is already into 2012. This has been a year of new and wonderful friends through both Studio VI and new Vistage members and chairs that we've gotten to know. Congratulations to Patrick Lee on his launch! Many of us will reunite at Studio X in late February...hope you'll be there! All the best to each of you and your families for a healthy, successful, and prosperous New Year! Jay

New Year's Poems

Eighteenth-century Scottish poet [Robert Burns](#) may well be most famous not for a poem he wrote, exactly, but for a poem he wrote down. According to [Burns Country](#), a comprehensive website devoted to the poet, Burns, in a letter to an acquaintance, wrote, "There is an old song and tune which has often thrilled through my soul. You know I am an enthusiast in old Scotch songs. I shall give you the verses on the other sheet... Light be the turf on the breast of the heaven-inspired poet who composed this glorious fragment! There is more of the fire of native genius in it than in half a dozen of modern English Bacchanalians."

That song was a version that Burns fashioned of "[Auld Lang Syne](#)," which annually rings in the New Year at parties across the world, though most often sung out of tune and with improvised lyrics, as it has been described as "the song that nobody knows." Though the history of the authorship of the poem is labyrinthine and disputed, Burns is generally credited with penning at least two original stanzas to the version that is most familiar to revelers of the New Year. Here are the first two stanzas as Burns recorded them:

Should auld acquaintance be forgot,
And never brought to mind?
Should auld acquaintance be forgot,
And auld lang syne!

Chorus.-For auld lang syne, my dear,
For auld lang syne.
We'll tak a cup o' kindness yet,
For auld lang syne.

Undoubtedly, some rousing version of the Scottish song echoed through the New Year's night near where [Thomas Hardy](#) wrote his haunting goodbye to the nineteenth century, "[The Darkling Thrush](#)." Dated December 30, 1900, which signaled the end of the century in Hardy's view, the poem intones a much more somber sense of the end of one time and beginning of another. Consider the last lines of the opening stanza, which set a grim scene:

The tangled bine-stems scored the sky
Like strings of broken lyres,
And all mankind that haunted nigh
Had sought their household fires.

But century's end, for Hardy, was possibly an arbitrary marking, too, and there was hope to be found, in the form of the sudden song issued from a thrush's voice, a "full-hearted evensong / Of joy illimited."

For centuries, it has been the charge of Britain's Poet Laureate to write a poem to ring in the New Year. Laureate Nahum Tate established this practice, having written eight New Year odes between 1693 and 1708. And the phrase "ring out the old, ring in the new" first comes from another laureate's pen, [Lord Alfred Tennyson](#), from his most well-known poem, "In Memoriam":

Ring out the old, ring in the new,
Ring, happy bells, across the snow:
The year is going, let him go;
Ring out the false, ring in the true.

Finally, Kobayashi Issa, a great practitioner of the [haiku](#) form, approached the New Year with a sense of humility and reverence:

New Year's Day--
everything is in blossom!
I feel about average.

Cartoons





Honey, our lawyer wishes us,
but in no way guarantees,
a Happy New Year.



History of New Year's Eve

Short video on the history of New Year's Eve:

<http://www.history.com/topics/new-years/videos#history-of-the-holidays-new-years-eve>

New Year's Quotes

Youth is when you're allowed to stay up late on New Year's Eve. Middle age is when you're forced to.
~Bill Vaughn

Many people look forward to the new year for a new start on old habits. ~Author Unknown

A New Year's resolution is something that goes in one year and out the other. ~Author Unknown

Be always at war with your vices, at peace with your neighbors, and let each new year find you a better man. ~Benjamin Franklin

No one ever regarded the First of January with indifference. It is that from which all date their time, and count upon what is left. It is the nativity of our common Adam. ~Charles Lamb

New Year's Day is every man's birthday. ~Charles Lamb

Never tell your resolution beforehand, or it's twice as onerous a duty. ~John Selden

Year's end is neither an end nor a beginning but a going on, with all the wisdom that experience can instill in us. ~Hal Borland

