



THE WAY^{of} *INTELLIGENCE*

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GRATITUDE

BY RHONDELL

TODAY WE'RE going to talk about gratitude. We have covered it in some other form at other times, but I notice that very few people seem to catch on, so we're going to talk about it some more. Maybe we'll hear this time.

So gratitude is the feeling that one has, that one is thankful, that one is pleased, that one isn't trying to have their present time, place and circumstance undergo a big change—one is quite free to be experiencing whatever "is". Now it's probably another word for being happy or delighted or a number of other words; but we prefer to say gratitude or thanksgiving.

Of course, we all have a holiday once a year that we call Thanksgiving and that usually winds up just stuffing our innards and not doing very much else. So we're talking about being in a continual mood of being thankful.

Now I think most everybody's heard the little story about a man that said he was feeling sad and sorry for himself because he had no shoes until he met a man who had no feet, and that then he was thankful that he had feet, anyway. Now, of course, that is probably a worthwhile attribute to be aware that I'm rather fortunate. However, it seems that most of us would be like the man that had no shoes, we have to have some very pow-

erful stimuli outside ourselves to point out that we are in the least bit fortunate. We feel that that story could have a lot better meaning if it said: "Well, why do I have to wait until I have a stimuli from outside in order to feel grateful or thankful or gratitude—can't I just do it myself all the time?"

Now we could notice people who have a feeling of being thankful and full of gratitude at all times (or what we could ordinarily call happy people). Obviously, any kind of work that you might be doing would be done a lot better if you were in a state of thankfulness. If you are in a state of fault-finding, anger, griping, complaining about whatever was going on, and it's seeing yourself as being very put upon, the job doesn't go as well.

We went to a restaurant a little while ago—it was a very nice restaurant which means that it was kind of expensive also, that's what being a nice restaurant is, expensive as well as looking well—anyway, we were given the best ignoring we had in quite a spell. We were ignored for at least 30 minutes, and we got up and asked somebody if the kitchen was closed. They said, "No." We said, "Well, are the waitresses on strike?" They said, "No, We'll find one."

So after some several minutes, one did show and again it was a very long time before a simple

thing was put in front of us; and one could tell by tasting of it, that whoever prepared it was doing it because they felt they had to. It wasn't because they loved food or they loved serving people, or that they considered that cooking was an art, which I feel it definitely is. They felt they were putting food through, and being aggravated because somebody came in. You can even tell the attitude in the taste of their food and everything else.

So no matter what business we might be in or what kind of work we might do, if we're doing it with a feeling of being thankful or in a state of gratitude, our work comes out much much better and all the results of it does. So if a person were looking for success, which many people ask us about—how they can be successful. The first thing that I would suggest is that one achieve a state of being thankful or in a state of gratitude. It is probably the greatest asset to and the first requirement of anybody being really successful. Some people make money by their anger; but it doesn't seem to do them very much good because they end up spending it on operations and ulcers and cures and what have you. They would gladly exchange all their wealth for a few hours of feeling good. I've known some of those people.

Now one of the big ways that people hide the feeling of being grateful from themselves is they set up an "ideal" of what "ought to be," and then they struggle towards that "ideal." So they're always in the state of struggle and conflict.

So if we set up an "ideal" of "what ought to be," then we are saying I will be happy when—at some future date—in case the "ideal" should ever actualize—which we're quite sure it won't. If it does, it will be for such a short length of time that nobody would ever notice it, because life is dynamic and is constantly moving, changing and we're in a constant different state of experiencing at all times.

So the first off we see that to be necessary to be thankful or to be "full of gratitude" would be to say I am free to experience whatever may arise in my way today.

Now you're going to experience whatever comes down the way today and you might as well do it gracefully and with fun and enjoy it.

People have been calling recently, "What can I do about this protracted flu that's going around." The only thing I can say is well, experience it freely. Two or three listened and experienced it freely and they called back and said the thing went away. The rest of the people called and said it's hanging on, it's hanging on—there's no way to get rid of it. But they're struggling and they're fighting with it and trying to make it go away and doing all the little tricks they have heard and whatever it be.

But if one decided to experience it freely, it probably would go very shortly because one isn't disintegrating the body with emotion. It then has the ability to use the inherent power in the living body to neutralize invasions of virus and what have you, so it might be the most appropriate way to get there.

So the person tells themselves when they have the ideal, "I will be happy when..." Now sometimes we talk to people a little bit about these general ideas, that one might as well be happy now—and then if all these wonderful things come along, we could still be happy then. It's all right, we can have happiness "nowly" and we can have happiness "thenly." There is really no rule against it. So several of them have come to me with a nice little Not-I which has arranged things and says "I'm happy now, *but* (that cancels out what they just said) I will be much happier when whatever their "ideal" is comes into being.

That's only a Not-I saying, "Well, I'm kind of miserable until I get there, but I'm going to say the appropriate words." Now a lot of people feel that if they say that they are thankful and everything, that that takes care of it.

