

Twenty Twelve Manifesto

*“Your life does not get better by chance,
it gets better by change.” -Jim Rohn*

Debbie LaChusa

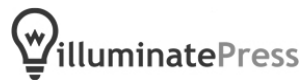


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A service of DLC Marketing, Inc.

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2012 is upon us

We're coming face-to-face with the 2012 predictions and prophecies. The end of the Mayan calendar. The end of the world. The end of the world *as we know it*. A time of change. The dawn of profound spiritual transformation.

Many theories. Lots of talk. Is it true?

I don't know.

What I do know is 2012 feels different *to me*. It's actually been coming on for a while. I've been talking about shifts in my life and business since 2009. It prompted me to write my book, *Breaking the Spell: The Truth about Money, Success, and the Pursuit of Happiness* (due out early 2012). And, after talking with many people during the writing of that book, I've learned I'm not the only one who sees these changes... who is experiencing them.

Our world has undergone so much change in the past few years. And so have I. After trolling down a fairly straightforward path for years—one that included all the norms: college, career, business, family—I feel as though I've been jolted off that safe and expected path. Thrown overboard into a sea of uncertainty and change. And while by all accounts I should probably be scared to death, I'm not. I'm at total peace. Perhaps it's merely time. Time to start a new chapter.

How about you?

Do you feel the change? Has it affected you? Are you still traversing along on the same expected path you've been on for years, or are you shifting? Are you beginning to question the status quo? Wondering if there's more out there? Not necessarily more stuff, but more substance? More satisfaction.

All you have to do is look around. The evidence is everywhere. The economy. The political scene. The financial markets. Business. You know it's been far from "business as usual" for some time now.

Are you ready for the changes? Are you embracing them or fearing them? Are you jumping in with both feet even though you can't see where you're going, or are you digging in your heels, struggling to keep things the way they've been?

I encourage you to embrace the changes. Don't be afraid to question where you've been, or where you're headed. Be open. Listen. Allow. Follow where you're being led.

I believe the key to successfully navigating the changes in our world and business, and finding fulfillment in business and life, resides in two concepts. They're my themes for 2012 and I encourage you to consider adopting them, too.

No Judgment

Alignment

No Judgment

Moving forward and embracing life is not about looking back and judging circumstances, other people, or yourself. What's done is done. We've made our decisions and choices. Regardless of how they turned out, they're history. No amount of regret or cursing can change them now. We may feel we have been wronged... by circumstances, by our government, by employers, by clients, by mentors, but the truth is it's all part of our journey. Our path. Our learning. Our lessons. Our life. It's how we learn what we really want. What serves us best.

It's not about what anyone else thinks, or even what we think we *should* be doing or living up to. It's about what *feels* right to us *now*. No matter where we've been, or what we've done in the past. Now is what counts. So if you need to make some changes I encourage you to make them. Don't hold back. Listen to that little voice inside that's urging you... nudging you. Trust it. Stop letting your mind overrule it.

The sooner we can learn to let go and move on, the more peace we experience. Anger. Guilt. Regret. None of it serves us. Listen to your heart. Move on when that little voice says it's time. Bring forward with you the lessons you've learned. But don't bring the negativity, self-criticism or regret. These negative emotions serve no good purpose. They only hold you back from the life you're meant to live *now*.

Alignment

For years I've worked hard to build my business and help others do the same. Marketing. Business Design. Branding. Sales. Copywriting. Internet Marketing. Websites. Blogging. Video. Yes, I know strategies that work. Lots of them.

But what I've learned first-hand in my business and by observing my clients is that without alignment none of it works. If the business you're in is not aligned with who you are and what you want out of life, success and happiness will elude you. If you aren't driven, passionate, and determined to be in the business you've chosen, then you're just going through the motions. Motions work. For a while. But not forever. It's too easy to get distracted. To put off the things that make you uncomfortable. To find reasons to do it tomorrow. To make excuses.

When you're in alignment you're unstoppable. You'll do whatever you need to do to make things happen. Even if you don't know what you're doing, you figure it out. Because you want it. Badly. So you go for it, with all your heart.

You break down barriers. You bowl over obstacles. You learn what you need to learn. And do what you need to do.

New beginnings

Time to step back and ask yourself if you're really doing what you want to be doing. Are you driven, passionate, and excited about doing the work you've chosen? And if not, it's time to find what does excite you. Stop wasting time doing what you think you're *supposed* to be doing. Be responsible. Don't leave your family in the lurch. But begin taking steps *today* toward the tomorrow you truly desire.