The merry year is born
Like the bright berry from the naked thorn.
~Hartley Coleridge

New Year's eve is like every other night; there is no pause in the march of the universe, no breathless moment of silence among created things that the passage of another twelve months may be noted; and yet no man has quite the same thoughts this evening that come with the coming of darkness on other nights. ~Hamilton Wright Mabie

Every man should be born again on the first day of January. Start with a fresh page. Take up one hole more in the buckle if necessary, or let down one, according to circumstances; but on the first of January let every man gird himself once more, with his face to the front, and take no interest in the things that were and are past. ~Henry Ward Beecher

New Year's Day: Now is the accepted time to make your regular annual good resolutions. Next week you can begin paving hell with them as usual. ~Mark Twain

The new year begins in a snow-storm of white vows. ~George William Curtis

For last year's words belong to last year's language
And next year's words await another voice.
And to make an end is to make a beginning.
~T.S. Eliot, "Little Gidding"

Yesterday, everybody smoked his last cigar, took his last drink and swore his last oath. Today, we are a pious and exemplary community. Thirty days from now, we shall have cast our reformation to the winds and gone to cutting our ancient shortcomings considerably shorter than ever. ~Mark Twain

And ye, who have met with Adversity's blast,
And been bow'd to the earth by its fury;
To whom the Twelve Months, that have recently pass'd
Were as harsh as a prejudiced jury -
Still, fill to the Future! and join in our chime,
The regrets of remembrance to cozen,
And having obtained a New Trial of Time,
Shout in hopes of a kindlier dozen.
~Thomas Hood

Drop the last year into the silent limbo of the past. Let it go, for it was imperfect, and thank God that it can go. ~Brooks Atkinson

Each age has deemed the new-born year
The fittest time for festal cheer.
~Walter Scott

Good resolutions are simply checks that men draw on a bank where they have no account. ~Oscar Wilde

Glory to God in highest heaven,
Who unto man His Son hath given;
While angels sing with tender mirth,
A glad new year to all the earth.
~Martin Luther

A new oath holds pretty well; but... when it is become old, and frayed out, and damaged by a dozen annual retriyings of its remains, it ceases to be serviceable; any little strain will snap it. ~Mark Twain, speech in New York City, 31 March 1885

But can one still make resolutions when one is over forty? I live according to twenty-year-old habits.
~Andre Gide

When then is lost, as time is by,
we look upon the yearly wine
to see our substance in the lees.
Did tribe and purse most pleasing leave?
To look for clear and faithful sense,
that gives a bodied stance bouquet,
then see the vat at mirror's face
and find in it, the yearly pace.
~E. Marshall, Vintner Epilogue (Happy Old Year)

Many years ago I resolved never to bother with New Year's resolutions, and I've stuck with it ever since.
~Dave Beard

I do think New Year's resolutions can't technically be expected to begin on New Year's Day, don't you? Since, because it's an extension of New Year's Eve, smokers are already on a smoking roll and cannot be expected to stop abruptly on the stroke of midnight with so much nicotine in the system. Also dieting on New Year's Day isn't a good idea as you can't eat rationally but really need to be free to consume whatever is necessary, moment by moment, in order to ease your hangover. I think it would be much more sensible if resolutions began generally on January the second. ~Helen Fielding, *Bridget Jones's Diary*

We meet today
To thank Thee for the era done,
And Thee for the opening one.
~John Greenleaf Whittier

One resolution I have made, and try always to keep, is this: To rise above the little things. ~John Burroughs

Of all sound of all bells... most solemn and touching is the peal which rings out the Old Year. ~Charles Lamb

A happy New Year! Grant that I
May bring no tear to any eye
When this New Year in time shall end
Let it be said I've played the friend,
Have lived and loved and labored here,
And made of it a happy year.
~Edgar Guest

It wouldn't be New Year's if I didn't have regrets. ~William Thomas

We spend January 1 walking through our lives, room by room, drawing up a list of work to be done, cracks to be patched. Maybe this year, to balance the list, we ought to walk through the rooms of our lives... not looking for flaws, but for potential. ~Ellen Goodman

