



TOPIC: REWARD AND RECOGNITION

TITLE: GRATITUDE

November 19, 2001

"Each day comes bearing its own gifts. Untie the ribbons." - Ruth Ann Schabacker

Recently I've found myself caught in a whirlpool of "Oh, me" tides – one of those times when it's easier to focus on what's wrong or what's not working than to look at the positive things that surround me. And there are so many of them.

Life can be a whirlpool, with tides pulling you first one way and then the other. Every now and then, you find yourself at the bottom, gasping for air. But during this Thanksgiving week, it's important to be thankful for what we have. The hard part is living the Thanksgiving spirit during the other 364 days of the year.

I'd like to dedicate this newsletter to the concept of daily gratitude. More than simply being thankful everyday, it's about cultivating a grateful heart and sharing that gratitude with everyone in your life – family, friends, strangers, peers, employees and others. I'd like to share with you a recipe for fostering this spirit.

Look around

Stop, look and listen to what's in front of you. Recognize the greatness in others, the challenges they've overcome, the person they are -- and the person you are.

What do you have to be truly grateful for?

Take time

Take time for everything you care about. You're responsible for the quality of your life. Making time to think, relax, play or just savor something special goes a long way. Most importantly, be sure to make time for yourself.

What aren't you making enough time for?

Share your gifts

Each of us possesses special gifts. Sometimes we don't use them, and sometimes we overlook them or forget they're there. Take time to share your gifts with others – you'll reap rewards you can't even imagine.

What is your special gift? How are you sharing it with others?

continued on next page



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Make Thanksgiving a daily ritual

Thanksgiving is an ideal time to appreciate everything we have. I challenge you to make Thanksgiving a daily ritual.

What will I do to acknowledge gratitude every day?

The spirit of gratitude is about recognizing and celebrating the gifts we have. It doesn't ignore the challenges and obstacles we face. In fact, it recognizes them and puts them in perspective – the perspective of what truly matters.

I wish for each of you this Thanksgiving season to embrace an attitude of gratitude every day of the year.

And I wish you a joyful holiday, in spite of international tensions and financial uncertainty. I hope you'll focus on the blessings we all enjoy – blessings that come from living in the world's most fortunate nation with its richness and diversity and its wealth of opportunities.