Thankfulness is not a group of words—it is an inner state of being, a very high inner state of being where the person sees that life is pretty wonderful—I have everything that I could really sit and inquire and insist about. I have food, clothing, shelter, and transportation. I have interesting things to do. I have interesting other people to

be around, and we really couldn't find too much to say that we needed anything beyond that. Now certainly we could all enjoy a lot of luxuries maybe. We've seen some people who couldn't enjoy them.

In this morning's paper, there was an article about some people that lived in the city of Phoenix that are homeless. They're living under an overpass, they have no shelter except maybe they cover up with blankets and what have you, and they can build a fire out under the place where they can stay reasonably warm. Some reporters asked, "Where do you get your wood." The gentlemen said, "If you don't ask any questions, you will be told no lies". But they had one picture of a little two-year-old girl who looked very happy. She had a big grin on her face and everything. She was stirring a pot of beans, which was being cooked on an open fire. I guess she was anticipating having some beans after a while, but possibly the little child hasn't been in a situation where she could set up ideals yet.

So it seemed to be quite all right. She's camping out and having a good time and she's feeling all right even though it had been cold weather for Phoenix—hot for most places. She's living outside and has no home of any kind, but her parents are with her and she gets to stir the bean pot, so that's quite all right. Now maybe if she's denied stirring the bean pot, she would be very unhappy, I don't know. You see, whatever the person sets up as being the "ideal" can become an over-

powering thing that makes you have a feeling of being sorry for yourself—feeling deprived, feeling put upon, unhappy, and what have you.

Now the things that people set up as “ideals” are anywhere from having 10 million dollars to having a new haircut, to having a job of any kind, to about anything you could conceive of. Whatever anyone sets up as an “ideal” (meaning that one must have that particular “ideal” before one can be happy) is a bar against enjoying or being thankful. You can only see what a pathetic mess you’re in because you don’t have whatever the “ideal” is.

So it’s possible that if we decided that we could take a “looksee”—right now—and see what our real situation is.

As I said a few minutes ago, we have food, we have clothing, we have shelter, we have transportation, we have interesting things to do. We have interesting other people about. They come and go all the time. We can do about anything we want to do—go where we want to go—stop where we want to stop.

So what is it that prevents one from feeling thankful other than that one has set up some sort of an “ideal” beyond any real human need—meaning that, “We must have this, before I will allow myself to be thankful, happy, contented,” whatever word you choose to use there. I think they’re all more or less synonyms that we could have whatever we like.

So when a person says—I’m happy now, but (the “but” cancelled off what was just said) I’d really be happy if I had so and so.

I talked to a lady just a little while ago who was very pathetic. Now what she was pathetic about was she didn’t feel top of the world this morning.

I asked her about something that she had asked me for not very long ago.

I asked if it came out all right because she had said she would be very very happy if that thing she asked me for happened. So I inquired as to how that situation came out. She said, “Oh, it turned out fine,” but now that doesn’t count anymore, and that’s so immaterial. It is the present little thing at the moment that she needs before she can be happy. So we recited several incidents over the past several years, several times she told me, “I would surely be happy if this happened.” She’s asked and requested our assistance trying to get these things to occur, and we have obliged. All of them seemingly have come about, but now this morning some little something was not there—and to hear her tone of voice it was as though this was the “end of the road.” “I’ll never have anything.” “It’s just the saddest state in all the world.” Now, of course, that’s not necessary—you can feel however you like. Just because there’s some inconvenience at the moment does not mean that one has to fall apart at the seams.

Having been around this planet earth for a good many years and hope to stay a great

number more, I have noticed that there is always something that is not just “ideal”. That is to say an “ideal” according to the human mind, based upon the whole purpose of living to be totally non-disturbed.

There is usually some challenge going on, some adaptations, something is always happening that makes us aware that there are sensations other than pure pleasure at all times.

Now there is no doubt that if you had nothing but pure pleasure all the time, you’d become very jaded with it in not too long a time. We all love pleasure—we’re not opposed to it at all. We think pleasure is fantastic and wonderful. I feel that if we never had anything but pleasurable sensations, we wouldn’t have the joy in “pleasure” that we do because we have experienced discomfort, pain, annoyances, aggravations and what have you. The contrast is so wonderful when we do have pleasure, that you might say we really appreciate it for a change now and then.

So let’s take as a little exercise that maybe we would like to continue for some length of time—and this exercise is for only one person—#1—you. We’re going to practice being in a state of “being thankful” at all times. Now we’re not going to have to pull the Pollyanna bit—I’m thankful that only 12 people got killed instead of 18. We’re going to be thankful that we’re experiencing a considerable degree of well being even though we feel kind of rotten today.

I used to work with people and some guy would come in and he'd have a pain all over. Finally it wound up that he only had a pain in his knee. But he'd say, "Doctor, I am no better—I have this horrible pain."