I absolutely believe we're all put on this earth with a purpose. Our job is to find it. Problem is we're often looking so hard we don't see it. I know. I've been there. Doing what I thought I was supposed to be doing. It wasn't until I got quiet and started listening to my soul that I started to really see it. And, it wasn't until I started following that little voice of inspiration that I began to experience the magic and fulfillment that accompanies the decision to follow your purpose.

A time of change

The evolution started for me in 2011 with the writing of my book *Breaking the Spell*. It continues this year with a revamping of my business, my brand, and my services. It's not a radical change. It's more of a shift. A fine-tuning. To be honest, I don't know exactly where it's all leading, but I can assure you I will continue to follow. I can't *not* follow. To stop would be to deny my mission... my purpose... the gifts I know I'm here to share.

Why am I sharing this with you?

As I sat here at the beginning of the year, continuing to step forward in faith with all the changes I've been inspired to make, I remained a bit uncertain about how—or if—to share it with those who have been faithfully following me.

Do I announce the changes?

Do I just do what I'm being called to do and not worry about explaining it?

Will anyone even notice... or care?

Lots of questions. Very few answers. So I kept doing the work I was inspired to do. Finishing writing my book. Revamping my website. Creating a new blog. While the questions still lingered. Like every other time, I knew the answers would come. I just didn't know when. Perhaps the most challenging part of this new journey I've been on—learning to follow inspiration—is the patience it requires.

The universe certainly has its own timing and it's often not fast enough for me. But I'm learning that faster is not always better. The nuances and joy are often lost in the mad dash. Time is spent doing things that don't need to be done, in an effort to keep moving toward the goal. When, in reality, when patience is embraced, life—and business—takes on a more magical quality. Amazing opportunities arise. And the answers always come, in perfect timing. *If you're listening.*

Today as I was sitting on the patio enjoying the sunshine and eating my lunch, my answers came. Twenty Twelve Manifesto. Share about the changes you've seen and experienced. Encourage others to embrace the changes, too. And share what you've been working on—lay it all out.

So as I always do these days, I immediately followed that inspiration. I sat down at my laptop and started writing this manifesto.

I believe business is changing

No, let me re-state that. I *know* business is changing. After 14 years in business on my own, I've experienced it first-hand. Therefore, my business must change (and so must yours). What worked a few years ago, no longer works the same today. There's a lot more marketing noise. Social media has changed the game. The ease and low cost with which anyone can put up a website has made the online marketplace even more crowded than it already was. The fact that we're all inundated with free information and e-zines makes it harder to build a list and break through the clutter. The economy has caused people to be more cautious. Corporate and financial scandals and unscrupulous marketers have made consumers more cautious.

As a result, people have changed. They consume information and buy differently than they did even just a few years ago. Technology continues to transform our world at a rapid pace. This all impacts you if you're a business owner. In fact, you've probably already felt the impact. Maybe it's gotten harder to do what you do... to attract clients... to sell your programs and services. If you want your business to flourish, you must evolve with these changes. Standing still is not an option. The world will pass you by

No secrets, just clues and time-tested strategies

While I definitely believe there are strategies that are required to be successful in business, I don't believe in "secrets to success," "proven systems" or "blueprints." To put it bluntly, just because something works for one person does not mean it will work for you. It's imperative that you factor YOU into the equation.

Leaders wanted... are you willing to step up?

To succeed in business in today, you must be a leader. Just look around and you'll see that all successful businesses and people are. Anyone can follow. Followers are part of a crowd. They get lost in that crowd. If you want to succeed, you must be willing to take a stand and lead. You must identify the ONE thing you can do, in the way that ONLY you can do it, and do it to the best of your ability. You must have total confidence in yourself and your services. And, you must package it all in a way that grabs people's attention and helps them see how what you have to offer will enhance their lives, or their businesses.

Never forget it's personal

For years I managed marketing campaigns for large corporations. The first thing my team and I did was learn the client's business inside and out. It was the only way we could intelligently design a customized marketing approach to propel *that* business forward. While we followed some standard principles it was never "one size fits all."

When it comes to you and your business there are too many variables for "one size fits all" to work. If you're seeking help and guidance, you want someone who will work with you to design and implement a customized approach that fits you, your business, your industry, your clientele, your desired lifestyle, and your goals.

Passion is not enough

Recognize that while being passionate about what you do is important (it's what's going to drive you to push through obstacles and succeed) it's not all that is necessary. Frankly, no one really cares that you love what you do. *That* is not what's going to make someone hire you or buy your products or services.

