

# Gratitude is the Attitude!

*Serenity is not freedom from the storm, but peace amid the storm*

We live in an ever-changing world. This is an immutable universal law that we can either choose to accept or choose to fight. Fighting it causes us pain, denial, frustration and anger. Acceptance is the only way to find peace within oneself. Personally, I have chosen to view all changes, even if they taste bad, as opportunities for growth. I have set my intention to view this new world we live in as a place of beauty, connectedness and possibility. This is one of the gifts we received after the events of September 11th. I have seen Americans come together in a spirit of oneness as never before. We have opened our eyes and our hearts to the pain and suffering of others and extended a helping hand worldwide. The love and compassion that has arisen in us all speaks to the treasures we can pull from this tragedy. We have been given the opportunity to choose possibility over fear. It is this choice that will either lift us up or drag us down.

One gift I discovered within my own life is that I appreciate the little things more than ever before. Yes, I still have to maintain my normal family life and routine, but those kids sure are getting more hugs than usual, and I'm making extra sure they feel loved and cared for. I have found that I want more than ever to acknowledge the beauty I see in this world, sending messages of light, love and possibility to all those who have touched my life.

It is in this spirit I offer to you a "spiritual practice" which I have found to be transformative: A Grateful Journal. Gratitude is the attitude I have found on the other side of the tragic unfolding of our world. In life's quiet moments I have begun to take the time to ponder all I have to be grateful for. Relaxing here in my cozy living room, embraced by the warmth of the firelight, enjoying whatever book piques my interest, my children off in their rooms attending to their studies; the peace, the shelter, the beauty that surrounds me. I think of old friends and new ones, those who live in my heart but not often in my daily life. I could go on forever... with what I have to be grateful for.

One of the quickest ways to shift your perspective on the world is to write in a Grateful Journal. The actual journal can be anything you choose, but something you make a commitment to writing in daily. I found a unique daily calendar with pictures of wolves which are of special importance to me. Each night before I go to sleep I find a place of peace and warmth, and take a few quiet moments to relive my day. I then write down at least 5 things that I am thankful for. Sometimes my entries are as simple as a few quiet moments to myself, or a beautiful song I enjoy singing. Whatever they are for you, keep them personal and simple.

There are many benefits to this exercise. First, your mind is training itself to think in a positive manner - to dwell on the good things instead of the negative. This, in itself, is a refocusing of your energies that promotes both physiological and mental health. People who are depressed tend to stare at what's not working in their lives. A friend of mine says, "It's like the 'having a spider on your face story'; that's all you can see." When looking at the bigger (universal) picture our "problems" somehow lose their grand stature, especially when we perceive the dire circumstances in which so many others exist in our world. Somehow, those little aggravations become less important and we can "let them go."

Positive thinkers see the beauty in all things, maintaining the belief that everything is possible if you just believe it is so. We can all train ourselves to find the gift in every situation. We have been granted the greatest power of all, the power of choice, of free will. In his book, "A Man's Search for Meaning," Victor Frankl, a holocaust survivor, maintains that "the last of human freedoms is the ability to choose one's attitude in a given set of circumstances." This freedom is our most valuable gift in life.

This acceptance of life promotes an attitude that will get you through even the toughest times. You will begin to see the world as a happy, beautiful place, a place where you can create your own world, your way. We live in a time of uncertainty, where we cannot predict the outcome. But we can choose to live our lives fully, within the chaos and not be consumed by it. It is our individual choice.

Reverence, respect and appreciation grow as you continue your grateful journal. You begin to see the world with new eyes, unclouded by desires, judgment, and fear. You begin to appreciate what you have; family, friends, all the little things in life, that spark your spirit, light your fire and fill your being. Is this not a feeling that you desire in your life? You can have it. But you must take action to achieve anything.

Do It ! Affirm that you will begin here and now. Find yourself a journal, and each night before you go to bed jot down a few things you are happy to have in your life. Keep it simple, keep at it, and you will soon discover a new you. Enjoy.

Namasté ~ Janet

Janet Glass, M.A. is a Spiritual Coach. "Let me help you achieve your highest potential by releasing the past, setting visions for your future and living fully in the present." Call 508-888-7876 or send an e-mail to [janet@visionkeeper.com](mailto:janet@visionkeeper.com). <http://www.visionkeeper.com>