Well, we'd look at the case history that said you came in with both elbows in a mess. "How's your elbows?"

"Oh, they're all right, but this knee is killing me".

"You said that when you came in that you couldn't eat very well, that all your food turned into sour mess, and you upchucked it. How's that?"

"Oh, I'm eating fine, but this knee is getting me down; and I'm no better than I ever was."

Well, we'd go over all the list of the symptoms. So 90 per cent of all his symptoms were gone, but he was complaining just as loud about this little 10 per cent that was still left. His knee was still hurting.

Well, sometimes with considerable amount of tedious effort, we could get the person to be thankful for all the things they had previously, but were now reduced to only this one. Now once you can get a person to being thankful for how well the body is—90 per cent of it is feeling wonderful, then you can get them to that point where the other 10 per cent of pain is gone tomorrow morning. But you know we do love to complain—now why, I don't know.

What value do we get out of complaining? Nobody does very much about our complaining. We feel terrible. We are fault finding with Life and with the human body and with every-

thing about us. We're faultfinding instead of finding gratitude; but all faultfinding and complaining makes us feel very rough. I think everybody has experienced that "feeling rough" whether we pay very much attention to it or not. We know that it does. It would seem that when we have discovered that when we're feeling thankful for even a little while, we're then feeling a lot better all around. About right? Feeling a lot better!

So it would seem that one would shun complaining and sticking up for rights and blaming like they shunned the plague. I think if anybody knew that if they went to a certain place and indulged in certain things, they would get AIDS, for instance—I think they'd stay away from there. Just seems to me that everybody would do that. I believe everybody's got that much horse sense, as we call it. Is that right? Would you go somewhere where you knew you'd get AIDS?

Well, here's something that you know about. **We get a mental AIDS which messes up the body every time we indulge in complaining, sticking up for rights, blaming, which puts our moods way down at the bottom.** You know that, don't you?

Now you can also be aware that if you're thankful, you're smiling, you're having a good time, and you're grateful for everything and everybody around you along with the beautiful weather, nice clothes and cars that you feel wonderful too. King Solomon would have

thought he really had "arrived" if he had any vehicle that anyone of us here is driving around. He rode around in a damned old chariot with springs on it—rougher than a boot with no air conditioning. Here we ride around with all these wonderful cars, and we go around complaining. Now if we can see that—how in the world could we ever get into complaining, sticking up for our rights, blaming, being angry and all this—especially because we know it's going to make us feel terrible right then and there.

We also know that if we're very thankful for all the wonderful things we have—think of the age we live in where it would be very miraculous even to people that were born during the turn of the century. Your vehicle would surprise them. They had a few old cars—one or two or three around here and there—hand-made jobs. They didn't have any jet airlines. They didn't have an airplane to fly at the turn of the century—very few central heating systems—plumbing, as we know it, was non-existent. Anybody can afford a house with plumbing in it now—then only the very "wealthies" could have it.

So we have all the things that the greatest of wealth had only a few years ago; and if we don't have anything to be grateful for and thankful for, I'd like to know what it would take.

So let's practice being at least conscious enough now that we can see the whole thing of being conscious enough to say, "This I have." "This I can do." "This I can be

thankful for.” If we practice a little bit, it will finally become second nature like complaining is second nature to most everybody now. They’ve complained so much, they don’t even know they’re complaining.

Very recently a lady was sitting in front of my desk and she was complaining up a storm—just one thing after another. When she finally stopped to get her breath, I got a word in and said, “If we could bring complaining to an end, things might be different.” She said, “I never allowed myself to complain about anything in my life.”

What else could I say? Where was I left? She never complained, but all I could hear was a constant row of complaining. But you see, she didn’t know she was complaining for the simple reason that it was second nature for her to complain. It was just like breathing—it was mechanical. She was totally unconscious of what she was doing—that I know!

And when you try to talk about being conscious enough to begin to pay attention to what all we have to be thankful for, it would require first that we establish our little “frame of reference”, “point of awareness” out here somewhere. So that becomes a separate entity. “It” can watch what’s going on.

So we feel that it is very essential for us to be aware that we have a lot of things going on that we pay very little, if any, attention to. So let’s make our “point of awareness”—begin to pay attention.

Now we don’t want to “condemn or justify” the fact that we remark about some of the

things (complaining, judging and blaming) we see as only as reminders—it is not for condemnation and not for justification. It’s merely there and we can begin to do something.

Now we have all the opportunities in the world. We have constant material available to us to remind us of being conscious. We have all kinds of opportunity—we have written materials—we have spoken material. We have a continuous supply of teaching material behind to always back us up—to get us out of the pits.

