

Gratitude Creates a Rich Life

Increase in your personal energy and uplift your spirits by acknowledging or giving thanks for something or someone good in your life. Gratitude for even the smallest of things sets a positive mood for your entire day.

When you regularly express thankfulness or appreciation, you are surrounding yourself with positive energy on the outside along with great positive thinking on the inside. Gratitude equals positive energy, a better tomorrow for you and a richer fuller life.

A fledgling Salvation Army Lieutenant was in charge of his first post along with his wife and two young children. Being Thanksgiving, he was grateful for his post, responsibilities and family but was most anxious to help as many underprivileged families as possible by providing them a good Thanksgiving Day meal.

He and his very pregnant wife personally chose a family on the list to help that resembled their own family. With their rather limited financial resources, they shopped for the largest turkey they could find plus all the trimmings and baked pies and cookies for dessert. They were so happy when they packaged the huge meal into several boxes and drove to the family's home.

When the Lt. and his wife knocked on the door, the family met them with tears and hearts filled with gratitude – but, there was a problem! They only had a two burner hot plate for meal preparation and a very small refrigerator already filled with baby formula and milk. There was no oven to roast the turkey, little space for cooking the trimmings and no space in the refrigerator to store the large raw turkey and the fresh produce.

The Lt. and his wife promptly picked up the boxes of fresh foods needing preparation plus the turkey, took them home and spent the remainder of the day

before Thanksgiving preparing a complete dinner for a family in need, delivering it Thanksgiving morning. They went back home both exhausted and exhilarated to start all over again to prepare their own family meal. They were filled with:

- Gratitude for being able to help another family in need
- Gratitude for the realization that so many have so much less than most
- Gratitude for what they had.

It was at times like these that this young Lieutenant realized how grateful he was for being part of the Corps with its motto “Doing the Most Good” and how blessed he and his family was with their modest surroundings.

Find Gratitude Where You Are

Sometimes, in difficult times it is hard to be grateful for the small things in life when the needs seem so great. Do some of the following to maintain positive gratitude energy:

- Place an item that is symbolic of gratitude for you in the center area of the room you spend most of your time. Items such as a gift from a treasured friend, a small framed hand written note of appreciation or a picture of someone who is always there for you will provide you great gratitude energy.
- Place a candle in a safe container in the middle of your home in fall or earth tone colors lighting it weekly with the intent of expressing appreciation and gratitude for what you have.
- Create a gratitude journal and add something to it every day, even if you have to begin with a seemingly endless list of the mundane such as a refrigerator, food in your cupboard, a chair to sit on when eating or resting at the end of a busy day. Your list will grow and so will your joy and well-

being. Be sure to go back periodically and read some of your earlier entries to life you spirits and see how you've grown.

- Make a point to look at or use your symbolic gratitude reminder on a daily basis. It will not only bring a smile to your face but you will also be reminded to think of something right at that moment to be thankful for.

“Gratitude creates great attitude,” a much richer personal life and should be a mantra for everyone and every day, not just one day a year. The rewards for being grateful for even the smallest things are encouraging, can help you emotionally thrive on even the worst of days and are uplifting so you can soar with the eagle on the great days.

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