He who breaks a resolution is a weakling;
He who makes one is a fool.
~F.M. Knowles

The object of a New Year is not that we should have a new year. It is that we should have a new soul and a new nose; new feet, a new backbone, new ears, and new eyes. Unless a particular man made New Year resolutions, he would make no resolutions. Unless a man starts afresh about things, he will certainly do nothing effective. ~G.K. Chesterton

I think in terms of the day's resolutions, not the year's. ~Henry Moore

Time has no divisions to mark its passage, there is never a thunder-storm 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. ~Thomas Mann

I made no resolutions for the New Year. The habit of making plans, of criticizing, sanctioning and molding my life, is too much of a daily event for me. ~Anaïs Nin

Why won't they let a year die without bringing in a new one on the instant, can't they use birth control on time? I want an interregnum. The stupid years patter on with unrelenting feet, never stopping - rising to little monotonous peaks in our imaginations at festivals like New Year's and Easter and Christmas - But, goodness, why need they do it? ~John Dos Passos, 1917

New Year's is a harmless annual institution, of no particular use to anybody save as a scapegoat for promiscuous drunks, and friendly calls and humbug resolutions. ~Mark Twain

Every man regards his own life as the New Year's Eve of time. ~Jean Paul Richter

To kick start my New Year, I took an IQ test and the results were negative. ~Unknown.

The trouble with jogging is that the ice falls out of your glass. ~Unknown.

When I thought about the evils of drinking in the New Year, I gave up thinking. ~Unknown.

Definition of a hangover: Wrath of Grapes. ~Unknown.

Cheers to a new year and another chance for us to get it right. ~Oprah Winfrey.

We will open the book. Its pages are blank. We are going to put words on them ourselves. The book is called Opportunity and its first chapter is New Year's Day. ~Edith Lovejoy Pierce.

The Old Year has gone. Let the dead past bury its own dead. The New Year has taken possession of the clock of time. All hail the duties and possibilities of the coming twelve months! ~Edward Payson Powell.

Twenty years from now you will be more disappointed by the things that you didn't do than by the ones you did do. So throw off the bowlines. Sail away from the safe harbor. Catch the trade winds in your sails. Explore. Dream. Discover. ~ Mark Twain.

Always bear in mind that your own resolution to succeed is more important than any other. ~ Abraham Lincoln.

An optimist stays up until midnight to see the New Year in. A pessimist stays up to make sure the old year leaves. ~ Bill Vaughn.

New Year's Eve, where auld acquaintance be forgot. Unless, of course, those tests come back positive.~ Jay Leno.

May all your troubles last as long as your New Year's resolutions! ~ Joey Adams

The proper behavior all through the holiday season is to be drunk. This drunkenness culminates on New Year's Eve, when you get so drunk you kiss the person you're married to. ~ P.J. O'Rourke.

People are so worried about what they eat between Christmas and the New Year, but they really should be worried about what they eat between the New Year and Christmas. ~ Author unknown.

The only way to spend New Year's Eve is either quietly with friends or in a brothel. Otherwise when the evening ends and people pair off, someone is bound to be left in tears. ~ W.H. Auden.

Lecture Tour with A Difference

On New Year's Eve, Daniel was in no shape to drive, so he sensibly left his van in the car park and walked home. As he was wobbling along, he was stopped by a policeman. 'What are you doing out here at four o'clock in the morning?' asked the police officer.

'I'm on my way to a lecture,' answered Roger.

'And who on earth, in their right mind, is going to give a lecture at this time on New Year's Eve?' enquired the constable sarcastically.

'My wife,' slurred Daniel grimly.

Politician in Action

A Senator in the USA was once asked about his attitude toward whisky.

'If you mean the demon drink that poisons the mind, pollutes the body, desecrates family life, and inflames sinners, then I'm against it. But if you mean the elixir of a New Year toast, the shield against winter chill, the taxable potion that puts needed funds into public coffers to comfort little crippled children, then I'm for it. This is my position, and I will not compromise.'