So let’s begin to exercise it (being thankful) and practice it so that we can begin to use what’s available to us. **If you practice being thankful for a while, not near as much as we have practiced “complaining and sticking up for rights and blaming” and so forth, we will find that being in a state of “gratitude” or “thanksgiving” has become second nature.**

Now when it’s second nature, it’s really part of us then. If something is second nature to me, then that’s part of me. When something’s second nature to you, that’s part of you. It’s like the poor lady that was sitting and complaining and complaining and then said, “I have never allowed myself to complain about anything in my life ‘cause it doesn’t do any good.” She was just by “second nature” complaining. She was totally unaware she was complaining. She wasn’t trying to kid herself or anything. It’s what we call “second nature”—something that has been done so

long that it is just the only way of doing it. It’s like breathing.

So then, we now have a subject that we will practice to see how much of the time I wind up being thankful; and how much of the time I can be totally free to experience what’s going on—and we don’t have to have any ideals.

We are so intent on our ideals, but we can set them aside for a couple of weeks at least. They don’t deteriorate any while you’ve got them set aside. You can go back and pick them up if you feel they’re real essential to your well being, but could we just plain set them over in the corner and let them gather dust for a couple of weeks?

Okay, I’ve talked long enough. Are there any questions? Got any question brother Bill?

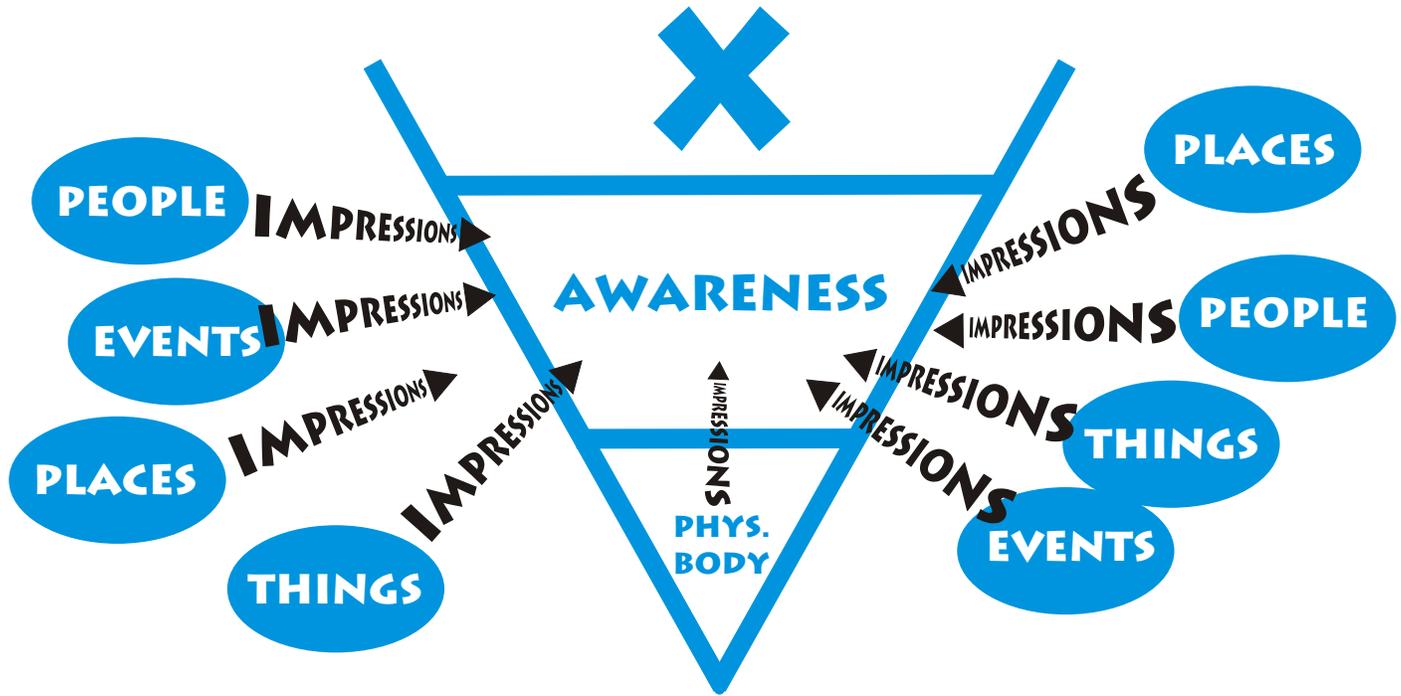
(Well, I get a kick out of every time I listen to you, you come up with this thing “but.” Should we take “but” out of our vocabulary?)

Well, unless you want to cancel what you said just before it, isn’t that correct? I’m very happy, but I’d be a lot happier—so that cancels. I’m not very happy at all because if I were going to be a lot happier, I’d get this other thing. So every time you put the “but” in there about something, you have cancelled what you just said before. It’s like a man walked in and said, “I love all mankind, but I can’t stand all these damned individuals.”

