

New Year, Same Me; Cultural New Year Traditions

The beginning of a new year is often associated with resolutions and the desire to change oneself. However, it's important to remember that there's nothing wrong with embracing who you are right now. Instead of focusing on changing yourself, consider setting goals that align with your values and passions. By doing so, you'll be more likely to achieve them and feel fulfilled in the process. Remember, self-improvement is a journey, not a destination. So, let's celebrate the new year and all the possibilities it brings, while also embracing and loving ourselves for who we are today. New year, same me, and that's perfectly okay. (Read our Newsletter discussion to learn about S.M.A.R.T goals!)

How do People around the world bring in the New Year!

At the stroke of midnight, people worldwide usher in the New Year with their own distinctive and exciting traditions:

- **Denmark's** New Year's Day is marked by smashing plates and glasses against family and friends' doors, a practice believed to fend off evil spirits. Some people also jump off their chairs at midnight, hoping to attract good luck.
- **Spain** has a unique tradition where 12 grapes are eaten on New Year's Eve, each representing a month of good luck in the upcoming year.
- In **Mexico**, el Dia de Año Nuevo is celebrated by throwing buckets of water out of the window and opening the front door, symbolizing a fresh start. Coins are also thrown on the ground and swept back inside to welcome a prosperous future.
- In **Brazil**, wearing white on New Year's Eve is believed to bring good luck and peace. Additionally, special underwear is worn in red (for love) and yellow (for money) colors to attract good fortune. These customs are also followed in other Central and South American countries.
- **China** celebrates the new year with the Spring Festival or Lunar New Year, which typically falls between January 21st and February 20th. The celebration lasts for 15 days, and it is the most important holiday in China. During this time, families gather for reunion dinners, exchange red envelopes filled with money, and watch firework displays.
- **Thailand** celebrates the new year with Songkran, which takes place from April 13th to 15th. This celebration is also known as the water festival, and it involves throwing water on each other as a symbol of cleansing and renewal. People also visit temples to make offerings and pour water on Buddha statues.
- In **The Bahamas**, the new year is celebrated with the Junkanoo festival, which takes place on December 26th and January 1st. This festival involves colorful parades with music, dancing, and elaborate costumes made from crepe paper. The festival dates back to the 16th century and is a celebration of the country's African heritage.