



Pause With Purpose

...to refresh

...to grow

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Thanks Giving Power

There's "frost on the pumpkin," and throughout America people are preparing for Thanksgiving Day. Thanksgiving Day celebrations are a long-standing tradition with roots reaching back to the early years of America's existence. In those early, difficult years, food was shared and thanks was offered for survival and for autumn crops. Today, we continue to gather together to celebrate the harvest, often sharing a traditional turkey feast.

Some of us even refer to this day as "turkey day." We focus on good food, good friendships, and time off from work. It's a wonderful party. Yet, when we lose touch with the original purpose of the celebration (thanks giving), we miss an opportunity to feed on the real power of the holiday.

Power? In thanksgiving? Many of us were simply taught the *requirement* of being thankful. We were trained as children when to say "please" and "thank you" appropriately. Yet, there is so much more to purposeful thanksgiving than simple courtesy and good manners.

Consider, for example, the fact that giving thanks implies the

existence of someone else - the "thanks receiver." When someone does us a favor, we thank that person. In the case of Thanksgiving Day, our thanks is extended to our Creator for his care and blessing, demonstrated through the bountiful harvest. Consciously giving thanks in this way brings to our awareness that we are intimately connected to a benevolent Creator who not only can, but wants to provide what is best for us. It is a powerful reminder that we are not simply on our own, dependent solely on our own strength and resources. In this way, thanksgiving helps us build a stable, personal base of humble security.

Giving thanks also provides us with a powerful mechanism for influencing our thoughts and our experience of life. This is significant in light of the fact that life is more than just joyful harvest and success. Life also holds loss and wounding, heartache and failure. These experiences are as real as our success, and they can produce significant pain. Facing, working through, and coming to peace with this side of life is crucial, since staying stuck in this negative space only breeds resentment, bitterness, and despair.

One way to move beyond the hindering weight of life's pain is to give thanks. When we intentionally and honestly give thanks in the presence of pain, we consciously alter the focus of our thoughts from the negative to the positive. We open the door to a different mindset, and in doing so we create the opportunity to experience our self and our world in a more positive way. Our *experience* of life changes, even though our *situation* might not.

It has been said, "You may not be able to control the wind, but you can adjust your sails." Also, "It is not what happens to us that matters so much as how we respond to what happens, and how we respond is a function of our inner resources of heart and mind." Giving thanks is one way we can "adjust our sails." It exists as a valuable resource for our heart and mind. And we find that the more thankful we are, the more of its benefits we receive.

The power of thanksgiving is real. It is available to anyone who chooses to claim it and use it. **Now** is a great season to give it a try! What do you have to lose, but the weight off your back?



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CONTACT INFORMATION

Your thoughts and comments are warmly welcomed. I would also be happy to share with you more about life coaching and how it can help you take on the challenges of life and bring new vitality into your relationships.

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Thanks Giving Challenge

In a world where pain and pleasure coexist, there are times when giving thanks is difficult and seemingly illogical. How can we give thanks in the midst of pain and loss?

Let's remember at the start that pain and thankfulness are not by nature mutually exclusive. While giving thanks *for* suffering may seem out of our reach, it is possible at some point to step around our suffering and to use it as a guide to a place of thankfulness.

Following this model, the broken ankle leads to thankfulness for two strong feet and the ability to heal. The grief of loss and change draws us to thankfulness for past times of "having" and current opportunities for new beginnings. You get the idea.

The goal is not to be superficial or to trivialize pain, but rather to maintain our connection with thankfulness. This connection is crucial, because with it we hold on to the security and power available through thanksgiving. In times of struggle, that may be just what we need to "get around the corner."



"The unthankful heart
... discovers no
mercies; but let the
thankful heart sweep
through the day and,
as the magnet finds
the iron, so it will
find, in every hour,
some heavenly
blessing."
-Henry Ward Beecher

Happy Thanksgiving!