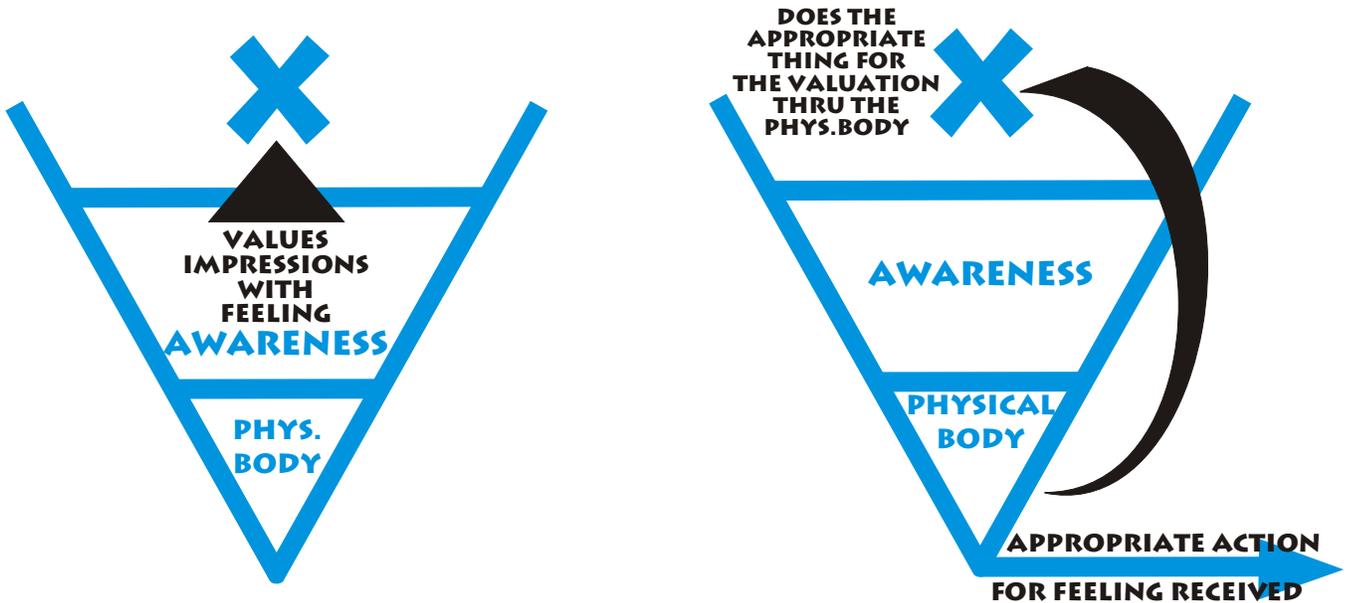
(Got it.)

Ok, we will call it a day. ✕

Picture of Man in ThanXgiving



1. IMPRESSIONS FROM OUTER AND INNER WORLDS ARE SELECTED AND TAKEN IN BY AWARENESS. AWARENESS VALUES THE IMPRESSION BASED ON THE PURPOSE OF LIVING. THIS VALUE IS A FEELING. FEELING IS THE MEDIUM OF "COMMUNICATION" BETWEEN X AND AWARENESS.



2. EXAMPLE: AWARENESS CONSIDERS A GOOD FRIEND (AN IMPRESSION), HAS THE DELIGHTFUL FEELING OF PRAISE OR GRATITUDE. THIS VALUING OF THE FRIEND AND THE DELIGHTFUL FEELING IS A "REPORT" TO X.

3. LIFE THRIVES ON PRAISE (CHECK IT OUT) AND WANTS TO KEEP IT GOING, SO DOES THE APPROPRIATE ACTION TO KEEP THIS DELIGHTFUL STATE, THROUGH THE PHYSICAL BODY.

4. THE PERSON DOES THE ACTION INVOLVED (MAYBE JUST ENJOYING THE FEELING; MAYBE PHONING HER, WHATEVER IS DESIRED).

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE RESEARCH PROJECT ON GRATITUDE AND THANKFULNESS

DIMENSIONS AND PERSPECTIVES OF GRATITUDE

CO-INVESTIGATORS: ROBERT A. EMMONS, UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, DAVIS

SYNOPSIS. GRATITUDE is the “forgotten factor” in happiness research. We are engaged in a long-term research project designed to create and disseminate a large body of novel scientific data on the nature of gratitude, its causes, and its potential consequences for human health and well-being. Scientists are latecomers to the concept of gratitude. Religions and philosophies have long embraced gratitude as an indispensable manifestation of virtue, and an integral component of health, wholeness, and well-being. Through conducting highly focused, cutting-edge studies on the nature of gratitude, its causes, and its consequences, we hope to shed important scientific light on this important concept. This document is intended to provide a brief, introductory overview of the major findings to date of the research project. For further information, please contact either of the project investigators.

We are engaged in three main lines of inquiry at the present time: (1) developing methods to cultivate gratitude in daily life, (2) developing a measure to reliably assess individual differences in dispositional gratefulness and (3) designing experimental studies that enable us to distinguish the differential causes and consequences of gratitude and indebtedness.

