

How to be grateful?

Gratitude is a powerful tool, and it's a tool that we rarely pick up. Gratitude is an awareness of and a sense of contentment with what we have, where we are. It's an attitude that confronts the discontentment within us that is a fruit of the Fall in Genesis. Gratitude is a wonder that one simply has to embrace to keep from becoming bitter, angry and controlling. We mistake gratitude for a feeling. Gratitude is not a feeling. It's a commitment, a mind-set, a spiritual attitude that focuses our eyes on all that God has given us, all that he has done for us and all that he is.

How do we become more grateful people? A trait that we can focus on to grow in gratitude is to grow in awareness. Awareness is a trait that helps us see not just what is obvious and loud but what is necessary and often subtle, simply because it is so constant. To be aware is an effort, and it seems that part of the reason is why it is such an effort because it is the way we are wired. Our brains are geared toward the memory of pain. It's part of the way God set it up that helps us avoid people or situations that harm us.

To grow in gratitude, we need to share good news with each other. So much of our dialogue is negative, and negative is the wild animal in the yard: If we feed it, it gets bigger. Combat the human tendency to complain and find fault by sharing good news and good stories from your day. Share the little moments that made the day a touch simpler, share the little sacrifices people made for you that day etc. Make a commitment to reject complaining. Complaining is like scratching a bug bite. The instant relief is wonderful, but in just a couple of seconds, we'll need to scratch again. That's how complaining works: we're never done with it. Reject the complaining spirit!

So, let's be grateful for the innumerable people in our Community who make it all work and make it work better. Let's be grateful people! Enjoy another month in God's presence!

Happy
Thanksgiving
to you!

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Get a life...

Often one hears the statement, "Get a life!" Do you sabotage your potential for happiness, good health and prosperity by setting up standards that are impossible to meet?

Lincoln stated "People are about as happy as they make up their minds to be." We seem to suffer from the "if only" disease. If only I were thinner, taller, healthier... We can fall into the trap of waiting to be happy. It affects us mentally, physically and spiritually. If you keep planning to "get a life", you may not live long enough enjoy it. Try these simple steps:

- Accept yourself for who and what you are. Be kind to yourself.
- Hold your tongue. Get in touch with the empathetic side of yourself.
- Find the real you. Venture out of your box of life and have some fun.
- Shape up and become the change you wish to see in others. What we dislike in others is usually what we dislike in ourselves. Since you can't change others, work on changing yourself.
- Find out why it's great to be alive. Everywhere you go, decorate the world with kindness. Be a happiness giver!

The aging process can be a positive, vibrant, healthy experience.

Use Your Brain To The Max

It is reported that at a gathering of prominent brain surgeons, Albert Einstein began his talk by saying, "The answer to your question, 'Yes, you can have my brain when I die.'" Einstein made them agree that after studying his brain for a year, they would gather together again and open a sealed envelope which he would leave with them that day.

After Einstein died and following a year of dissecting, weighing, measuring and subjecting the sections and slices of his brain to various tests and probes, the surgeons gathered and waited for the sealed envelope to be opened and Einstein's message revealed.

"By now, you have discovered that the physical construction of my brain varies little from what you have examined. Early in life, I computed the number of brain cells I had, compared to the life span I expect to live and decided that I could never fill my brain completely in my life time. I concluded that I was free to learn as much as I wanted, and there would be space for more. It was this realization and the approach to learning that have shaped my life."

Each of us has more than a hundred billion cells and even though we use a billion or so over a lifetime, that is only a blip on the screen of what remains. We can never use up our brain capacity. Most of us barely tap it. Numerous studies prove that physical exercise slows brain deterioration in the elderly and can reverse mental decline. Regular aerobic exercise increases blood supply to the brain and encourages the growth of neurons. Adding complex movements to your aerobics stimulates increased connections between brain cells that further increases their information processing capacities. Foods rich in lecithin and choline feed the brain.

To me old age is always fifteen years older than I am.

Bernard Baruch

If wrinkles must be written upon our brows, let them not be written upon the heart. The spirit should never grow old. *James Garfield*

Cheerfulness and content are great beautifiers and are famous preservers of youthful looks. *Charles Dickens*

Go slowly and you shall surely arrive. *Milarepa*

Quotable

You deserve Good things! You are someone to be celebrated! Respect and recognition. Acceptance and admiration. Rewards for your hard work and dreams realized—you deserve all of that and more. You absolutely are someone to be held in high regard. Without even trying, you shine!

God doesn't always call the strong. Sometimes you have to be weak enough to serve.

Shine your light, no matter how dark the world around you appears.

You can make a big difference no matter how little you make.

Life isn't fair, but it's still good.

What other people think of you is none of your business.

This Thanksgiving, let those of us who have much and those who have little gather at the welcoming table of the Lord. At this blessed feast, may the rich and poor alike remember that we are called to serve one another and to walk together in God's gracious world. With thankful hearts, we praise our God who like a loving parent denies us no good thing!