Businesses based on passion that don't take into account what the marketplace wants or needs won't thrive. You absolutely must match up what you do with something people want. Something they need. Something they can't live without. Something that makes their life better. And, something they're willing to pay for. Otherwise you're just wasting your time. And you'll be nothing but frustrated.

Marketing is more important than ever

You must learn how to get in front of people and communicate what you can do for them in a way that engages them, connects with that want or need, and resonates with their desires. Yes, that's called marketing. In the crowded, noisy world we live in today, where it seems like everyone wants to be an entrepreneur, good marketing become even more crucial to your business success. But never forget that good—even great—marketing won't work (at least not for long) unless you have a solid business foundation *first*.

Not a system, a new order (actually it's as old as time!)

There is a distinct order in which a successful and enjoyable business is designed. Find your Passion. Identify what you do well. Fill a Need. Uniquely Brand Yourself. Create and implement great Marketing. Connect. Resonate. And, all of this must be followed by the willingness, and the ability to sell.

Considered a four-letter word by some, S-E-L-L is something you must do if you want to succeed in business. The key is, when you're in the right business, you will want to sell. You will passionately share your message because you know you can help people. In fact, you can't wait to help them. So, odds are, if you're squeamish about selling you're either not in the right business, or you haven't yet learned how to pull your passion into your marketing.

The question is, are you willing to change what's not working?

The reality is if you're not happy with your life or business right now, change is the only remedy. I encourage you to be open to the changes that are necessary for you to be happy in your life and successful in your business... and be willing to make them. Those changes may include a total overhaul, or simply some minor fine-tuning. Either way, I promise you they'll be a step in the right direction!

Because making those changes is the only way to ensure you'll fulfill your purpose in 2012, and beyond. After all, life—and business—really is a series of constant tweaks and changes. It doesn't stand still. So neither can you.

We've all heard the clichés about change: Change is hard. Change is scary. Change is the only constant. People resist change.

I would like to suggest you consider another perspective: change is simply how you choose to look at it. It can be hard if you choose to view it as hard. It can feel scary if you allow yourself to be frightened by the unknown. However, you can just as easily choose to be excited and curious about the possibilities.

If you're ready for a change and you'd like a little help navigating the path, you'll find some ways on the following pages that I can help.

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Debbie LaChusa's Services for 2012

I've made some changes to my business and service offerings for 2012. As you'll see on my new website at www.DebbieLaChusa.com I'm focusing my work in three main areas: (1) Consulting; (2) Writing; and (3) Speaking.

Consulting

The Business Stylist® www.DebbieLaChusa.com/the-business-stylist

Consulting *not* Coaching... yes, there *is* a difference!

For years I have allowed people to refer to me as a coach, and I have also used that title myself. In 2012 I have made a conscious decision to remove the word “coach” from my service offerings and marketing, and present myself for what I truly am: a consultant.

When I work with clients I don't merely coach them to find their best answers, I provide recommendations and work with them to implement those recommendations so their businesses become more successful. Nothing against coaches, but what I do cannot be learned in a training program. It can only be learned in the real world. It's the culmination of more than 25 years of education and real-world experience developing businesses and brands, and marketing them. It's important for me to distinguish this difference and set myself apart.

Consulting Services

I have revamped my business and marketing consulting services for 2012. To learn more about my *Marketing Check-Up* (a quick and inexpensive way to find out what changes are needed in your business to enable you to reach your goals this year), custom-designed consulting packages (for personalized, one-on-one help and support—I will do my best to help you accomplish your goals within your budget and if I can't, I'll tell you), or low-cost self-study programs you can do on your own and at your own pace, including *Package U* and *Get Clear!* please visit www.DebbieLaChusa.com/the-business-stylist.

If you'd like to see, or talk to, some of the people I've helped with my consulting services I invite you to visit www.DebbieLaChusa.com/references

Writing

Books www.DebbieLaChusa.com/books

I'm excited to announce my new publishing imprint: *Illuminate Press*. It provides the perfect vehicle to write and publish books and e-books (including this manifesto) that are consistent with my mission to shine a light on myths and misconceptions I see in the world and in business.

The Illuminate Press mission is...

Books that question what is... Expose the truth... and Illuminate the possibilities

Breaking the Spell: The Truth about Money, Success, and the Pursuit of Happiness is the first book to be published by *Illuminate Press* and it will be available in early 2012. To learn more and download the first chapter absolutely free, please visit www.BreakingTheSpellBook.com

I have several other book ideas in the queue for *Illuminate Press*. Topics currently under consideration include marriage, college/career, marketing, parenting, and weight loss and fitness. These are all areas I have personal experience in.