This project is supported by a grant from the John Templeton Foundation of Radnor, PA.

GRATITUDE INTERVENTIONS AND PSYCHOLOGICAL AND PHYSICAL WELL-BEING

IN AN experimental comparison, those who kept gratitude journals on a weekly basis exercised more regularly, reported fewer physical symptoms, felt better about their lives as a whole, and were more optimistic about the upcoming week

compared to those who recorded hassles or neutral life events (Emmons & McCullough, 2003).

A related benefit was observed in the realm of personal goal attainment: Participants who kept gratitude lists were more likely to have made progress toward important personal goals (academic, interpersonal and health-based) over a two-month period compared to subjects in the other experimental conditions.

A *daily* gratitude intervention (self-guided exercises) with young adults resulted in higher reported levels of the positive states of alertness, enthusiasm, determination, attentiveness and energy compared to a focus on hassles or a downward social comparison (ways in which participants thought they were better off than others). There was no difference in levels of

unpleasant emotions reported in the three groups.

Participants in the daily gratitude condition were more likely to report having helped someone with a personal problem or having offered emotional support to another, relative to the hassles or social comparison condition.

In a sample of adults with neuromuscular disease, a 21-day gratitude intervention resulted in greater amounts of high energy positive moods, a greater sense of feeling connected to others, more optimistic ratings of one’s life, and better sleep duration and sleep quality, relative to a control group.

MEASURING THE GRATEFUL DISPOSITION

Most people report being grateful (average rating of nearly 6 on a 7 point scale).

Well-Being: Grateful people report higher levels of positive emotions, life satisfaction, vitality, optimism and lower levels of depression and stress. The disposition toward gratitude appears to enhance pleasant feeling states more than it diminishes unpleasant emotions. Grateful people do not deny or ignore the negative aspects of life.

Prosociality: People with a strong disposition toward gratitude have the capacity to be empathic and to take the perspective of others. They are rated as more generous and more helpful by people in their social networks (McCullough, Emmons, & Tsang, 2002).

Spirituality: Those who regularly attend religious services and engage in religious activities such as prayer reading religious material score are more likely to be grateful. Grateful people are more likely to acknowledge a belief in the interconnectedness of all life and a commitment to and responsibility to others (McCullough et. al., 2002).

Materialism: Grateful individuals place less importance on material goods; they are less likely to judge their own and others success in terms of possessions accumulated; they are less envious of wealthy persons; and are more likely to share

their possessions with others relative to less grateful persons.

DISTINGUISHING BETWEEN GRATEFULNESS AND INDEBTEDNESS

In a narrative study, people who write about being indebted to others reports higher levels of anger and lower levels of appreciation, happiness, and love relative to people who write about being grateful to others (Gray & Emmons, 2000).

The experience of indebtedness is less likely to lead to a desire to approach or make contact with others relative to an experience of gratefulness. Thus, indebtedness tends to be an aversive psychological state that is distinct from gratitude.

THE FOUR FORCES & GRATITUDE

An example of the Four Forces in action. Let's say I like the feeling of delight (who doesn't?), and I decide that on Thanksgiving Day I will spend it in gratitude.

- 1. INITIATIVE: I WILL TO KEEP MY INNER STATE IN GRATITUDE FOR A DAY.**
- 2. RESISTANCE: SOME LITTLE (OR BIGGER) THING WILL COME ALONG TO CHALLENGE ME. IT'S INEVITABLE. MAYBE UNCLE JOE AND HIS OBNOXIOUS BEHAVIOR AT THANKSGIVING DINNER? HOW WILL I HANDLE IT?**
- 3. FORM: IF I AM FREE TO EXPERIENCE THIS, WHAT IS TO ME A GOOD GUEST AT DINNER, IN CHARGE OF MY INNER STATE RATHER THAN LETTING UNCLE JOE TAKE CHARGE OF IT, THERE WILL BE ONE "FORM"--THE FEELING YOU EXPERIENCE. IF I TURN MY INNER STATE OVER TO UNCLE JOE, THERE WILL BE SOME DEGREE OF DISTRESS IN MY BODY.**
- 4. RESULT: MY DELIGHTFUL STATE IS MAINTAINED, AND IT IS CONTAGIOUS (CHECK IT OUT). THE WHOLE TENOR OF THE PARTY MAY CHANGE? IF I LET UNCLE JOE TAKE OVER, THERE WILL BE AT LEAST TWO OF US FEELING UNPLEASANT.**

The Four Forces are present everywhere, all the time. They are usually unfolding unconsciously. It's a wonderful and enlightening experience to take charge of them. And always remember that some resistance to your initiative will show up--how you handle that determines the form and result. ✕

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THE “NOT-I” IS THE “NOT-NOW”

