Gratitude offers us many gifts

We think of gratitude as an appreciative word or deed given in return for someone’s kindness. Gratitude can become an automatic response to any situation that benefits us and is often given without awareness of its many benefits. Like Thanksgiving, thankfulness can become so stylized that its real meaning is lost.

What gifts does gratitude offer us when we use it? What does being grateful do for us? First of all, gratitude has great restorative powers. Appreciation of others always raises one’s own level of happiness. Gratitude is an excellent way of removing your concentration from negative situations and placing your attention on what is right. The simple act of being aware of what one is receiving and expressing gratitude in action, brings the desired state of joy.

Secondly, being grateful extends your present joy backwards by holding thoughts of gratitude about people and events from the past. It can make you smile and fill your heart with joy when you reminisce about your beautiful friends and the special times you’ve had. The more gratitude you feel about the past, the happier you are in the present.

I believe the most marvelous gift that unconditional gratitude gives us is clarity and vision. Giving unconditional gratitude I begin to see that everything is here to bless me. I really cannot explain how this happens. It just does. It makes no sense in terms of our worldly thought processes. Only the actual act, in which you give gratitude unconditionally, brings the fantastic results of seeing clearly. As one keeps extending gratitude to everyone in your past and your present, you start to see that all that surrounds you is actually in harmony. You begin to see that what you judged as harmful and unfair was really a misinterpretation, a faulty judgment based on your perception, which is very limited in its scope.

Human perception seems very powerful. It proceeds from our limited self-concept. From this view, that of a limited and unconnected being, we look out at a world filled with danger and pain. If we refuse to act on this perception but desire to see what is happening in our life, spiritually, we get an entirely different view. We begin to see the interconnected and intersupporting relationships of reality. We begin to see the spiritual dance in which we are each engaged. It is important that you not try to figure out the dance, but merely let it reveal itself to you and the move to the beat. Unconditional gratitude replaces your frustration with the peace, joy and happiness that is naturally yours.

Namaste!

A Thanksgiving Wish
May every moment
Of your life be celebrated
with gratitude—living
in the consciousness of being
thankful for all things.

May the feeling of
gratitude radiate
from you in all
directions, touching
everyone in your life
and resonating deep
within your soul.

How to observe
Thanksgiving

* Count your blessings instead of your crosses;
* Count your gains instead of your losses.
* Count your joys instead of your woes;
* Count your friends instead of your foes.
* Count your smiles instead of your tears;
* Count your courage instead of your fears.
* Count your full years instead of your lean;
* Count your kind deeds instead of your mean.
* Count your health instead of your wealth;
* Count on God instead of yourself.

Thanks for reading this publication!
**Cultivating Gratitude...**

Most spiritual traditions speak of the importance of cultivating a sense of gratitude in life if one is to evolve into higher realms of human existence and consistently experience joy, aliveness and meaning in one’s life.

Gratitude paves the way for a host of very positive qualities to emerge. One can cultivate more of this wonderful quality by starting a gratitude journal, writing down all things, both great and small, that we are grateful for in our life. Nothing is too small or insignificant to be included because the scale of gratitude knows no bounds. Review your list daily.

Gratitude is an essential part of spiritual consciousness, as it opens your heart and enables you to get a glimpse of that state of consciousness that connects you to all this is, a state of consciousness that is bliss itself, union with your soul, connection to your source. So make it a regular part of your spiritual practice whatever that may be. Give thanks for all the blessings of your life: material, emotional, social, artistic, aesthetic, recreational, spiritual.

Call a friend or relative, or write a letter to let someone know what they mean to you, even if they are healthy and not in crisis. The consistent practice of expressing gratitude reminds us that we do not live alone; we survive only because we are constantly receiving goods from people, from nature and from spirit. Gratitude helps us to be more aware of the many things that we receive from other people and realize that our lives depend on the perpetual giving of others, and we feel a deeper responsibility to give more of ourselves.

Albert Einstein said, “A hundred times every day I remind myself that my inner and outer life depends on the labors of others, living and dead and that I must exert myself in order to give in the measure as I have received and am still receiving.”

I am grateful to have the opportunity to write SAGE-ING AGE-ING each month. I leave you with a wonderful quote by Melody Beattle: “Gratitude unlocks the fullness of life. It turns what we have into enough and more. It turns denial into acceptance, chaos to order, confusion to clarity. It can turn a meal into a feast, a house into a home, a stranger into a friend. Gratitude makes sense of our past, bring peace for today and creates a vision for tomorrow.”

*Gratitude is a Sanctuary that allows us to love even deeper.*

**Editor**

Jane Zoltek, ssjtosf

**HAPPY THANKSGIVING TO EACH OF YOU!**

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**Tidbits**

*November is a special time to dig deep within our hearts and appreciate all of the blessings in our lives. Abundance comes not from without but from within. It’s presence is sparked from the recognition that we are already rich—rich in spirit. Genuine abundance and prosperity emanates from the love inside of us, that infinite well-spring where our fulfillment and peace of mind exists; the source of love within us where our genuine inspiration lives; the channel that allows our creativity to burst forth and our love to pour outward. When we recognize that we’re all connected, then we understand that to give to another is the same as giving to ourselves.*

*The two most important days in your life are the day you are born and the day you find out why. Mark Twain*

*An unexamined life is not worth living. Socrates*