However, as with *Breaking the Spell*, my intention is not to present myself as an expert in any of these topics. Rather, it is to approach them from my personal experience, ask questions, do research, interview others, and compile it all into a book that shines a light on topics that I believe have become mired in myths or misconceptions. I view myself more as illuminator than expert. Thus the name!

If there's a topic you're interested in seeing covered by *Illuminate Press* please drop me an email at debbie@debbielachusa.com and let me know.

Writing: Blogs www.DebbieLaChusa.com/blogs

I've been blogging since 2006 and in 2012 I launched my latest blog, *The Money, Success, Happiness Blog* at www.MoneySuccessHappiness.com. On this blog I share my thoughts and opinions on these three topics, as well as research I uncover, books I recommend, and videos and articles I find that I think share messages worthy of your consideration. The blog is brand new however I will be adding to it every week and hope to create a robust hub of valuable information.

I encourage you to check it out at www.MoneySuccessHappiness.com, subscribe to my RSS feed, or join my list (you can join by registering for the free chapter of my book) so you can receive blog updates and participate in the conversation.

* * *

Speaking

www.DebbieLaChusa.com/speaking/

I've spoken for years, on teleclasses and on the stage, locally and around the world. While I have traditionally spoken on marketing and branding, my intention is to focus my future speaking more on spreading the messages in the books published by *Illuminate Press*, beginning with *Breaking the Spell*. I'm passionate about creating change in the world and I believe speaking and writing are powerful ways to do so.

If you'd like me to speak to a group you're involved with, please email me at debbie@debbielachusa.com so we can talk.

Wrapping things up

I've already gone on longer than I intended. I hope if you've made it this far you've found this manifesto interesting and thought provoking.

Please feel free to share your thoughts and response by dropping me an email at debbie@debbielachusa.com. I personally read every email I receive and would love to hear from you.

Because that's another change I am embracing in 2012—the two-way conversation! I want to know what you think. I want to know how I can serve you. I want to be in conversation. It's far too easy to get stuck behind a computer all day and lose touch with the very audience you're trying to reach.

So, I encourage you to reach out and touch me back. I promise it will make my day!

In the end, I hope this manifesto has moved you. Gotten you to stop and think. Step back. Re-evaluate your life... your business. Re-energize. Re-invent if necessary.

I genuinely hope 2012 is your happiest and most fulfilling year yet. If you think I may be able to help ensure that it is, please don't hesitate to reach out to me.

I'd love to support you in following your purpose and doing the work you're meant to do.



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About Debbie LaChusa

I love to write, talk and share. As much as I choose to be a positive person, when I see a problem I can't help but speak my mind. I am honest, direct, and I never beat around the bush. I also love to help others grow, prosper, and learn from my experiences and mistakes.



I Can Market Anything... But I No Longer Choose to.

After studying advertising and marketing in college and spending 13 years creating and implementing marketing campaigns for everything from new home communities and cars to newspapers and fitness associations, I decided I was done marketing products and services I wasn't passionate about. I was also burned out from balancing a demanding career and a growing young family. So in 1998 I decided to start my own business. I also began speaking, writing, and teaching others. In the process I discovered my true passion. Now, instead of marketing houses or cars, I enjoy helping those who help and serve others—primarily coaches, consultants, and other service-based business professionals—design, brand, and authentically market their businesses.

I've Started Businesses, Written Books, and Spoken Around the World.

Since 1998 I have created and run eight different businesses—some successful and some not so much (what can I say, it's been a journey!). I've written and published three books (the last one was a lot harder than the first two!) and created three different blogs. I've traveled across the United States and to Canada and Australia to speak and I've developed, marketed, and sold information products, and training and mastermind programs.

I've also taught more teleclasses than I can count and have been fortunate enough to be featured in magazines such as *Entrepreneur* and *Home Business*, as well as on *Forbes.com*, *CNBC.com*, *Inc.com*, *Yahoo! Finance* and the *Yahoo! Small Business blog*. I say this not to brag but rather to share that my career has been an ever-changing adventure providing wide and varied experience that I in turn use to help others.

On a Personal Note

When I'm not writing or running my business you're likely to find me just plain running (I'm a former marathon runner and still enjoy running, just not so far!), doing P90X or Pilates in my "home gym," reading, spending time with my husband, mothering my two college-age kids (yes, they still need a mom at ages 19 and 22!), playing with my dogs, or simply enjoying sunny SoCal.