RECENTLY A FEW OF US GOT TOGETHER TO DISCUSS THE WORK

IT'S BEEN transcribed, here is some of it. (meeting in progress)

Christine: First of all, “we” don’t really get “rid” of any Not-I’s, we just learn to ignore them and eventually they fade away. Of course it’s faster if we truly see the folly of it—then it is useless and we won’t hear from it again, or if we do we just laugh. The only reason “the chooser” is called a Not-I is because it is basing its choices between A & B on misinformation and doesn’t see that. But every human will probably always have a chooser of some kind because we have taste. We choose what clothes to buy, what to eat tonight, a million little choices a day. There is nothing sinister about it, there is nothing to “get rid of.” Just want to be aware of it—it’s not Ultimate Truth—it is MY Truth at the moment, and subject to change. ... I think this is fun, it came to me last night. Almost all of the work that we have been involved in, not just The Way of Intelligence, but the “Great Work,” whatever one calls it, any developmental work that gets one past “be good and go to heaven” tells us to work on being in the moment. Even therapy does this to a degree, embracing the past and then moving on (“embrace it, don’t marry it—a handshake will do.” I read this in the funnies today) We want to be in THIS moment, and This moment, and This moment and it tastes completely different than anger or guilt over the past, or worry about the future. I think we all know that.

Well, it occurred to me that we can draw the Picture of Man and change the word “not-I” to “Not Now.”

I’m complaining because I want something to change (future). I’m blaming someone or something that happened in the past. I’m pleasing for a future effect. I’m quoting authorities that are long gone. I want to change the future. I’m sticking up for “rights” that may have been presented in the past and “should” be there in the future.

Zena: An experiment then?

Christine: Well sure, everything’s an experiment. But I thought it was a cute tool for keeping in the moment.

Zena: More directed to the now, perhaps?

Christine: Yes. Every time I hear a Not-I it can remind me that I have slipped out of the Now into the past or future.

Luz: Wow!!

Christine: When all there is is right Now and right Now and right Now.

Luz: Wonderful!

Christine: So it’s a tool for the kit.

Christine: I was chatting with Cindy on the phone last night, and she was telling me how it is easier for her to stay in the moment these days, not fretting about the future, and it came to me to change Not-I to Not-Now, and we both laughed and she thought it was great. Me too!

Helen: Just thought of something new also. Thinking of the “present” as like a “beat” of the

heart, that is the only a beat for that moment, then a new beat and on and on.

Luz: All our troubles are in the past and future. The present is absolutely wonderful.

Christine: I heard a story of two guys who were kayaking, one fell out. Big challenge and scared to death, and he just kept saying to himself, “Right this second I’m okay,” over and over, and he was rescued. He swore that exercise saved his life by not letting him panic.

Helen: Had a little incident yesterday that normally would have lasted at least a full day... remembering... lasted about an hour max. Uttered another little prayer of ThanX.

Christine: Yes, when we’ve been going up and round and round that mountain, the circles get smaller, we recognize the signposts, it doesn’t take as long.

Luz: Wow again.

Helen: That really makes a beautiful picture.

Christine: Wouldn’t trade a wrinkle for that bit of wisdom!

Helen: Nor !!

Robin: When you stay in the moment, there’s no drama.

Zena: It’s funny but the being in the moment is something that this group has helped me with. If I were not in the moment, coming to the group would remind me to be there.

Helen: It really is a “newness,” isn’t it.

Zena: Yes.

Christine: You know what’s really funny? We are always in this

moment. There is nowhere else “real” to be. We just let the computer (brain) go rummaging in the past and inventing the future and we identify with that, but we ARE in the moment, and when we let the computer take over, it gloms onto all those crummy feelings from past and future and we miss the reality that right Now is right Now is right Now, and it can’t possibly be anything else.

Helen: “be-ing”

Christine: So next time I’m fretting about something in the future, I can say, “Oh, that’s just Not-Now”

Zena: Could we go over the Picture of Man?

Christine: Great, do you want to give it a try?

Zena: Okay. Awareness function, and it can report to X with feeling what is going on, then X does the appropriate thing, through the physical body, and that is all she wrote.

Christine: The only thing I might “edit” a bit is that line “Awareness can report to X”. Awareness is constantly reporting to X, not “can”—it IS, all the time. What we are concerned with here is that it often is “reporting: conflict, which causes a panic situation. So this work is to examine conflict, the nature of it, the root of it, and work on that. But Awareness is constantly “reporting,” not just now and then.

Audrey: You can’t turn it off, can you?

Christine: Correct. You can only be in charge of it, or not.

Zena: Okay. So we report, and if it is conflict, then that is what is reported.

Luz: Feeling is going on all the time.

Elizabeth: So the point is to filter out what we report to X, so we can live healthier and more aware of ourselves.

Christine: Yes, exactly. Awareness IS a “filter” (and that is why it is referred to sometimes as Resistance).

Zena: So we need to be aware of Self.

Elizabeth: So resistance can be either positive or negative?

Christine: We don’t use those terms here. We use language specifically. What we would say is resistance just “is.” How we see it is what matters.

Elizabeth: Sorry, what I meant was we can choose what kind of resistance we take, because some may be harmful if there is no awareness.

Christine: Well, there is resistance in this realm. We maybe can’t always choose what we will “take” or not. For instance, if there is violent weather, it just is. We can choose to get out of its way or whatever, but we cannot to choose whether to take it or not. But we certainly can ignore some resistance. What’s called “contrived” resistance. For instance, disapproval from someone, or someone making us feel insignificant (or important, for that matter!). We can just ignore that kind of resistance (easier said than done, I know.) Zena, do you get it, that Awareness is continually “reporting,” not just when she thinks of it?

Zena: Yes, aaaaaagh.

Christine: Why “aaaaaagh”? Is that I groan I hear?

Zena: Yes, a groan. Because I do know this, but still learning.

Christine: Oh, thank you, that was a “stupid me!” from Not-I No.5

Zena: It occurred to I that a not-I has its home in my original Purpose of Living and can be gently traced back there.

Christine: Yes, all of them are based on the original Purpose of Living.

Audrey: Sometimes, if not more than that, even “often” on certain days, the report given to X by Awareness is not based on concrete truth. It is based on perceived truth, or depending on your environment, fabricated evidence. Does it, Awareness, not dredge up experience from the past and mix it in with what it is perceiving as reality at the moment it reports to X?

Christine: Absolutely it does. And that’s a big part of this work, sifting through that stuff, objectively as possible, without condemning or justifying. One way to do it is to just get in a habit of “pausing” before evaluating anything. Just a second or two will have a big impact, and I’m very glad you brought that up, Audrey. And your last remark, too, Zena, because where all the trouble comes in not “reporting” accurately is based on the purpose of living. If someone’s Purpose of Living is that “the purpose of living is to gain pleasure and escape pain” on all levels, the reports will just not be accurate very often. If you’re diabetic, for instance, pleasure would be in that chocolate. The Purpose of Living says go for it.” A new Purpose of Living, maybe this one, “I want to be what is to me a good guest,” would kind of make it obvious that you don’t want to be sick and spoil the party, so that new Purpose of Living would probably forego the chocolate. Does that make sense?

Luz: The new Purpose of Living has new values. Its values are concerned with being harmless and making a contribution to the party.

Christine: It might be, Luz, but anyone's new purpose can be anything. Maybe it is to rule the world!

Audrey: I'm coming in late on this one... answering Christine's "Does it make sense?" Totally. It really is all summed up in the two phrases; "Make nothing im-

portant and Keep the mood up." As a Baptist minister's child brought up with a thousand mile list of "shoulds," that near made me nuts. But it is the whole universe in a nutshell. ... Still, at least at first for someone from my background, it seems counter-intuitive. And then it becomes clear as crystal.

Christine: Yes, because we try to fit the new in with the old. It doesn't work. That's why we are all told in the beginning "try to

suspend everything you know."

Luz: Not-I's resisting.

Christine: and check out the info. Just check it out. If it doesn't work, then trash it. But the way to check it out is not just to hear the words and see if they are acceptable, it's to run experiments, little ones, to check out if the idea is tenable. ✕

THE FOUR QUESTIONS AND POSSIBLE ANSWERS

1. What am I? "A privileged, invited guest."
2. Where am I? "At a beautiful estate called Planet Earth."
3. What's going on here? "A Big Party with lots of guests and plenty of games to play."
4. What can I do? "Be what is to me a Good Guest."

THE FOUR GREAT GAMES

Which operate by suggestion:

1. POWER POLICIES--Decrees what's "in" and "out."
2. MEDICAL ARTS--Decrees what's "normal" and "abnormal."
3. THEOLOGY--Decrees what's "good" and "bad"
4. BIG BUSINESS--Decrees what's "pretty" and "ugly."

THE FOUR DUAL BASIC URGES

1. PHYSICAL--to GAIN comfort and pleasure and ESCAPE pain and discomfort.
2. MENTAL--to GAIN attention and escape being ignored or rejected.
3. EMOTIONAL--to GAIN approval and ESCAPE disapproval.
4. TRANSCENDENTAL--to GAIN being needed, feeling important and ESCAPE feeling inferior or useless.

The Four Dual Basic Urges are not "right/wrong" or "good/bad," they just are a side-effect of living, not the Purpose of Living.

THE FOUR WAYS OF MAN

1. THE WAY OF THE JUNGLE--Kill anything about to interfere
2. THE WAY OF JUSTICE--"An eye for an eye"
3. THE WAY OF UNDERSTANDING--"Anything I or another does is felt at the time to be right, proper, or justified."
4. THE WAY OF INTELLIGENCE--"A new Purpose of Living with the ability to be in charge of my inner state at any time."

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